

Apocalypse 676

Chapter 676

Translated by: La0o9

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Standing in the dust cloud, Gu Qing Shan silently sighed.

—*seriously?*

I already hid myself so well, yet the summoning still reached me.

Of course, a summoning isn't mandatory, so as long as he refused, the magic would have failed.

According to his original plan, he shouldn't have accepted the summoning.

But as he saw the man's terrible state and his unwillingness, Gu Qing Shan still decided to take up his sword and answered the call.

Inside the dust cloud.

"Shannu, remember this technique well"

He took the Chao Yin sword in hand and lightly whispered behind his back.

The man and woman didn't even hesitate to attack as soon as they heard a voice.

Ridiculous, Wang Cheng was a Devil Summoner!

I'm not sure why he succeeded in the summoning during the last moments of his life, but he offered everything including his soul for this summon.

Such a heavy price must've summoned an unprecedentedly terrifyingly strong devil or fiend!

The man and woman both used all their strength to attack whatever was inside the dust.

But before their techniques could even come out, they froze.

Both of them froze in place, unable to move a finger.

At first glance, their souls seemed to have left their bodies, unable to control it.

—-it was because Gu Qing Shan's sword had already moved.

The Chao Yin sword was already swung, not carrying with it a single bit of killing intent.

This sword swing was casual and contemptuous, there wasn't even a sword phantom on it, as if the user was only practicing their techniques without actually using force or intention to attack anyone.

If there was something special about this strike, it would be that it was fast.

It was fast to the extreme.

Unfortunately, this strike was far away from its targets, no matter how fast it was, it couldn't possibly touch them.

— — —and yet, because of this strike, both the man and the woman were unable to move.

Gu Qing Shan swung again.

This strike was different.

Sword phantoms manifested as a thin string that was swung with a 'sha'.

Sending their two heads flying.

The corpses fell.

The battle was over before it even began.

Gu Qing Shan put his sword away.

Behind him, the Six Paths Great Mountain sword appeared.

Shannu spoke, a bit embarrassed: "Gongzi, I couldn't understand, was that [Severance] just now?"

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[Severance] is Gu Qing Shan's Lightning Thaumaturgy, anyone that got hit by it would have their consciousness separated from their bodies for a duration of three seconds.

This was the upgraded version of [Seven Shackles] and [Stiffness], no living being would be immune to it.

Gu Qing Shan smiled and told her: "It wasn't just [Severance], take another look.

He swung the Chao Yin sword again.

This time, he purposefully swung slower so that Shannu could clearly see his movement.

As she observed, she was surprised: "I understand now, this is the Secret Art, [Life Seeker] with [Severance] attached to it!"

"Correct"

Gu Qing Shan confirmed it.

[Secret Art: Life Seeker, your attacks can reach the enemy when they are within 10 feet of you]

[Notice: This Secret Art can only be activated within a 10-foot range of an enemy]

[Notice: This Secret Art can be used together with other Secret Arts]

The three of them were standing very close just now.

As soon as Gu Qing Shan was summoned, the other party was already within his range of 10 feet.

So Gu Qing Shan had two choices.

One was to take the initiative and attacked first with [Life Seeker] active.

The second was to be careful, use [Severance] first to immobilize them and make them unable to resist before swiftly taking their lives.

Gu Qing Shan chose the second.

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This man and woman were able to make such a secretive plan and killed Wang Cheng in one fell swoop, so they must have the necessary mental fortitude and means for it.

Not to mention the countless Professions that Gu Qing Shan saw back at the Profession Committee, there was no telling what kind of thing these two were capable of and how he should be wary of them.

So in that split second, he decided to restrain them before anything else.

Shannu thought briefly and quickly realized: “Gongzi, if that’s the case, wouldn’t that mean that as long as you use [Life Seeker], every enemy within 10 feet of you will be affected by [Severance]?”

Gu Qing Shan nodded: “Unless they already know of [Life Seeker]’s characteristics, or they have an especially potent spirit sense that foretold them of their own death, no one will be able to escape from the combined attack of [Severance] and [Life Seeker]”

Shannu continued: “In other words...”

“Indeed, as long as an enemy gets into a range of 10 feet around me, whenever I attacked, they would easily be immobilized by [Severance]” Gu Qing Shan casually told her.

Shannu was stunned and fell into silence.

She was slowly digesting the shocking capabilities of this Secret Art.

From now on, both gongzi’s and my fighting style will be changed greatly.

No wonder gongzi wanted me to take a close look.

No wonder Xie Dao Ling specifically exchanged this technique from someone else.

In hindsight, Xie Dao Ling must’ve kept it in mind ever since she knew that Gu Qing Shan awoke a Lightning Thaumaturgy.

—although Xie Dao Ling doesn’t know that Gu Qing Shan’s Thaumaturgy has been upgraded twice, going from [Seven Shackles] to [Severance], she has always been silently looking for a suitable sword technique for her disciple.

With his restraint-type Lightning Thaumaturgy, it was almost like this Secret Art was made for Gu Qing Shan!

This is what ‘within 10 feet, I seek out your life and extinguish it’ truly means!

Shannu went silent thinking about her fighting style from now on.

Gu Qing Shan had also put the Chao Yin sword away and crouched down to look at Wang Cheng’s corpse.

Wang Cheng’s eyes were still opened wide and bloodshot, his expression full of unwillingness and pain.

Gu Qing Shan silently sighed and shook his head: “Reckless man, I’ve completed my end of the deal between you and I”

Following his declaration, a grey rune suddenly came out from Wang Cheng’s corpse.

This rune silently came into Gu Qing Shan's hand.

Lines of glowing text appeared on the War God UI together with it.

[First rule of summoning: A fair deal]

['Fair' refers to the fact that the Summoner A accepting the Summoned B's work, as well as B accepting A's payment]

[This summoning has fulfilled the above conditions]

[Issuing payment to the Devil King of Huang Quan]

[Wang Cheng's soul vessel rune: This rune contains Wang Cheng's entire life's worth of experience, knowledge, abilities and wealth, as well as the Soul Points contained in his soul]

[You may now absorb this rune]

Gu Qing Shan lightly tapped the rune.

Countless images flowed into his head.

A lot of time seemed to have passed, but in fact, it was only a split second, and in that time Gu Qing Shan had suddenly learnt a lot of things.

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His Soul Points have also increased quite a bit.

After he found the Divine Watch of God Institute and learned [Miracle Search] from it, he had 86,000 Soul Points left.

Then he learnt a lot of Blade, Archery, Martial Arts, and even Cooking skills, then used [Mystery of All Beings Equal] over and over. Even when the creatures he turned into were tiny like an ant or a skylark, he still had to pay the Soul Points for it.

So now he only had around 70,000 Soul Points left.

And then this Devil Summoner Wang Cheng's summoning gave him 3000 Soul Points!

Just like that, Gu Qing Shan gained some more Soul Points, settling at around 73,000 Soul Points.

Furthermore---

Gu Qing Shan raised his hand.

A grey shadow appeared from his hand.

This was a Fiend-Devil Covenant.

After absorbing Wang Cheng's payment, Gu Qing Shan actually learnt his Devil summoning technique!

As Gu Qing Shan looked at his Soul Points and the grey shadow on his hand, he couldn't help but mutter: "No wonder devils and fiends are willing to respond to such a summoning, this is basically wealth falling from the sky"

All of a sudden, a tiny sound could be heard from above the shuttle's wreck.

Someone was coming.

Shannu hurriedly asked: "Gongzi, what do we do now?"

"Hm? Hmmmm..."

As he said that, Gu Qing Shan dispelled the Devil summoning.

He crouched down in front of Wang Cheng's body and spoke apologetically: "I'm sorry, but I'll probably need to take something else from you"

Under Shannu's watchful eye, Gu Qing Shan took a hair off of Wang Cheng's head.

He grasped the hair and activated [Mystery of All Beings Equal]

The second Wang Cheng appeared.

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"Gongzi, are you going to impersonate him?" Shannu smiled and asked.

Gu Qing Shan looked at Wang Cheng's corpse and scowled: "Many people were involved in his ambush here, so if I simply leave right now, quite a few problems would occur that will be troublesome to deal with"

"Then what should we do?" Shannu asked.

"Can't you help me think of something?" Gu Qing Shan asked her back.

"Gongzi, you jest, such a complicated topic should, of course, be solved by you"

"What about you?"

"I'm only a sword, I'll do whatever gongzi orders me to"

"...hah"

"Why do you sigh, gongzi?"

"It's nothing, I'm just a bit mentally fatigued..."

The commotion outside the shuttle's wreck became louder.

"Gongzi, you need to think of something quick, otherwise we can only slash open a path"

Gu Qing Shan glanced at Shannu's calm and casual demeanor and thought of an idea.

"Shannu, you use the [Mystery] and turn into Wang Cheng"

"Ah? What about gongzi?"

“I’ll just be myself”

Shannu thought briefly and spoke: “I understand, gongzi wants to use your status as a member of the Justice Iron Fist Club to act like you’re protecting Wang Cheng”

“That’s not it” Gu Qing Shan smiled, “right now Barry and Kitty are still watching over my world, I won’t be able to call them here”

“But shouldn’t the name of the Iron Fist Club itself be more than enough to deal with this minor situation?” Shannu casually smiled and told him.

Gu Qing Shan took out his jet-black Shen Wei General armor, fully equipping it before putting the golden mask on.

His face disappeared behind the mask.

It was now that he told her: “Shannu, we might be able to rely on others sometimes, but most of the time, you’ll find that you can only rely on yourself”

“Why?”

“Barry has many enemies before his leg was fully healed, he couldn’t even step out for a single second and I’m currently within an unknown situation without the strength to back my claim up”

“Anyone that can be his enemy must be very strong, so if I use the name of the Club right now, those enemies will likely use me as a substitute to unleash their grudge, and they won’t even need to cause a commotion to do it”

“That’s why, don’t trust a renowned reputation to always bring you good things, because sometimes it can instead pull you into a greater spiral of danger instead”

“I understand, then what should we do now?”

Shannu was now very confused.

Gu Qing Shan answered: “If Wang Cheng was a Devil Summoner, I’ll now become the Devil that took his soul”

...

A few minutes later.

Outside of the wreck.

All scavenger members had returned.

On the path that led into the main ship, five muscular men were shouting and warning the scavengers to report and turn in what they found in the wreck without any tricks.

The leader of these men was a completely green man with a body that looked like it was made from solid rocks.

He was the second mate of the ship, a powerful Combatant that was completely loyal to the captain, so after the previous second mate was eaten by a void monster, he got to take the position.

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At this point, he was a bit annoyed as he told the two next to him: "Go and take a look at why the bunch on the second wreck haven't gotten out yet"

"Brother Yan, it's that thing..." his subordinate whispered.

The second mate scowled: "I know the reason, but we can't delay for too long. Boss doesn't care about the life of some nobody, but if we're too slow and make him wait, he WILL be angry— go give Zhang Yi a hand"

"Gotcha"

The subordinate answered as killing intent flashed from his eyes.

He nodded to two of his colleagues and prepared to go towards the second wreck.

At the same time.

Bam!

With a loud 'thud', the second wreck's door was kicked open.

Wang Cheng came out with a man wearing jet black armor and a golden mask in tow.

"Wang Cheng!"

Someone shouted from surprise.

"Hm, it's me, why are you all so surprised?" Wang Cheng casually spoke.

Without waiting for his subordinates to say anything, the second mate stepped out in front of everyone and approached him.

"Wang Cheng, where is your wife and Zhang Yi?" he asked in a low voice.

"Dead" Wang Cheng's tone carried a sense of indifference and coldness.

The second mate was briefly surprised.

But he reacted quickly.

I'm not sure how much Wang Cheng knows about this.

But if Wang Cheng heard something from Zhang Yi, he will definitely go find the captain.

In order words, I must eliminate Wang Cheng right here, otherwise, the captain will know that my people here were bribed by Zhang Yi to ambush him!

The second mate smirked and signaled with his hand: "Dead? According to the rules of the ship, killing your shipmates means death, all of you, kill him!"

With his order, the group all charged at Wang Cheng.

They already saw the situation clearly with the second mate's signal.

He wanted to take Wang Cheng's life!

And they didn't even need to think to know who they should side with in this situation.

The second mate's subordinates as well as the other groups of scavengers all attacked at once, preparing to take Wang Cheng's life.

They came from all directions.

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They had Wang Cheng surrounded, 360 degrees without a dead spot.

Wang Cheng smirked but didn't move.

The black-armored man next to him drew his sword.

The sword bypassed Wang Cheng while a cold, thin arc was drawn in the air.

Everyone had the same thought.

—*what is he doing?*

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At the very next second,

Weapons fell,

Incantations stopped,

Spells faded,

Fists stopped moving.

All of their attacks were halted on their way.

Everyone noticed that they have all lost control over their bodies, frozen in place without being able to move.

Being experienced, the second mate had immediately transformed and turned into a large rock monster.

Kih!

As the Chao Yin sword slashed him from far, the arc of lightning that it carried was diffused.

Gu Qing Shan was slightly surprised.

So the other party is able to instantly turn into rock.

Rocks aren't naturally afraid of lightning, and they aren't considered to be living beings, so he managed to dodge the combo attack of [Life Seeker] and [Severance].

How rare for this to happen.

However, the others weren't as lucky.

They all fell to the ground and fainted.

Gu Qing Shan purposefully didn't kill them, but only knocked them out.

As for the second mate——

Gu Qing Shan chuckled: "What an interesting form, it really does open one's eyes"

He raised his sword.

The second strike won't be so simple.

All of a sudden, a loud, hoarse voice shouted:

"Stop!"

—*hoh!*

An intense wall of wind was raised, quickly separating Gu Qing Shan from the others.

A man wearing a captain's hat stood across from Gu Qing Shan.

He has greasy, long hair combed all the way back, a hooked nose and a pair of thin sharp eyes that stared straight at him.

Gu Qing Shan recognized this man.

Through Wang Cheng's memories, he knew this man was the ship's captain, as well as the one everyone called 'Boss'.

The captain scowled as he glanced at the knocked out men on the ground and grunted: "Wang Cheng, what is the meaning of this?"

Wang Cheng coldly replied: "They wanted to kill me, so I retaliated"

The captain took another glance to see that none of them were wounded and calmed down a bit.

He pointed at Gu Qing Shan and asked: "Who's this guy?"

"Boss, I'm a Devil Summoner, of course he's the devil that I summoned" Wang Cheng answered.

The captain looked behind him.

Among his dozen or so subordinates, one of them stepped out and whispered to the captain: "That is a devil, and a Devil King as well"

The second mate took this chance to turn back into humanoid form and loudly declared: "Boss, Wang Cheng summoned a devil and killed both his wife and Zhang Yi, he violated the ship's rules!"

"Boss, not only did he violate the rules, he refused to admit it, so I ordered everyone to catch him" while explaining himself, the second mate looked at Wang Cheng and Gu Qing Shan with a grudgeful gaze.

Damn it!

Where did Wang Cheng manage to summon a devil and such a powerful one as well!

He shouldn't have been able to...

The captain's aura changed.

“Wang Cheng, the rules have been established from the very start, no one can kill their shipmates, you dare to violate my rules?” he spoke in a threatening tone.

Wang Cheng suddenly laughed and spoke: “Boss, they wanted to kill me first, I was only defending myself”

The captain froze.

He suddenly realized that this matter wasn't as simple as he thought.

The entire ship was currently watching them, if he couldn't resolve it fairly, a lot of things could go wrong later on.

“Damn it, Wang Cheng” the captain cursed, “whether it's you or anyone else, if they dare to pull the wool over my eyes, I'll guarantee they're going to end in the most terrible way”

He reached into his chest pocket and took out a small black bell.

“Wang Cheng, tell me everything again. I'll remind you to not lie, otherwise, the Funeral Bell will ring and I swear I'll make you regret it”

“Naturally” Wang Cheng casually said: “That bitch Bai Yu had an affair with Zhang Yi, bribed a lot of people to cover for them while they scheme to get rid of her husband, that's all there is”

The captain looked at the black bell in his hand.

It didn't ring.

The captain relaxed slightly.

So it was the truth, Wang Cheng killed them out of self-defense.

The captain fell into thought.

If it was self-defense, he didn't violate the rules.

“Very well, if it was a misunderstanding, we'll wrap things up here” the captain declared.

Suddenly, the devil standing by Wang Cheng suddenly laughed in a sharp but short tone.

This laugh was grating to the ears, causing everyone to feel slightly uncomfortable.

It was now that they remembered that there was a powerful summoned devil standing next to Wang Cheng.

This devil managed to knock out over a dozen people at once, if it weren't for Wang Cheng, they might have actually died instead.

Seems like this was Wang Cheng's true ace in the hole.

How ridiculous of Bai Yu and Zhang Yi to attempt to kill him without even finding out about this guy beforehand.

“Captain, my devil has something to tell you” Wang Cheng spoke.

“What is it?” the captain asked in a solemn tone.

“It said, just now the second mate tried to kill me, will the captain also let the second mate say a few words as well?”

Chapter 678

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The captain looked at Gu Qing Shan.

This supposed ‘Devil King’ is wearing jet black armor with a thick mist of black energy that comes through the joints and drifts upward.

The devil is also wearing a golden mask decorated with countless intricate runes that hides its face.

He could sense the power radiating from the devil’s body.

After trading blows just now, this devil has constantly maintained its peak state, with killing intent sharply converging, ready to attack without any regard for life at any moment.

This is a dangerous bastard.

Even more annoying than that is that this devil was summoned here through a contract.

Which means it can simply return to its world by invoking the Law of the contract.

If I cause it to be angry, this Devil King might ignore Wang Cheng’s payment entirely, kill my men and leave.

...I’m not going to let that happen.

The captain squinted his eyes extremely thin, appearing to be smiling.

He cleared his throat and spoke: “The second mate won’t specifically target someone, I can vouch for him on this”

Everyone around him was surprised.

Not because the captain was vouching for the second mate, but because the captain was explaining himself to the devil.

From a certain point of view, this was the captain’s compromise.

But the devil didn’t feel any of that and continued: “But Wang Cheng already accepted your ‘test’, why can’t the second mate as well?”

The captain froze.

No one on this ship had ever dared to question his authority before.

The captain’s gaze fell downwards, silently looking at Gu Qing Shan’s hand.

Gu Qing Shan was currently covered in full armor with one hand on his sword.

Tiny sparks of white-blue electricity were running across the sword.

...it can use Elemental techniques as well as sword techniques, I've never seen such a devil before. It was able to knock a group out with only one strike.

The captain was scowling ever so slightly.

—I can clearly tell this devil isn't particularly powerful, but why am I feeling so tense? Should I fight, or should I not?

The decision he made here could bring about two completely different situations.

He took a deep breath and quickly made his choice.

He spoke: "You damn devil, I—"

"Captain sir!"

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The second mate cut the captain off.

He suddenly came forward and spoke to the black bell himself: "I want to prove myself to everyone here; for the second mate of the ship have never taken any bribes, nor scheme to harm or kill any shipmates"

He declared.

The black bell remained silent.

It didn't ring.

Everyone cheered.

The second mate was speaking the truth!

He regained everyone's trust.

The captain relaxed his expression a bit as he glanced at Gu Qing Shan and turned to Wang Cheng: "See, on my ship, no one dares to violate my rules"

"Those two who schemed to kill you, even if you had died, when I find out the truth, I would have definitely avenged you!"

He was also speaking to the black bell.

And the black bell didn't ring again.

Everyone once again cheered.

After the captain and second mate both passed the test of the bell, the atmosphere returned to normal.

No one else appeared to be tense as everyone was smiling.

Indeed, the captain had always been someone worthy of their trust.

The captain would definitely maintain the rules and order on the ship.

As someone with absolute loyalty to the captain, the second mate would also never attempt anything against his own allies.

A crew like this was certainly worth them staying in.

Gu Qing Shan stood still and silently looked at the small bell before falling into speculation .

According to Wang Cheng's memories, this bell came from the Holy Church of Death, a commonly used artifact of Death called the Funeral Bell.

Whenever someone spoke in the Funeral Bell's presence, the bell would determine the truth of that person's speech through their soul and make a judgment.

The item was common because the Holy Church of Death frequently gifted these Funeral Bells to various forces of the Strife Zones.

First of all, through this artifact, they were able to expand the range of influence of the Holy Church of Death.

Secondly, whenever someone uses these bells, they would have to pay a not so inconsiderable fee to the Holy Church of Death.

Thirdly, whenever the bell was activated, it would record the events that happened where the bell was, relay it to the Holy Church of Death so that agents of the church could record the appropriate information.

Even though many organizations knew right away that this was a ploy by the Holy Church of Death, after some consideration, they would still accept this Funeral Bell.

Because as long as they had this bell, no one in their organization would be able to lie.

This was the ultimate threat.

As large inter-world organizations, the thing they wished for the most was nothing but stable internal affairs.

For countless years, no one has been able to deceive the Funeral Bell yet.

That was why everyone was relieved after the captain and second mate both got through the bell's test.

Wang Cheng also smiled in relief after a brief pause.

"Thank you captain, I can be assured now" Wang Cheng said.

The captain complained: "You damn brat, do you have any idea how much I have to pay the Holy Church of Death every time I use this bell?"

Wang Cheng just grinned.

At this time, a few people went out from the second wreck and whispered to the captain.

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The captain's wrinkled-filled face finally loosened.

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He declared: "Bai Yu and Zhang Yi betrayed me and attempted to kill a fellow shipmate, their personal belongings will now be confiscated!"

"After we finish this time's deal, I'll even divide their belongings between everyone!"

Everyone cheered again.

Not only did the captain swear to protect his own crew members, but he was also very generous!

"Wang Cheng, since you're the victim, you will receive the biggest portion" the captain squinted at Wang Cheng.

Wang Cheng grinned and spoke: "Thank you, captain"

The captain relaxes his hands and lightly ordered: "Everything is resolved now, you can dispel your summoning and get that damn devil out of here"

Wang Cheng paused briefly.

She quickly asked Gu Qing Shan what to do.

"Captain, sir, there's actually something else that I need to report to you alone" Wang Cheng said.

"Ah?" the captain raised his eyebrows.

He glanced at Gu Qing Shan, then at Wang Cheng.

The devil still hasn't left.

What is Wang Cheng trying to do?

After some hesitation, the captain spoke: "Second mate, you can go and take care of the rest here. Wang Cheng, come with me to the captain's room"

A few moments later.

Inside the captain's room.

Wang Cheng clearly reported everything that he heard.

The captain silently sat there.

His expression was dim and heavy.

Someone actually dared to pool the wool over the captain's eyes!

His current expression showed his inner fury very well.

"You mean to say that it was actually the first mate that colluded with Bai Yu and Zhang Yi to do this?" he asked.

"That's exactly what I'm saying" Wang Cheng nodded.

"What about the second mate?"

“Zhang Yi only managed to speak about the first mate and he already got killed by the excited devil, I’m not sure if there was anyone else, but the first mate was definitely involved”

The captain looked towards the devil: “Then why did you insist on questioning the second mate?”

“Smokescreen, we always like to use these cheap tactics to fool the enemy” the devil chuckled.

“You damn devil...”

Wang Cheng quickly spoke: “Captain, sir, I’ll pay for the cost of using the Funeral Bell”

Hearing that, the captain’s expression became a bit better.

He glanced at the black-armored devil and questioned Wang Cheng again: “So the reason why you still haven’t dispelled this summoned devil is because of the first mate?”

“Yes”

“Very well, I understand, if the first mate was truly up to something, he violated my rule, I’ll judge it fairly”

He pressed a button on the table and spoke: “Call the first mate”

The two of them waited for a few moments.

The first mate arrived.

On the ship, the first mate’s strength was only second to the captain.

Usually, the captain didn’t do anything in particular on the ship, so the first mate was the person with the most authority and control over the crew.

The captain’s strength was a mystery, no one really knew for sure how strong he truly was.

But everyone knew very well how strong and cruel the first mate was.

Does the captain intend to deal with the first mate right now?

Or did the captain call the first mate in to gang up on me?

While Shannu was recalling things from Wang Cheng’s memories to judge what to do, she instinctively became anxious.

The black-armored devil silently stood behind without reacting at all.

“Captain, did you need me for something?” the first mate respectfully asked.

The captain pointed at the bookshelf on the wall and spoke: “Get the 17th book on the 3rd row and give it to Wang Cheng— that’s my reward for him”

“Yes” the first mate answered.

He turned away and looked up at the shelf.

The 3rd row... 17th book...

The first mate was searching.

The captain glanced at the first mate's back.

Without a sound, he raised his hand, opened his palm, and made an action like he was holding and turning a doorknob towards the first mate from afar.

Cr-rack!

The first mate's neck was snapped.

The captain then clutched his hand tightly together and swung outwards.

Poosh!

Blood spew everywhere.

The first mate's head was twisted off his neck.

His corpse fell on the ground, making a dull 'thud'.

The second-in-command of the ship was killed without a sound.

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The captain pressed the button on the table again and ordered: "The first mate went against my rules and has been killed, get two men in here to sew his head back on and put his corpse on the deck, make sure that everyone sees it"

Two of his subordinates quickly arrived.

They bowed to the captain, then one took the first mate's head away while the other dragged his body outside.

The captain glanced at Wang Cheng, smiling again.

"How was that?"

"Thank you captain, for upholding justice for me"

"Are you assured now?"

"Very much, sir" Wang Cheng sincerely said.

"Hm, then go, remember, no one will ever break my rules"

"Understood, captain, sir"

Wang Cheng and the devil both left.

The captain silently stared at their backs.

"Oi, brat" he suddenly called out.

“Captain?”

“Dismiss your devil already, the crew is going to feel threatened”

Wang Cheng didn't answer, but the devil answered: “I need to escort him to his room for the contract to be considered complete”

Hearing that, the captain loosened his expression.

He nodded: “Fine, then go already, I don't want you scaring my men”

“After Wang Cheng is safe, then of course, I will” the devil answered.

Bam!

The door was closed.

They left.

The captain sat in silence for a few moments.

His fist unconsciously clenched tight, as if killing the first mate couldn't make his fury subside at all.

“Bastard...” the captain muttered in a low voice.

He suddenly took out a small box from underneath the table and searched for a coin inside.

This seemed to be a unique coin as the surface of it was completely flat and smooth without any carvings on it.

The captain blew a breath at the coin, waited until the border of the coin begin to vibrate slightly before calling to it: “Sorceress, I summon you”

Following his voice, a female figure appeared on the coin.

“What is it?” the figure asked.

“Sorceress, I need you to tell me a fortune”

“You know of my fee?”

“Of course”

“Very well, wait a moment, I will prepare the ritual”

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The female on the coin disappeared.

A few moments later.

The sorceress' voice came from the coin again: “State the matter in your heart that you long to know”

The captain spoke: “It's strange, I was clearly able to feel that my opponent was much weaker than I was, but my instinct was telling me not to fight him”

“Ah? That seems like quite a unique opponent”

The sorceress’ voice now seemed a bit interested.

As a pursuer of the origin of the mystic, she was always interested in anything that didn’t make sense.

The captain continued: “I now want to know if we were to really fight, would I be able to defeat the Devil King that Wang Cheng summoned”

“Wait a moment”

The other side went silent for a while.

As the captain felt more and more anxious, the sorceress’ voice came again.

“Now, toss the coin”

“And then?”

“If the coin lands on the side with your portrait, then you would have been the winner”

“Then what if it is the Devil King’s portrait?”

“Then you will have died”

“Only those two possibilities?”

“Do as I say first, I will be here to observe your results” the sorceress spoke.

The captain clenched his teeth and took the coin in his hand.

The sorceress’ face on the coin suddenly disappeared, leaving a smooth coin without any carvings once again.

The captain tossed it up.

The coin flew up high, flipping around itself again and again.

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Ting!

It fell on the table and bounced a few times.

— — —and stood up straight!

The coin squarely stood up on the table without any signs of falling to a particular side.

The captain opened his eyes wide, temporarily speechless.

“Ahahahaha!”

The sorceress couldn’t help but laughed.

“What is this?” the captain couldn’t wait to ask.

“How interesting, that Devil King was much weaker than you are, but if you had fought, the situation would have been a stalemate where neither sides could do anything against the other”

The sorceress then continued: “Hah, such a rare telling result would bring me good luck from the mystic beyond, so I won’t charge you this time”

“I look forward to your next visit”

After that, her voice went away.

She had left.

The only one left in the room was the captain, stunned in his seat.

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A few moments of silence.

He suddenly roared: “Despicable bastard!”

He pounded his fist on the table.

Everything on it was sent flying upwards before dropping down again on both the table and ground.

But the coin was still standing straight up without moving.

“No! I definitely won’t allow——”

The captain muttered in anger.

He stood up, quickly came to the wall and placed his hand on it.

All of a sudden, his expression turned strange.

“What the hell, did that Devil King notice something?”

“...Not good, I have to prepare a bit more”

He quickly mumbled to himself and quickly left the room.

He slammed the door behind himself.

The room returned to silence.

A few moments later.

Suddenly, the smooth coin on the table slowly fell to one side.

On the other side.

Gu Qing Shan and Shannu once again entered the wreck of the shuttle.

“Gongzi, why did we come here again?” Shannu asked.

“Because no one on the outside knew that when Bai Yu and Zhang Yi attempted to kill Wang Cheng here, they had succeeded and already told him about the first and second mate helping them”

Gu Qing Shan continued: “How ridiculous of that captain to pretend to use the Funeral Bell to prove the truth”

Shannu carefully thought about that: “Then that’s too strange, the ones who helped Bai Yu ambush Wang Cheng were surely the first mate and second mate, but the bell didn’t ring at all. Could there be something wrong with that Funeral Bell?”

“No, there was something wrong with the second mate” Gu Qing Shan told her.

Shannu was slightly shocked and asked: “How did gongzi conclude that?”

Gu Qing Shan asked her in return: “Do you still remember what he declared to the Funeral Bell?”

Shannu carefully thought about it and repeated: “He said—— I want to prove myself to everyone here; for the second mate of the ship have never taken any bribes, nor scheme to harm or kill any shipmates”

“Notice anything?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“...I didn’t” Shannu answered.

Gu Qing Shan helplessly explained to her: “He only said that the second mate didn’t do any of those things, but carefully made sure to avoid referring to himself”

Shannu suddenly realized and exclaimed: “It’s true! He only said that the second mate didn’t do those things, he never said he didn’t do them”

“Which means he definitely wasn’t the second mate” Gu Qing Shan muttered.

“Then who was he?”

“I don’t know yet, but I’m guessing he isn’t a person”

“Why so?”

“Because he managed to stop my [Life Seeker Severance]—— although the Earth Element can indeed counter my Lightning Element, but when my sword struck him, I felt a strange, indescribable feeling”

Gu Qing Shan sighed: “For now, the situation is too eerie and strange, the only remaining place that’s safe to hide is inside this wreckage”

“——so we’re going to switch our identities here”

As Gu Qing Shan said so, he took off his Shen Wei armor.

“Gongzi, it’s been a long time since you’ve acted this cautious” Shannu was in awe.

“There are an uncountable amount of living beings and Professions within the Strife Zones, as well as all sorts of void monsters. In such an unpredictable circumstance, not exercising caution wouldn’t get you very far”

As if she remembered something, Shannu scowled: “Right, gongzi still have at least two karmic adversities to go through, caution really is necessary”

Gu Qing Shan nodded.

He didn’t want to underestimate anything that could be related to an adversity.

He activated the [Mystery of All Beings Equal] and turned into Wang Cheng’s appearance.

Inside the wreckage of the ship, two Wang Cheng that looked exactly the same were standing across one another.

“Gongzi is... so I don’t need to impersonate Wang Cheng anymore?”

One of the two asked.

“Hm, I have a feeling that some sort of unimaginable change might occur very soon, so from this moment on, I’ll do it” the other Wang Cheng answered.

“That’s great!”

The first Wang Cheng sighed in relief and quickly transformed back into the graceful but aloof blue-dress girl.

Chapter 680

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

Gu Qing Shan turned into Wang Cheng and quickly returned to the main ship.

As soon as he came out from the wreckage, he saw the second mate standing at the entrance of the main ship, coldly looking at him.

The scavenging was already over.

So everyone had already returned to the main ship, only the second mate was still standing here.

As if he was waiting for someone.

Gu Qing Shan glanced at him, said nothing and just went back into the ship.

“Wang Cheng, where’s your devil?”

As he walked past him, the second mate couldn’t help but ask.

“It? The contract was over so it returned” Gu Qing Shan replied.

The second mate froze briefly before giving him a small pouch.

“This is your salary this month, everyone has already gotten theirs, only yours is left” he said.

“Ah, thank you, no wonder you waited for me here” Gu Qing Shan received the pouch and said.

He didn’t turn around and kept walking, eventually disappearing down the walkway of the ship.

The second mate stared closely at his back without moving.

A long while later.

The second mate muttered in a low voice: “Damn brat, finally dismissed his devil...”

With a sigh of relief, he appeared to be assured.

If Wang Cheng didn't have such a powerful Devil King guarding him, who would be afraid of that guy?

They made a mistake by not knowing Wang Cheng could summon a Devil King.

Otherwise, when fighting against a summoner, all he needed to do was not give the summoner enough time to chant his incantation.

As for how, within the narrow pathways of the ship, that was easily achievable.

While thinking, the second mate slowly went into the ship as well.

On another side.

Gu Qing Shan walked past the ship's public area.

He saw the first mate's corpse as well as the corpse of several others being hung there on display for all to see.

Some members of the ship's crew gathered here and loudly discussed among themselves.

"So it turns out Wang Cheng had accused the second mate wrongly, the first mate was the one that did this"

"I knew there was a reason why I didn't like the first mate"

"Hmph, he's always been so full of himself, doing whatever he liked. Now the captain finally discovered his handiwork"

"To help Bai Yu and Zhang Yi kill Wang Cheng like that, I wonder how much he got bribed?"

"It doesn't matter, he got what he deserved"

"In hindsight, the previous crew members who accidentally died might have been done by him as well"

Gu Qing Shan didn't come forward.

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He was only silently listening to everyone's discussions.

According to Wang Cheng's memories, there would occasionally be one or two people who died during missions.

But this was unavoidable, as living with such a dangerous job required people to take certain risks.

Just earlier today, the ship was suddenly attacked by void monsters, losing quite a few people in the process.

It was simply bad luck.

Gu Qing Shan's gaze passed through the first mate and looked at the other corpses.

According to the captain's announcement, those people were the first mate's accomplices, the ones helping the first mate arrange these hidden deals and betraying the captain's trust.

So according to the rules, these people also deserved to die.

But since that was the case, the ship's situation became a bit awkward.

A number of people died by the monster's attack, then a few more were killed because they betrayed the captain.

So now there weren't too many people remaining on the ship.

Fortunately, although the captain was strict, he only did that for everyone's well being, so the remaining members all felt assured.

Gu Qing Shan glanced over and over through the window of the ship to look at the space vortex outside. —that was a vastly endless space that connected every world in the 200 million World Layers, where countless fierce and scary void monsters lived and thrived, each civilization needed to follow the established routes in order to travel through this endless space to reach another world.

According to Wang Cheng's memories, to maintain the safety of a journey, at least 10 veterans working at once were necessary to pilot the ship.

But now that a majority of the ship's crew had died, there were barely 8 people left.

Seems like the ship will need to recruit more members once it reaches the black market.

Gu Qing Shan shook his head and left.

He returned to Wang Cheng's personal cabin.

He closed the door and opened the pouch he just got.

Cling, clang clang!

The metal coins fell on the table, making clear chimes that were easy to the ear.

These were green metal coins that had a certain bit of weight to them, not only were they very solid, they also contained secret magic runes to prevent forgery.

The head of the coins depicted a 6-armed monster, while the tail was a number [7] carved using the most commonly used language of the 900 million World Layers.

These were #7 coins.

In the Strife Zones, ranked by their monetary values, there were a total of 1001 types of numbered coins.

The higher the number, the more value they contained.

And among the 1001 types of coins, #7 coins weren't considered to be very valuable.

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—-you can't really expect someone doing a job like scavenging broken ships actually to make much money, can you?

The truly valuable and powerful flying transits weren't going to be found by normal void monsters.

And only people without money would ride on these low-quality, garbage flying transits that carried high risk.

The most common type of transit to run into accidents were these bottom-tier vehicles that transported poor people.

Which means the job of a scavenger that searches through the wrecks of these garbage really didn't pay much at all.

To depend on this job to make any sort of fortune was a daydream within a daydream.

This was also Wang Cheng's tragedy.

If he was only able to advance just one step further as a Devil Summoner, he would've been able to let go of this dead-end job and get a job that paid better.

But he no longer had the chance.

Gu Qing Shan silently sighed, stopped thinking about that and looked at Wang Cheng's payment.

All of them were now on the table, the same green #7 coins, about 40 pieces in total.

This was all of Wang Cheng's salary.

Gu Qing Shan went silent, then lightly tapped a spot in Wang Cheng's personal cabin according to his memories.

A small chest showed up.

He lifted the chest up and opened it on the table.

The chest was filled with #7 coins.

Gu Qing Shan smiled bitterly.

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Fine, I'm currently dirt poor without a penny to my name, so even though these coins are one of the lower valued ones, they still amount to a small fortune.

He took one of the coins and carefully observed it in his hand.

The 6-armed monster on the coin had noticed his stare.

It appeared to be extremely irritated, even trying to swing its arms at Gu Qing Shan in threat.

Below the depiction of the monster were two small lines of text.

[Six Claw]

[Small monster, characteristics: thick-skinned, low threat]

As Gu Qing Shan read these two lines of text, he couldn't help but smile sarcastically.

"Small monster, a low threat?"

He muttered.

——Gu Qing Shan already ran into this 6-armed monster when he had just left the First Zone.

At the time, this monster simply charged through the space vortex without minding any other creatures.

Gu Qing Shan saw with his own eyes how this monster devoured everything it wanted, the embodiment of 'unbeatable' in that place.

But it was still only #7, called a small monster and rated as being low threat.

According to Wang Cheng's memories——

There were a total of 1001 types of numbered coins in the Strife Zones, each of them depicting a different kind of monster.

And these monsters were also ranked according to their strength.

So the monster depicted on the #1 coin was the weakest.

While the strongest was depicted on the #1001 coin.

But it wouldn't be easy to run into such a creature.

Rumor has it that during the Age of Old, even the Old Gods had to fight for several years before they could finally overwhelm it and kill it.

The monster now only existed in legends, something that a normal person would never have a chance to gaze at—— not even through its depiction on the coin.

Within these 200 million World Layers, the majority of people would never even have a chance to look at the #1001 coins in their entire lives.

If a normal Professionalist were able to use a #500 or above coin, they would be able to ensure a life of luxury within the Strife Zones without ever worrying about money again.

Gu Qing Shan silently fell into thought for a while before sighing.

He put all the #7 coins back into the chest before putting it into his Inventory Bag.

As he finished, Gu Qing Shan's expression slightly twitched.

He took out a newspaper.

——the Spire Keeper Association newspaper that Kitty gave him before.

The very first thing that he saw was a large picture on the front page.

A towering spire that stood among the clouds was broken in half, slowly collapsing.

Line after line of text quickly appeared below the picture.

[Day of the Spire's destruction]

[An unspeakable horror had come! It came too quickly, beyond all expectations]

[The Tower of Knowledge created by the Old Gods have been destroyed]

[The Spire Keeper Association's casualties are immeasurable, they are currently taking their last stance]
[SOS! SOS! Requesting the help of all Lord-class and above Combatants throughout the 900 million World Layers!]

[This is a battle that will decide the survival of our entire 900 million World Layers, if we fail, it will become even more powerful. For the sake of your own survival, please join the battle at the world of the Spire Association!]

Gu Qing Shan held his breath as he read the news.

How did the situation become so serious?

This was completely out of my expectation.

That thing in God Institute, the creature with a face that was half-man, half-woman— what exactly is it?

What kind of creature, or power could possibly destroy the Tower of Knowledge that was made by the Old Gods in one fell swoop?

Can no one really stop it?

Gu Qing Shan was unable to take his mind off of it.

The news was already fully displayed, and he had finished reading through the newspaper.

But before he could put the newspaper away, another unexpected event had occurred immediately after.

The humanoid figure of light once again appeared before him.

To be exact, it had appeared in front of every living being in the Strife Zones.

With the solemnity of a divine being, the figure of light declared: 「 Announcement: The first group of followers to light their Tree of Divinity has appeared 」

「 The path to godhood has official opened 」

「 The Divine barrier of the Gods will soon be activated 」

「 The Strife Zones will be hidden away from the rest of the 900 million World Layers 」

「 From this moment onwards, anybody who leaves the Strife Zones will no longer be able to re-enter the Strife Zones! 」

Chapter 681

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

Along the lengthy flow of history, the most shocking and ground-breaking events always happen unexpectedly.

These events that could define history as well as change them were completely always unpredictable, very few could ever foretell them, and even less knew the entire truth behind the events as they happened.

The innumerable undercurrents were always hidden somewhere, affecting the flow of events; not even powerful beings the likes of Gods could fully control where things were headed.

The figure of light reappeared without any warning.

And no one could predict that it would make another announcement and new rule so quickly.

But 1 second before the figure of light made its announcement across the 200 million World Layers of the Strife Zones.

The entire Strife Zones went dark.

Countless blinding streaks of light appeared, each dragging a long illuminating trail behind all over the Strife Zones.

This looked a lot like a meteor shower.

But an immensely vast power was contained inside this shower, so much that no one could tell where this meteor shower arrived from.

Even the most powerful Combatants in the Strife Zones only knew that countless unknown things have ripped through the sky as they descend into the Strife Zones from an extremely distant place.

But what these things were, as well as how they came here, were a complete mystery.

Even the most well-known and most powerful clairvoyants weren't able to find where those meteorites had landed.

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That scene only lasted for a second.

One short second.

Exactly a single second.

Then the meteorites all disappeared, vanished, hidden away.

—-as if they never existed in the first place.

The Strife Zones returned to normal.

At this time, the figure of light's voice came.

It solemnly announced:

「 Announcement: The first group of followers to light their Tree of Divinity have appeared 」

「 The path to godhood has official opened 」

「 The Divine barrier of the Gods will soon be activated 」

「 The Strife Zones will be hidden away from the rest of the 900 million World Layers 」

「 From this moment onwards, anybody who leaves the Strife Zones will no longer be able to re-enter the Strife Zones! 」

Following its declaration, the Strife Zones completely vanished from within the 900 million World Layers.

This was the great Divine barrier set up by the seven Gods.

Its only function was to obscure the things hidden inside.

—-to hide the entirety of the Strife Zones.

No one knew what kind of thing the seven Gods were considering when they set up such a thing.

But it was likely that not even the Gods could predict that within the blink of an eye right before the Strife Zones were completely hidden, a meteor shower had gotten inside.

...

Back on the scavenger ship.

The captain carefully listened to the figure of light's declaration.

Even after the figure of light had gone away, he still didn't move an inch.

"Someone had already lit their Tree of Divinity!"

The captain sighed, his voice containing some sort of insuppressible emotion.

Indeed, lighting the Tree of Divinity means that they can learn the techniques and knowledge of the Gods— and someone had already managed to achieve that.

But what about me?

I still have to struggle to earn the necessary travel fees.

Even if the travel fees were enough, what about other preparations after reaching the Holy Church?

Even if lighting the Tree of Divinity doesn't cost anything, what about the resources to actually practice the techniques of the Gods?

There's nothing you can achieve in this world without money backing you up.

Never mind becoming a God, even maintaining the most basic pride and dignity of a Professionalist requires the support of ample amounts of money.

The captain lowered his head and went silent.

He clenched his fist, then let go, hesitated for a brief moment before clenching it again.

"It should already be time, the only threat left was Wang Cheng, but Wang Cheng already dismissed his devil..."

"Seems like I'll have to make the necessary preparations for concluding everything"

Everything I've prepared up to now, wasn't it to wait for this exact moment?

Now that the fruit is ripe, what else do I have to hesitate for?

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The captain clenched his fist tightly and made his decision.

On the other side.

Gu Qing Shan was standing inside Wang Cheng's cabin.

The newspaper in his hand had already displayed all of its text.

He didn't know anything about the sudden meteor shower that had appeared for a single second outside the ship— one that encompassed all of the 200 million World Layers of the Strife Zones.

But another paranormal phenomenon was happening right in front of him.

The newspaper in his hand suddenly went into flames.

Without giving time for him to even react, the sudden flame instantly burnt the newspaper black.

But it didn't turn to ash.

Instead it began to unroll itself in Gu Qing Shan's hand like a piece of cloth.

Gu Qing Shan's expression changed.

He already understood, this newspaper wasn't just a newspaper, it seemed to have some sort of other special function.

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This was something Kitty casually handed to him without drawing much attention to it.

Now that I think about it, if the newspaper wasn't as simple as it seemed, then Kitty's actions must've also had some other meaning.

Unlike her happy-go-lucky big brother, Kitty has always been a careful and meticulous person. Then, what exactly is this black cloth hidden under the newspaper?

Gu Qing Shan doubtfully thought.

A faint light began to blink on the outside of the black cloth.

This blinking light then scattered into a mist of faint and dim blinking lights.

This was quite a strange sight to behold.

While Gu Qing Shan was still confused, the War God UI suddenly lit up.

Lines of glowing text appeared on the UI.

[The outer seal of the coded black cloth has been removed]

[Discovered item: Blade Edge Pledge's coded black cloth]

[Grade: Unique item]

[Doomsday Chronicles: Blade Edge Pledge is one of the most mysterious organizations within the 900 million World Layers, no official records ever existed to tell of its exploits, only the most powerful Combatants know that it truly does exist]

[War God Skills: This coded cloth is a unique item used for Super Dimensional communication among a select few organizations, there are no skills that you can learn from it]

Gu Qing Shan quickly read through everything.

Without giving him time to think, a female voice came from the glittering mist that came from the black cloth.

[Who... is there?]

The voice was faint and weak, like the voice of someone already at the end of their rope, barely clinging on to their life.

Hearing this familiar voice, Gu Qing Shan couldn't keep calm.

He instantly asked: "Is that Yun Ji? Forecaster of Calamity, lady Serena?"

A wave of noises could be heard from the other side.

After a bit of time, these noises faded away.

The female voice came again.

[Gu Qing Shan? I was wondering why someone on our side would be so close, so it was you]
She breathed heavily and tried to speak: [...My wounds are too severe, I already can't move anymore. I can only send you my coordinates, if you don't have anything else crucial to do, come save me]

The light from the mist then began to gather onto the black cloth, then followed the cloth into Gu Qing Shan's hands before flowing into his Thought Sea.

Gu Qing Shan now knew her location.

"Wait for me, I'll come immediately!"

He loudly said.

Yun Ji replied: [I'm already close to death, but before I die I can try to tell you as much as possible, so come quick]

Apparently, it took the rest of her strength just to say those words, as her voice was completely cut right off after she finished speaking.

Gu Qing Shan paused briefly.

He pulled out a coordinates globe from the desk and seriously studied it.

According to Wang Cheng's memories, Gu Qing Shan quickly found Yun Ji's location on the globe.

Greyhan Black Market

Yun Ji is currently at Greyhan Black Market!

If these coordinates are correct, they are very close!

Gu Qing Shan then began to think of how to save her.

At this moment, he gave up all of his previous plans.

No matter what kind of problem or secret this ship has, it is already unimportant, the priority now is to save her!

Currently, the ship was already heading to Greyhan Black Market, but because of some possible

unexpected appearances of void monsters, the ship maintained a slow speed out of concern for safety and habit.

—-I need to get this ship to proceed at full speed!

After deciding, Gu Qing Shan immediately left his cabin.

He could tell that the captain was someone with an extreme thirst for wealth.

It should be enough to offer all of Wang Cheng's wealth to him— since all he was asking for is the ship to speed up a bit.

Gu Qing Shan quickly walked towards the captain's room.

At a certain point.

He suddenly stopped.

He felt his surroundings to be strange.

Gu Qing Shan tapped his Inventory Bag, summoning the full Shen Wei General armor and quickly equipped it.

Grabbing the void of space, the Six Paths Great Mountain sword was in his hand.

“Come out!”

Gu Qing Shan shouted.

But no one responded.

The entire ship was silent, not even an echo could be heard.

Gu Qing Shan released his inner sight and scanned the entire ship at once.

Nothing.

Everyone on the ship had disappeared.

Chapter 682

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

Gu Qing Shan looked around.

No sound could be heard from any part of the ship, not even a bit of chatter or footsteps.

It was like the entire crew vanished from the face of the world.

Even the corpses of the first mate and the others disappeared from the public area.

Through the window of the ship, some small-sized void monsters could be seen passing by occasionally.

But not a single sign of life could be found inside of the ship.

It had fallen into complete silence.

Gu Qing Shan put his golden mask on and headed for the captain's room with a sword in hand.

He kicked the door open.

There wasn't anyone inside either.

Gu Qing Shan paused briefly before heading to the control room.

No matter what kind of strange or fearful thing that happened here, he did not care.

The only thing he was concerned with was to quickly arrive at the black market to rescue an ally!

The door of the control room was tightly shut.

Gu Qing Shan didn't bother to check and just kept moving forward.

The Chao Yin sword appeared from the void of space, flew ahead and pointed itself at the door of the control room.

It thrust forward slightly.

———Secret Art, [Water Flow Severance]!

Boom!

The heavy metallic door was destroyed.

Gu Qing Shan walked in and took a glance at the multitudes of buttons on the dashboard.

Wang Cheng had quite a bit of experience living on this ship, but he didn't have the skills to pilot it.

Gu Qing Shan didn't hesitate for long.

He lightly touched the surface of the dashboard and walked from one side to the other.

Various notifications popped up on the War God UI one after another.

[You've touched the old-styled medium-sized tow and transport ship main control unit]

[You've touched the navigation globe]

[You've touched the speedometer]

[You've touched the stealth function switch]

[You've touched the thruster controls system]

[You've touched the void radar]

[You've touched the central processing power core controller]

...

[The above ship piloting devices has used the following skills:]

[Old-style medium-sized tow and transport ship piloting technique, stealth flying technique, stealth function control technique, speed control technique, radar reading technique, thruster control technique...]

[Comprehending the above skills will require 1376 Soul Points, do you want to expend the required Soul Points?]

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“Yes” Gu Qing Shan answered.

[Soul Points deducted, comprehension begun] the War God System replied.

One breath.

Two breaths.

Three breaths.

Gu Qing Shan let go of the sword in his hand, walked up to the dashboard and quickly operated it.

He first discarded all the shipwrecks in tow behind the ship, then put the ship to top speed as well as adjusting the stealth function to its maximum level.

—this way, the ship’s weight would decrease, but due to the increase in speed, the overall energy consumption would be greater.

Under normal circumstances, the captain would definitely not agree to let the ship proceed like this.

But Gu Qing Shan couldn’t care less about such expenditures.

The ship jerked slightly as its speed was greatly increased with a ‘bang’, speeding through the space vortex.

Suddenly, a voice came from behind Gu Qing Shan:

“I didn’t know you also knew how to fly a ship”

It was the captain’s voice.

At some point, he had been standing at the door to the control room.

Gu Qing Shan didn’t turn around and simply said: “I’m in a hurry”

The captain’s voice became lower as he spoke again: “But you’re using my ship”

“Hm, I know that; that’s why I’m paying for it”

Gu Qing Shan took out Wang Cheng’s chest of money and tossed it behind himself.

Clunk!

The chest fell on the ground between the two of them, spilling some of its green coins outwards.

As the captain stared at the scattered money on the ground, his eyes slightly glittered.

—first, he suddenly knew how to fly the ship, then he casually tossed a whole chest of coins away just like that, Wang Cheng’s actions up to this point had been completely out of his expectations.

“What are you using my ship for?” the captain tried probing him.

“To get to the black market quickly”

“And then what? Where are you heading after that?”

“That’s my personal business, it’s nothing worth talking about”

Gu Qing Shan still didn’t turn back and spoke as he kept piloting the ship.

He was monitoring the wind measurement device to catch an opportunity to speed up the ship further.

Yun Ji’s life is already like a candle in the wind, I have no time to waste here, I have to go as fast as I can!

The captain stared at the money on the ground for a while before glancing at Wang Cheng’s back.

“Wang Cheng, ah, Wang Cheng, I really can’t believe I’ve been underestimating you all this time”

While saying that, he raised his hand and pointed at Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan scowled.

This fool still wants to cause a commotion at this crucial point in time!?

He released his inner sight, went past the walls of the ship and randomly locked onto a wooden branch flying through the space vortex.

Divine Skill, [Shadow Shift]!

Gu Qing Shan switched places with the wooden branch.

He appeared where the branch was in the space vortex while the wooden branch suddenly appeared in the air where he stood.

At the very next split second.

[Shadow Shift], again!

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Gu Qing Shan switched places with the captain.

He appeared inside the cockpit while the captain was thrown out into the void of space.

Gu Qing Shan’s figure blinked and returned in front of the control dashboard.

Just in time for the branch to hit the ground.

In not even a breath’s worth of time, the strongest person on the ship – the captain – was thrown out of the ship just like that.

Gu Qing Shan continued to pilot the ship.

He didn’t move his focus away for a single second, completely focused on piloting the ship to reach the black market as soon as possible.

A few dozen seconds later.

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A heavily breathing voice came from the door to the control room.

“Wang Cheng, who exactly are you!?” the captain furiously shouted.

“You don’t need to know that, stop prying and stop bothering me” Gu Qing Shan was still focused on the dashboard and casually answered.

The captain paused briefly before suddenly laughing in a frenzy.

“Ahahaha! You are definitely not Wang Cheng!”

“I knew it! There was no way Wang Cheng could summon a Devil King!”

He mumbled to himself: “With such a miraculous Spatial technique, you must’ve done quite a lot of things”

“For someone this strong to be so careful, you must be avoiding something”

“I’m guessing you must be similar to me”

“Either you’re an infamous wanted criminal on the run, or you must’ve done a big job and needed to hide away, so you stowed away on my ship”

As he said so, the captain’s eyes changed.

He appeared a bit excited and began to move his fingers: “You really are impressive, unfortunately, you came onto MY ship”

“And we’re currently moving through the space vortex”

“So whatever YOU possess is going to be MINE!”

He placed his hand on the door frame and suddenly vanished.

The ship went completely out of Gu Qing Shan’s control.

The entire ship slowly grinds to a halt before slowly gliding along with the currents of the space vortex.

At the same time, the crew members stepped out from the metallic walls one by one.

Their expressions were cold, their movement stiff and awkward, exactly like what you’d expect of zombies in the apocalypse.

“Why did you have to force my hands”

Gu Qing Shan sighed and shook his head.

The Chao Yin sword flew out and slashed each of the several dozen crew members here once each.

Clang clang clang clang clang!

Sparks of lightning flew everywhere.

The crew members were forced to take a step back with a slash mark each on their bodies, but they weren’t stunned by [Severance].

Their movements weren’t restricted at all.

If it was just the second mate alone like before then it would’ve been understandable.

But none of them were affected by [Severance]

This caused Gu Qing Shan to be a bit surprised.

The captain's voice became excited and cruel: "If this was any other place, maybe I would've considered your offer, but this ship is my turf, my world, I'm definitely not losing to you!"

"Come, fake Wang Cheng, didn't you have a really powerful devil!?"

"I know you Devil Summoners well, I know the exact process you need to go through for summoning a Devil, and I can guarantee you that you won't have a chance to complete it!"

While he shouted, the crew members already charged forward.

They surrounded Gu Qing Shan and attacked.

Gu Qing Shan's gaze became sharp.

Sha!

The Six Paths Great Mountain sword was swung.

A faint blue sword phantom appeared, drawing a perfect crescent arc in the air.

All the crew members were sliced apart by the [Crescent Slash]!

Immense sword-infused wind lingered, blowing the severed limbs towards the wall with constant dull 'thuds'.

The bodies fell to the ground, but no blood was spilt.

Soon enough, the bodies disappeared altogether.

Various defensive items and armors scattered all over the ground.

As Gu Qing Shan stared at the broken items on the ground, he suddenly realized.

No wonder [Severance] wasn't able to restrain them.

Their main bodies were actually these controlled items!

The captain went silent briefly, but quickly chuckled again: "How impressive, but how long can you actually keep this up?"

The items slowly sunk into the ground of the ship and disappeared.

A short moment later.

More crew members appeared.

This time, their eyes were a lot more spirited and their movements were much more flexible.

"You can never kill all of my men! The more you kill, the stronger they become!"

The captain laughed.

Gu Qing Shan completely ignored the captain's mocking laugh.

He simply put his hand on the ship's dashboard and glanced at the text that appeared in front of his eyes.

Lines of glowing text quickly appeared.

[Discovered item, Ship Puppet]

[This item has used the following skills: Metal Fusion (Advanced), Soul Puppet Manipulation (Intermediate)]

[Metal Fusion (Advanced): You can fuse yourself together with metallic objects, at the same time use your thoughts to control metal]

[Soul Puppet Manipulation (Intermediate): You can use your soul's power to control your puppets to fight]

[Detected that your soul have been released, you may directly comprehend the aforementioned techniques]

[Through learning these techniques, you will gain the Profession of Metal Puppeteer]

Gu Qing Shan was slightly surprised.

Then he quickly understood, the captain was a Metal Puppeteer.

The second mate from before as well as all the crew members right here were all non-living objects and items that he made into puppets.

Not just that, even the ship itself was fused with him—— of course, this must've taken a lot of effort.

If I didn't know that the captain had fused with the ship and stayed here to fight with those puppets, the situation will only become more and more dangerous.

No wonder the captain was so confident that he would be able to win against me

But now...

Gu Qing Shan grabbed the Six Paths Great Mountain sword and infused it with spirit energy.

White-blue arcs of lightning came from the Six Paths Great Mountain sword, manifesting as a bright sword phantom.

The captain laughed mockingly: "Ahahaha, what are you trying to do? You want to fight me? Unfortunately, you're never going to find me!"

Without saying a word, Gu Qing Shan stabbed the Six Paths Great Mountain sword straight into the hull of the ship.

The entire ship shook.

Normally, due to the environment it needed to traverse, a ship like this was always sturdier than normal.

And since the ship had fused with the captain, both it and the captain's defenses must have increased quite a bit.

Unfortunately...

This sword had the ability to break Laws.

No matter if it was [Metal Fusion] or [Puppet Manipulation], neither of them was any good against the Six Paths Great Mountain sword.

So this strike actually could actually hurt him.

Gu Qing Shan pulled his sword out.

The ship shook again.

The captain spoke with a lot more calm in his voice: "Hmph, to randomly attack the ship when you can't find me, what a fool"

Gu Qing Shan kept silent and infused his spirit energy again.

This time, a more intense sword phantom manifested on the Six Paths Great Mountain sword.

The captain's voice quickly came again.

This time, his tone was a lot more hurried: "Oi, I know we're fighting here, but this ship is just a flying vehicle, you don't need to——"

Before he could finish, Gu Qing Shan once again stabbed the hull of the ship with all his power.

This time, the ship shook considerably more, as if it was going to fall apart at any moment now.

The crew members all lost control of themselves and collapsed.

A faint scream could be heard coming somewhere else on the ship.

Gu Qing Shan casually grinned and spoke: "Your mouth says 'no', but your body is clearly telling me 'yes'"

An even more intense sword phantom manifested on the sword.

Chapter 683

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

Glistening lightning snakes slithered along the blade of the autumn-like blue steel sword.

Gu Qing Shan raised his sword again, acting like he was about to stab it.

The ship suddenly trembled.

The devices on the ship's control dashboard returned to normal.

And it once again picked up speed.

There would be only one reason for this to happen.

——the captain did not dare to endure that cruel attack anymore and de-fused himself from the ship.

He had retreated.

Gu Qing Shan let go of the sword, letting it hover in the air.

He turned around, quickly operated the control units on the dashboard, and controlled the ship to fly forward faster.

Soon enough, the ship reached its maximum speed.

If they kept going like this, in just 6-7 more minutes, the ship would reach Greyhan Black Market.

A few breaths of time later.

The door of the control room opened.

The captain showed up again.

This time, a few patches of blood could be seen on his clothes, not to mention cold sweat dripping all over his face, a terrible appearance.

“You despicable fake, how did you find out?”

The captain spat out some blood and begrudgingly questioned him.

Gu Qing Shan reached out with his hand and lightly flicked the Six Paths Great Mountain sword.

Receiving his order, the Six Paths Great Mountain sword flew out of the control room and out of sight.

Gu Qing Shan then replied: “I’ve travelled through billions of worlds for countless years, I can tell that you were a Metal Puppeteer at a single glance”

The captain angrily shouted: “Bullshit! I’m the first ever person to combine [Metal Fusion] and [Soul Puppet Manipulation] into one, when the hell did I ever run into you!”

Gu Qing Shan paused slightly.

—so he was a Profession founder!

No wonder the Profession Committee’s encyclopedia is only growing every year.

It turns out even an old man who picks up trash in the Strife Zones can create a completely new Profession...

While thinking that, Gu Qing Shan couldn’t help but felt a bit of respect.

“Seriously, just stop here, I’ve already paid you for using your ship, I’ll leave immediately after we reach the black market”

“From now on, we don’t owe each other anything, and there’s no grudge to be held”

Gu Qing Shan said.

The captain went silent.

This man is too eerie, he’s clearly so weak that he isn’t a match for me.

But he can see through my abilities.

Wait a minute—

Maybe he can only see through the ability of others, but his true fighting abilities aren’t really that

strong?

In hindsight, I'm only hurt because I was overconfident.

Damn it!

He must have held some sort of secret.

Should I or should I not risk it...

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While the captain was hesitating, his gaze fell to the ground.

Towards the chest of money Gu Qing Shan threw out.

This was a chest full of #7 coins.

That's right, he doesn't seem to care at all about a chest full of money.

What kind of person doesn't care about money at all?

Even without turning around, Gu Qing Shan was observing the captain with his inner sight.

So he quickly understood what the captain was thinking through observing his gaze and expression.

Gu Qing Shan silently sighed.

While piloting the ship, he told him: "It's fine even if I tell you, I'm actually a novice in the Strife Zones. I'm only heading to the black market to find a friend, so I don't have any money with me"

Thanks to the ship flying at full speed, they were already very close to reaching the black market.

"A novice? You're telling me you're a novice who just came into the Strife Zones?"

The captain smiled sarcastically and spoke: "A novice who can see through a new Profession that I've been hiding for many years?"

"A novice who doesn't even care about a chest full of money?"

The captain's voice became a bit hoarse as he spoke full of emotions: "Only after reaching my age you can really understand a certain thing. That is as long as people can think broad-mindedly while they're alive, they will find that there aren't that many things that are worth caring about"

"Well now, you didn't strike me as such an open-minded person at all" Gu Qing Shan praised.

He checked the navigation globe.

Soon.

I'll be there soon.

I need to stall for just a little bit longer.

The captain shook his head and continued: "Of course, this is built on a crucial premise, that is you must have enough money— as long as you have money, anything else is insignificant and can be ignored"

"...I retract my praise of you" Gu Qing Shan replied.

The captain had been stalling for so long most likely because he was accumulating power, to silently prepare some sort of spell.

He smirked: "You can afford not to care about this chest of money because you've definitely seen more money before! Because you are wealthier than you appear!"

"Did you know? The way you tossed the chest just now, that casual act was exactly like that of the richest bunch of people"

"You're completely wrong, that's not the case at all" Gu Qing Shan immediately denied it.

"Stop acting! Your manners, your conducts are exactly the same as those legendary Bramble Birds!" the captain grunted.

"... Maybe... I got influenced by a bad habit, but I really don't have any money" Gu Qing Shan tried to explain.

"Only a corpse doesn't lie" the captain shouted.

His spell was finally complete.

Oom—

The ship suddenly broke apart.

Gu Qing Shan was thrown out into the space vortex.

Behind him, the ship once again gathered to form a giant made completely out of metal.

This metal giant looked exactly the same as the captain.

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It opened its mouth and spoke full of killing intent: "You are the first person to be weaker than I am, but was still able to hurt me"

"Your wits and abilities are worthy of me using my most powerful form against you"

"Come, fight this old man!"

"This will be the most glorious battle of our lives because one of us will definitely die here!"

"Last man standing gets it all!!!"

The giant stood in the void, shouting full of fighting spirit.

He had prepared for a battle to the death!

—but across from him, the man who impersonated Wang Cheng didn't care at all.

The man took a look at a piece of cloth in his hand, glanced upwards, and muttered: "Not too far... let's hope I'm there on time"

The giant stop.

"Did you not hear what I said?"

The giant angrily questioned him.

Gu Qing Shan didn't bother to react to him and turned away, flying towards the black market.

Like a streak of light, he was flying through the space vortex at unimaginable speeds.

And then.

He went away.

Yup...

He really did.

The giant froze on the spot: "..."

"You damn motherfucker!!!!!!!!!"

The giant roared.

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It turned back into a ship, gathering the maximum power possible to fly forward at full speed.

"Aaaaaaa, despicable brat! I'm going to chop you to pieces!"

The ship pursued Gu Qing Shan.

Despite it only being a medium-sized towing ship, it was still a product of the Strife Zones, after countless modifications and improvements, it was a ship with a considerably powerful engine.

Not to mention it was also being reinforced by the captain's [Metal Fusion] and [Puppet Manipulation].

At its current speed, it would definitely catch up to Gu Qing Shan.

The ship was flying forward at full speed!

After just one minute, the captain had already discovered that brat's figure in the space vortex.

I'm catching up!

The captain was grinding his teeth so hard it could shatter.

He manipulated the ship, making it speed forward again with a loud 'boom'!

All of a sudden, the sound of emergency alarms came from the ship.

At the same time, the booming of the ship's engine clearly became weaker.

The ship slowly grinded to a halt.

Next to Gu Qing Shan, a blue-dress girl appeared.

Earlier on, after the captain de-fused himself from the ship, Gu Qing Shan had ordered her to leave for this reason.

The blue-dress girl tapped her Inventory Bag and took out a thin and long escape pod--- the best one on the ship that was completely refueled.

Shannu spoke: "Gongzi, aside from this escape pod, I've done as you ordered and dismantled all of the ship's fuel cells, putting them into the Inventory Bag"

"Well done"

Gu Qing Shan climbed onto the escape pod and began to start it up.

“Bastard! Don’t you dare run!”

The captain roared again.

He leapt off the ship, and headed towards them.

Gu Qing Shan quickly activated the escape pod and inputted the coordinates.

The escape pod gave off a loud boom before shooting off towards the far space ahead.

Shannu stood still.

She held both the Six Paths Great Mountain sword and Chao Yin sword in hand to receive the captain.

“So you wanted to fight?”

She coldly spoke.

Countless overlapping sword images came from the two swords, completely surrounding the captain.

Bam—

Bamm—

After a few short but fierce exchanges, the two of them took distance from each other.

As the captain glared at Shannu, then at the direction that the escape pod had disappeared to, he knew that he wouldn’t be able to catch up this time.

He furiously cursed: “Coward, you don’t even have the will to fight me!”

“That’s where you’re wrong” Shannu coldly replied.

“Of course I’m not, he already ran away, what else could it be?” the captain grunted in a low voice.

“Just because you wanted to fight, gongzi has to fight you?”

“My gongzi is a busy person, he doesn’t have time to be dawdling here with you” Shannu shook her head and spoke, bored: “This may hurt your self-esteem but— what worth is there in fighting you?”

As soon as she said that, she disappeared in front of the captain.

At an extremely far distance ahead, she briefly reappeared before disappearing again.

After three times of that instantaneous transportation, she went completely out of sight.

The only person left in the space vortex, stunned and speechless, was the captain.

Chapter 684

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

Let’s rewind time back a bit.

As Gu Qing Shan was hiding in the ship's wreckage and got summoned by Chen Wang.

On another side.

Outside of the Strife Zones.

The world of the Spire.

An unprecedentedly tragic battle was coming to its end.

Oom—--

At the far end of the earth, the giant spire that connected heaven and earth was crashing down.

The Old Gods' Tower of Knowledge was destroyed!

A sharp, high-pitched female voice echoed across the entire world: 『 Living beings created by the Gods, you have no idea what true despair really is 』

A frenzied male voice continued: 『 Your only value is the nutrients hidden in your souls! 』

A hyper-pitched, extremely high decibel chanting voice came from a unified voice between the male and female voices: 『 『 Souls! Sacrifice your souls to me, aaa—--—- 』 』

With an ear-piercing screech, the monster stood at the very center of the battlefield and opened its mouth.

Every person currently locked in battle suddenly collapsed.

Their souls came out from their bodies sucked into the monster's mouth.

Countless souls on the battlefield were flying towards the monster.

The only ones who weren't afraid of having their souls sucked away were the people of God Institute, as the rest fell into a terrifyingly desperate situation.

Even Lord-class Combatants who were thought to be invincible in the 900 million World Layers were unable to do anything against this.

They shook off their enemies from God Institute to attack the monster with their most powerful attacks.

But none of their attacks did anything.

The monster simply stood there, unscathed as it continued to suck everyone's souls away.

Even quite a few Lord-class Combatants were unable to resist this suction and got their souls sucked right out from their bodies, going into the monster's mouth.

While those who could resist it fell into a different sort of danger.

With every passing second, their bodies were being attacked with an intense destructive force.

In just a few moments, their bodies will have been destroyed by the invisible power, leaving their souls no place to stay.

At that point, their souls would no longer be able to resist the monster's suction, getting pulled in and being devoured whole.

Fewer and fewer survivors were left on the battlefield with every passing moment.

The end of the 900 million World Layers was already in sight.

All of a sudden, a deep blue light that seemed almost like an ocean covered the entire battlefield.

Under the shine of this deep blue light, everyone's souls were suddenly let free.

The monster's soul suction was cut off.

『 「 Who! Who dares to interfere with my feast!? 」 』

The male and female voices angrily roared in unison.

The remaining survivors on the battlefield shouted in surprise.

"Lady Darksea!"

"Lady Darksea, you're here!"

"We're saved!"

"Please command us in this battle!"

When she heard everyone's voices, a deep sigh came from the endless void.

A sound quickly came into the ears of every survivor here: 「 I will bring you into the Strife Zones, as the Divine barrier that the seven Gods had set up there will soon be activated, hiding the entire Strife Zones away 」

「 Do not leave the Strife Zones, because only the Strife Zones of the 900 million World Layers will temporarily be safe! 」

「 You all must conserve your strength, live, and find a way to deal with it 」

Washed by the deep blue light, a layer of ice quickly formed around the bodies of everyone here.

This ice froze all of them and then——

The ice crystals flew upwards and vanished without a trace.

The monster silently watched as this happened.

It had attempted several times but found itself unable to stop this divine technique.

Only after it had ended did the monster look deep towards a certain place in the void of space.

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The monster's female voice laughed loudly before slowly asking: 『 Where did those people go? 』

Silence.

No one answered her.

But the female voice sounded even more triumphant: 『 For me to not be able to stop these living beings from escaping, I presume it must be a Divinity— how unexpected, besides those seven Gods, a Divinity still remains here that hasn't escaped the 9.9 billion World Layers 』

The male voice spoke excitedly: 「 If you still haven't escaped, then your end is already set in stone! 」

They both roared at once: 『 「 You won't escape, your fate has reached its end! 」 』

Within the endless deep blue light, a female voice sighed.

She spoke: 「 Today I will die, but not by being devoured by you 」

As she spoke, the entire world began to crumble.

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...

On the other side.

All remaining Combatants were sealed inside a frozen layer of ice, quickly traversing through countless worlds to reach the Strife Zones.

The ice crystals fell like a sudden meteor shower that quickly scattered and vanished among the 200 million World Layers of the Strife Zones.

The meteor shower ended in just the blink of an eye.

A second later.

The figure of light slowly echoed across all worlds of the Strife Zones.

It solemnly announced:

「 Announcement: The first group of followers to light their Tree of Divinity has appeared 」

「 The path to godhood has official opened 」

「 The Divine barrier of the Gods will soon be activated 」

「 The Strife Zones will be hidden away from the rest of the 900 million World Layers 」

「 From this moment onwards, anybody who leaves the Strife Zones will no longer be able to re-enter the Strife Zones! 」

The entire Strife Zones completely vanished from the 900 million World Layers.

No one else could find the missing 200 million World Layers anymore, losing all previous forms of traversal to and from those worlds.

At this time, inside the Strife Zones.

One of the countless frozen blocks of ice had traveled through the space vortex directly towards the world of Greyhan.

Around the ice, countless mystical divine runes appeared.

—these divine runes would ensure that the ice crystals will not be interfered with or discovered by any power.

Without a sound or warning, the ice went through the atmosphere of the world and landed in a secluded desert within Greyhan world.

The ice crystal quickly buried itself into the ground, surrounded by darkness.

A while later.

A female voice came from inside the ice.

“Blade... Edge... Pledge”

Oong!

An invisible wave spreads from this world outwards.

Inside the darkness underground.

The female voice coughed uncontrollably as if that incantation just now drained all of her powers.

After a moment of wait, she struggled to speak: “Who... is there?”

A worried voice came out.

[Are you Yun Ji? Forecaster of Calamity, lady Serena?]

This was Gu Qing Shan’s voice.

...

Time quickly passed.

Greyhan’s world.

It wasn’t morning yet, so this was currently the darkest hours of the day.

Far in the sky, the sound of flapping wings suddenly came.

A single bird dashed through the darkness, falling straight down from the sky.

Not a single bit of aura or presence came from this bird, no matter what method you tried to use to sense it, you would get the same results.

That this was a normal bird.

While flying straight down, the bird was still flapping its wings.

—-it was still attempting to fly even faster downwards.

At a certain point.

When the falling bird had almost reached the ground.

It suddenly vanished.

A man in jet black armor wearing a golden mask appeared instead.

Hovering in the sky, the man stared at the vast desert below him.

He flashed, disappeared where he stood and reappeared directly on the ground; a large distance away from before.

With a black cloth in his hand, the man's inner sight quickly expanded and locked onto the location.

He quickly ran up and sat down in front of a sand dune.

He formed a hand seal.

Hoh!

His spirit energy manifested as an intense gust of wind that blew the sand and gravel in front of him away.

The blue ice crystal appeared in front of him.

Inside the ice was a beautiful woman who was bloodied all over, her eyes barely opened, seemingly fallen into a coma.

The wounds on her body were terrifying, her aura was also weak that you could feel that she was barely hanging onto life.

If it weren't for the power in the blue ice constantly maintaining her vitality, she would've already died right there.

Chapter 685

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

Some transparent divine runes could occasionally be seen manifesting around the ice crystal.

Within the ice, Yun Ji was currently in a deep state of unconsciousness, unable to tell Gu Qing Shan anything.

But when Gu Qing Shan showed up at the ice crystal, a pre-arranged spell was triggered.

A faintly glowing black dot of light flew out from between Yun Ji's eyebrows, going through the ice and stopping in front of Gu Qing Shan.

After thinking for a bit, Gu Qing Shan received the black dot of light with his hand.

The black dot was immediately absorbed into his hand and followed it straight into his Thought Sea.

Yun Ji's voice sounded into his ears.

"Gu Qing Shan, I'm about to fall unconscious, so before that, I will record everything here. When you get here, whether or not I'm still alive, I'll still be able to tell you everything"

Her voice slowly faded.

A complete series of images appeared in Gu Qing Shan's Thought Sea.

It detailed what happened after he and Ning Yue Chan left the 900 million World Layers alliance world.

Xie Dao Ling received Yun Ji's plush doll and was turned into a little girl.

It seemed like she had accepted their suggestion and was going to remain in Shen Wu world without leaving.

Following that, Yun Ji and Wang Chen as well as the other Lords participated in a top-brass meeting of the 900 million World Layers alliance.

During the meeting, some suggested helping the Spire, others suggested that they should observe and probe them first, a few even suggested that they should make the preparations to retreat after probing them in consideration of the automatic machine gun's strength and death.

After voting, the 900 million World Layers alliance decided to dispatch a squad of elites led by Lady Darksea.

And then, the tragic war.

It was a completely one-sided battle.

No one was able to do anything against the monster of God Institute.

Once it began to suck in their souls, it easily destroyed the Spire as well as the allied army.

The entire war headed to its end.

Yun Ji, Wang Chen and everyone else was one step away from death, but luckily they were saved by Lady Darksea at the very last moment.

Lady Darksea interfered with the monster's soul feast and brought all the remaining Lord-class Combatants into the Strife Zones.

The images ended here.

Gu Qing Shan closed his eyes and slowly watched through them all.

At first, when he saw Xie Dao Ling being turned into a little girl, he couldn't help but chuckled.

But as the images quickly changed to that of the war, he felt heavier and heavier as he watched on.

— that monster was very strange.

No matter what kind of attacks they used, none of them managed to hurt it.

Gu Qing Shan opened his eyes and fell into thought.

"Lady Darksea... please don't die..."

He muttered.

As Shannu had said, during the novice qualification test, the lady once told me something. Perhaps she knows something about me that I don't? Unfortunately, I have no way to find her now.

The scale and severity of that war had gone far above Gu Qing Shan's understanding.

From what he saw during the last few images, no one was left to help Lady Darksea.

Gu Qing Shan had no information to try and predict what would happen next.

But to Gu Qing Shan, the current key point was that—

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Shifu had left the 900 million World Layers and returned to the Scattered world without any intention of leaving any time soon.

Thinking that, Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but feel grateful to Yun Ji.

Even Lady Darksea couldn't stop that monster.

In the 900 million World Layers alliance, there should be a few Combatants who were at the same level as Lady Darksea, taking the highest positions of power, but it was likely that they wouldn't be able to stop that monster just like Lady Darksea.

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After this war, it was likely that the 900 million World Layers alliance would have to retreat.

Ironically, the originally dangerous Scattered worlds were actually safer compared to the 900 million World Layers during these unique times.

Shifu should be safe.

Which means, for now...

Gu Qing Shan stared at the ice crystal and lightly reached his hand out.

He placed his hand on the surface of the ice.

Lines of notification popped up on the War God UI.

[Item: Divine Power Frost Crystal]

[Note: This is the condensed form of Divine Power crystalized through the use of Laws]

[Doomsday Chronicles: Divine Power Frost Crystal is a Secret Craft unique to Divinities, only appeared a few times during the toughest moments of history for mortals, used to protect the lives of living beings] (1)

[To check the related historical events, please spend 1000 Soul Points]

At this point, the notifications suddenly stopped.

Following that, the buttons and icons below the UI, including ones that he hadn't unlocked, all turned grey.

Only the [War God Skills] icon was glowing.

It shined with divine light, slowly drifting upwards to the center of the UI.

The War God System's cold and mechanical voice spoke.

[Discovered Divine Secret Craft]

[Unique choice appeared]

[The System must inquire the following:]

[Would you like to upgrade War God Skills, allowing the range of skills you can learn to include those of divine beings?]

Gu Qing Shan immediately answered: "Of course"

[The System has accepted your will, preparing to upgrade War God Skills to allow you to comprehend Divine-grade techniques – Divine Crafts]

[Now, please prepare 1 million Soul Points to facilitate the upgrade of War God Skills]

1 million Soul Points!

Gu Qing Shan sighed.

I currently only have 73,000 Soul Points.

I was actually confident that this amount of Soul Points would be more than enough for any situation.

Who would've thought, just getting the ability to learn Divine Crafts required 927,000 more Soul Points.

What an unprecedented astronomical number.

However—

The entire Strife Zones are currently rushing in a frenzy to enter the path to Godhood.

I'm not a follower, so if I need to fight against those who have lit their Tree of Divinity from now on, I'd be at a severe disadvantage if I didn't have more powerful skills.

So upgrading [War God Skills] is a must.

Besides that, there are a few secrets hidden in here.

To be able to use a large-scale [Divine Power Frost Crystal] on every Lord on the battlefield at the time, Lady Darksea's identity was quite clear.

She must have been a Divinity!

Even if she wasn't, she would be an existence close to that of a divine being.

If she really was a Divinity, and she was concealing herself all these years within the 900 million World Layers alliance—

—then what is her goal?

Gu Qing Shan silently thought about this for a brief moment.

From her actions, it was clear that she stood on the side of living beings, and even saved quite a few Combatants at a crucial moment.

Gu Qing Shan thought as he asked: "I can stop the upgrade for now, gather enough Soul Points while I think more about this?"

[Naturally, to trigger the upgrade for War God Skills, you must have 1 million Soul Points, as well as allowing the System to detect the existence of any Divine Craft]

Gu Qing Shan placed his hand on the ice crystal again and asked: "Like this?"

[Correct, the ice crystal contains a Divine Craft, so it will fulfill the conditions for upgrading War God Skills]

"Understood, I'll quickly gather the necessary Soul Points"

Saying so, Gu Qing Shan lifted his hand away.

All the notifications on the War God UI disappeared.

Everything returned to normal.

Gu Qing Shan wasn't in much of a hurry to break the ice crystal.

Because the Divine Power inside the crystal was currently sustaining Yun Ji's life.

If I break the crystal without having a way to resuscitate her, that's killing her instead of saving her.

Gu Qing Shan carefully observed the ice crystal.

There was still ample Divine Power in there.

In a short time period, nothing major should happen to Yun Ji.

But this situation won't persist forever.

Divine Power would eventually run out.

At that time, Yun Ji will surely die without a doubt.

Gu Qing Shan scowled deeply.

Yun Ji is a bonafide Lord-class Combatant, a prominent figure even among the top echelons of the 900 million World Layers.

But she's currently on her deathbed.

What method do I actually use to be able to heal this dying Lord?

Note:

(1) Divinity: At this point, maybe some of you have noticed, but the Divinities and the Old Gods aren't the same. They are both divine beings, but are different kinds of divine beings.

Chapter 686

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

Gu Qing Shan stood still silently for a few moments.

He formed a hand seal to gather the surrounding yellow sand again to cover up the Divine Power Frost Crystal.

Then he tapped his Inventory Bag to take out a formation plate.

He quickly operated it.

Various colors of light quickly emerged from the formation plate.

With the Divine Power Frost Crystal as the center, numerous large-scaled camouflage formations were stacked upon each other.

After some brief thinking, Gu Qing Shan also arranged a miniature warp formation here— that way, he would be able to return here from any other locations within this world.

Once that was done, he placed the formation plate away.

Normally, it would be foolish to rely on any of these formations to conceal yourself for a long period of time, but if a total of 17 of them were stacked on top of each other might be able to conceal something for a long while.

The next problem would be to find a way to heal Yun Ji.

—according to Wang Cheng’s memories, this place is called Drifting Sand world, home to the 11th ranked black market in the Strife Zones.

Most of Wang Cheng’s life was spent on the ship, causing him to not know much about anything else, as well as his stingy nature that prevented him from spending much money, but he at least knew the hustle and bustle of the black market, and that various strange and unusual things were sold there.

The 200 million World Layers of the Strife Zones gave birth to countless civilizations, countless Combatants, as well as a richness of resources and unique treasures.

And black markets were places that didn’t have to pay any taxes to any country or civilization, all transactions here were under the protection of the black market’s owner.

Normally, the wise black market owner only takes a very small service fee from those who come here.

This causes the wealth-seekers of various worlds to gather and flock in droves, looking to make a fortune or a quick buck.

Most of the time, a black market would also have information brokers, the sort that may or may not be able to help Gu Qing Shan understand how to heal a Lord-class Combatant.

So for now, the best choice for him was to take a look at the black market.

Deciding that, Gu Qing Shan didn’t hesitate to put it into action.

He took out a spirit energy replenishment pill and swallowed it—

Because of how vast this world was, even as a Tribulation realm middle stage cultivator, he still would need to travel a long time to reach the black market.

Everything was now prepared.

Gu Qing Shan leaped to the sky turning into a streak of light and flew towards the horizon.

...

Drifting Sand world

In the sky.

A sand storm was brewing.

The entire world was currently covered in fine sand picked up by the wind.

Only a few rare areas that were protected by one or more mysterious powers would be avoided by the sand storm.

After flying for one day and one night straight, Gu Qing Shan finally felt a bit fatigued.

Currently, the sun was at its highest point in the sky, the time when it was the hottest in the desert.

It was exactly noon.

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Above the buffeting sand storm, seven suns were shining at once, scorching the ground in their heat.

Everything was burning.

If he didn't use spirit energy to protect himself, Gu Qing Shan felt that he might have already been cooked alive.

—according to what Wang Cheng knew, this was a world that almost got destroyed once before.

Unfortunately, Wang Cheng was both weak and had no status, so he knew nothing about the truth of that event.

Gu Qing Shan felt a bit regretful.

I have too little information, it'll be very disadvantageous for deciding what tactics to use later on.

He briefly checked his current rate of spirit energy consumption before glancing at the ground.

With the sand storm currently obscuring the sky and his vision, he couldn't see anything.

Without an option, he released his inner sight to check the ground below the sand storm.

—there was another sand storm below this sand storm.

After a long while, Gu Qing Shan finally found a place to temporarily rest.

Below the intense sand storm, within the vast and endless desert, there was still a small oasis where life was thriving.

It was a flourishing great tree full of vitality.

The tree was hidden behind a particularly tall sand dune, giving off an emerald green light that blocked out the surrounding sand storm.

Around the tree, due to this light, a small world full of life and vitality was created.

Without hesitation, Gu Qing Shan descended.

After flying for so long in a sand storm, his stamina had been expended quite a bit, so he needed to rest and eat something to regain it.

He landed in front of the tree and released his inner sight to check the surroundings.

There was nothing.

Gu Qing Shan then walked in front of the tree and solemnly bowed to it, saying: "I don't hold any ill will, I'm just a bit tired from flying so I came here to rest"

It tapped his Inventory Bag to take out a gourd full of spirit spring water and poured it all around the branches of the tree.

——this was Gu Qing Shan's own self-imposed code of conduct.

This type of spring water that contained spirit energy should be quite rare in the desert.

If this tree was an actual living being or was sentient, this spring water should be enough to please it.

Gu Qing Shan had received Wang Cheng's memories.

Wang Cheng was a garbage scavenger of the lowest level, but even he knew that there were too many strange species and unimaginable living beings in the Strife Zones to remember.

So Gu Qing Shan tried thinking along this vein of thought.

I still have a long way to go within the Strife Zones.

If I ever arrive at an unfamiliar place, it would naturally cause the attention of any species that live there. Under such circumstances, the best conduct would be to show my attitude and goodwill from the very start.

——even in such a barbaric environment, the show of goodwill and avoidance are always the first most basic form of survival.

The second most basic, but more intense form of survival is to compete and fight.

But after experiencing the matter with the figure of light, Gu Qing Shan felt that it was important to not look down on any sentient beings.

Because when the figure of light showed itself to every living being in the Strife Zones, even void monsters were included.

This proves one thing.

The seven Gods believe that all living beings in the Strife Zones are sentient and that they can walk the path to Godhood.

This also implied that all living beings are equal.

This means, when considering the implication that all living beings are equally sentient, it is crucial to show an amiable attitude.

No one will happily welcome an unknown stranger into their home.

But if the stranger shows goodwill, the results might differ.

Perhaps, under such circumstances, as long as the other party isn't a particularly cruel or violent individual, they will most likely not attack right away.

This was Gu Qing Shan's first viewpoint on the Strife Zones.

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And so, as soon as he arrived, Gu Qing Shan expressed his friendly attitude and gifted some spring water to the tree.

Sure enough, the spring water that he sprinkled all over the tree was quickly absorbed.

All of a sudden, a heavy, low voice came from inside the tree.

「Such refreshing spring water, it has really been a long time since I drank such a thing, if at all possible, please give me some more, thank you」

Gu Qing Shan looked at the tree in surprise.

But he took out another gourd of spirit spring water and poured it on the tree again.

Immediately, all the water was fully absorbed.

「Ahh...」

A pleased sigh came from the tree.

It continued: 「Traveler from a faraway place, your spring water have refreshed me greatly, you are welcome to rest yourself here」

—what it meant by that was clear, he wasn't actually welcomed to rest himself here before this.

Gu Qing Shan understood right away.

It seems like I did the right thing.

He clasped his fist and spoke: "Thank you"

「You are welcome, if possible, please give me another gourd」 after saying that, the tree seemed to felt a bit embarrassed by its request: 「Because my child will soon return, I had forgotten to leave some water for him— he will probably enjoy this spring water very much」

Gu Qing Shan smiled.

This was a world of sand, and after flying for so long, I haven't seen a single source of water.

Not to mention this world was apparently almost destroyed once.

It was no wonder that spring water would be well-received.

—and it was just spring water, I still have a lot.

Gu Qing Shan took out another gourd of water and placed it down on the ground next to the tree.

"For you" he said.

A deep hole opened up on the sand, sucking the gourd inside.

「Ah, thank you very much」 the tree joyfully spoke.

“You are welcome since I’m borrowing your wonderful place to rest, it’s only good manners to provide a few small gifts in return” Gu Qing Shan replied.

The tree answered: 「 I am not like those man-shaped thieves and robbers who doesn’t know any manners, so I also have a small gift for you in return—— it’s nothing much, but I hope you won’t refuse」

One of the tree’s branches then broke off by itself and fell next to Gu Qing Shan.

「 Please take it, it’s a token of my appreciation 」 the three said.

Gu Qing Shan looked at the branch.

What can something like that... actually do?

But he couldn’t not accept it either since that would be turning down goodwill.

“Thank you very much” he said.

「 Hm 」 the tree replied.

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Nothing more needed to be said here.

Gu Qing Shan casually used a manipulation hand seal to pick up the branch from afar and put it into his Inventory Bag.

He then took out a cushion, sat down and began to rest.

Time quickly passed.

Two hours later.

Gu Qing Shan opened his eyes, fully rested once more.

Only to see that there was a small black scorpion about the size of a palm in front of him.

This black scorpion seemed to be watching him curiously.

When Gu Qing Shan suddenly opened his eyes, he startled the scorpion.

It quickly buried itself into the sand and disappeared.

Gu Qing Shan didn’t mind it too much, simply smiled and stood up to leave.

“Farewell, and thank you” he told the tree.

「 Where are you going? 」 the tree curiously asked.

“To the black market, since I haven’t been there before, I wanted to take a look” Gu Qing Shan replied.

「 Ah—— why are you going there? 」 the tree continued to ask.

“I want to learn a few things about healing, since a friend of mine is quite heavily wounded but I don’t know what to do” Gu Qing Shan casually answered.

「Healing, huh」 the tree sighed, 「Unfortunately, I'm not well-versed in a thing such as healing either. You are a very well-mannered young man, you may go」

“Hm, farewell” Gu Qing Shan clasped his fist again.

「See you again」 the tree said.

Gu Qing Shan leapt to the sky, flying towards the horizon.

He just left the area where sand storms couldn't reach thanks to the tree.

And so the sand storm quickly buffeted him again.

A few moments later, he discovered that there were several dozen people near him.

As soon as Gu Qing Shan noticed them, they also noticed him.

Both sides were flying in the same direction.

—apparently both making their way to the black market.

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After some brief thought, Gu Qing Shan silently slowed down to let them pass ahead.

Firstly, there were many of them, secondly, he didn't want to get involved with them and cause any trouble, thirdly, Yun Ji was currently heavily wounded, so the thing he wanted to focus on was saving her before anything else.

Seeing him act like that, the other group appeared pleased.

They exchanged glances.

One of them raised his hand towards Gu Qing Shan.

He was wearing some sort of watch-like device on his wrist.

After taking a long look at the 'watch', the man told his buddies something.

As soon as they heard that, their expressions all became dim.

The one flying in the lead signaled to the rest of them after some thought.

—-at the same time, Gu Qing Shan felt a sense of danger.

He immediately realized.

An adversity!

Damn it, the second karmic adversity is already here!

It has been lying in wait all this time for a chance to erupt, and I unknowingly gave it that chance!

Without time to prepare—-

Gu Qing Shan managed to dodge almost ten attacks, but got hit by the last one and was sent flying backward.

Drawing an arc in the sky, Gu Qing Shan fell straight back in front of the tree.

As he crashed into the ground, the intense force kicked up a huge amount of sand, deep enough to almost show the black layer of rocks below the sand below his feet.

Gu Qing Shan shook his head and flew up again.

This was a simple coincidental meeting and impulsive killing intent on their side.

Fortunately, thanks to the Shen Wei General armor, I'm not hurt.

However, tiny cracks had already appeared on the armor.

Gu Qing Shan leapt up high and took out the Night Rain in the blink of an eye.

The group had already approached him again.

They were hovering in the sky, sarcastically smirking at Gu Qing Shan.

"Brother Zhi, this guy is an archer, his ability scores are so low, he's probably not going to be worth much" someone laughed.

"A mosquito's meat is still meat, we'll take what we can get"

The man they called brother Zhi casually spoke.

A muscular man spoke: "Just an archer, I can kill this type of weakling in my sleep"

Gu Qing Shan can already tell their intentions.

If it's killing—

A dwarf among them pulled out his dagger and spoke: "Whoever kills him gets to search him fi—"

Without being able to finish his sentence, an arrow had already pierced his head.

Blood flew everywhere.

Their expressions all changed.

"Bastard, he actually knows how to use a bow, everybody at once!" brother Zhi shouted.

The remaining dozen of them all drew their weapons and charged at Gu Qing Shan.

While retreating, Gu Qing Shan fired shot after shot.

Shifting Flurry!

Five arrows turned into blurred shadows, drawing unpredictable trajectories in the sky before killing another two of them!

Brother Zhi was extremely displeased!

I trusted the machine values too much and we lost some men for it.

"Damn it! His archery techniques are a lot better than the machine suggested, we have to get closer!"

Unfortunately——

The principle was there, but Gu Qing Shan's [Ground Shrink] was too fast, they couldn't catch up at all.

Another breath's worth of time later.

Another person got shot by Gu Qing Shan in the arm.

It was the muscular man from before.

He angrily pulled the arrow out of his arm and shouted: "Gather!"

Hearing his shout, everyone quickly gathered where he was.

The muscular man grinded his teeth as he glared at Gu Qing Shan and told everyone: "Both his life and his belongings are mine!"

"Got it!" they all agreed.

The man rubbed a ring on his finger and activated the spell on it: "[Chaotic Shift]!"

[Chaotic Shift], a Spatial Divine Skill, allowing the user and every ally within ten meters of them to bypass the restraint of space and appeared directly next to an enemy within the range of 1000 meters, instantly creating an encirclement.

In a split second, intense white light that rose to the sky appeared from the ring.

Everyone disappeared.

They reappeared around Gu Qing Shan, completely surrounding him.

Against an archer, their encirclement was just enough.

No ranged Profession could possibly escape from being surrounded like this.

"Brat" the muscular man grinned, "archery is a sissy's petty tricks, you have nowhere to run now"

Gu Qing Shan's expression turned a bit weird.

He didn't say anything.

Both his bow and arrows suddenly disappeared without a trace.

A cold gleam cut across the sky, quickly expanding into a full moon dance of swords.

Secret Art, [Life Seeker]!

Thaumaturgy, [Severance]!

Secret Art, [Crescent Slash] —— Full Moon!

Everyone was stunned in place, unable to move as the sword phantom sliced them to pieces, then completely decimated sword-infused wind without leaving a trace behind.

Gu Qing Shan slowly withdrew this sword.

Looking at the scattered red blood on the yellow sand, he shook his head and sighed.

“Sorry to disappoint you, but archery was only used as a warm up, when I really kill people I usually use the sword”

Chapter 687

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

Sword-infused wind clashed against the storm.

The yellow sand storm swept the severed limbs and body pieces up and away.

Gu Qing Shan put his sword away and spoke to the tree with the green glow: “I’m sorry for dirtying your place”

The tree responded: 「 It’s fine, it’s fine; nothing but a little smudge 」

Gu Qing Shan smiled: “Then I’ll be on my way”

「 Hm, see you again, feel free to visit whenever you have time 」

“Yes, see you”

Gu Qing Shan once again leapt to the sky.

He checked the direction and continued flying towards the black market.

This time, he didn’t run into anyone else and simply disappeared into the sand storm as he left the area of the tree.

After he left.

A small black scorpion jumped out from underneath the sand, whispering something to the tree

——this was the same little scorpion that watched Gu Qing Shan in secret when he was resting before.

The tree lightly shook before dismissing: 「 I won’t 」

The little scorpion didn’t understand and whispered again.

The tree answered: 「 Ah, it’s because he was polite, I like polite people 」

The scorpion still unwillingly squeaked a bit more.

The tree continued to explain patiently: 「 Not just that, this was the first time I’ve seen a human who could be so well-versed in two Professions at once. This type of person isn’t someone you can simply run into, he might have some sort of terrifying secret to him, so we had better not be involved in such troublesome matters 」

While it talked, a bunch of severed body pieces silently appeared from underneath the sand.

They belonged to those people Gu Qing Shan killed just now.

Besides the corpses there was also a gourd of spring water.

「 These should be enough for dinner, and he even gave us a bottle of spring water, don't you like it? 」 the tree asked.

The little scorpion looked at the corpses, then at the gourd of spring water, but was still a bit unwilling to let things go.

It tried to whisper to the tree again, unconvinced.

The tree sighed and spoke: 「 So you're that insistent on eating a fresh— 」

Suddenly, a device blinking with red light rolled off one of the corpses.

It began to give off a noisy and constant 'beep beep beep'.

The tree's voice was cut off.

Both it and the small scorpion were attracted by the device.

The scorpion silently listened for a while, then squeaked to the tree in a confused tone.

「 Ah, stop asking me, I don't understand technological things. You're the one going to study, find it out yourself 」 the tree's tone became annoyed.

The blinking device suddenly stopped.

Not long after, several black dots appeared in the sky.

The black dots were flying here at an extremely high speed, quickly landing in front of the corpses.

“Boss, we found the place, unfortunately, little Zhi's bunch is already killed” one of them reported.

“I thought our life monitoring device was malfunctioning, but someone was actually dumb enough to kill our people” the Boss spoke with a grim expression.

They all exuded thick killing intent.

They were eager to get their hands on the bastard that tried to go against them.

“9th, go take a look” the Boss ordered.

“Roger”

A midget among the group stepped forward and searched the pile of bodies for a small device.

In his hand, the device quickly got reactivated.

Everything that happened before was shown as a projection for all of them to see.

From the moment they ran into each other to the very last moment when Gu Qing Shan drew his sword and killed these ten people all at once.

Everyone silently watched through the entire thing.

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updates

“Bastard, we haven’t been to Greyhan’s world for too long, but we’re not weak enough to be looked down on by this sort of garbage weakling!” one of them furiously shouted.

“That’s right”

“You’re right”

“If someone found out that over a dozen of our people got killed not even 2 days after we got here, wouldn’t that make us the laughing stock of every organization here?”

“Right!”

Seeing everyone in agreement, the Boss nodded.

He spoke: “That brat was heading for the black market. We’re heading there right now to kill him!”

“His sword technique was quite strange, make sure to be wary of it”

“Clean up these corpses, we’re heading out right away!”

“Yes, Boss!” the group shouted in unison.

They quickly cleaned up their comrades’ corpses.

As the little black scorpion saw them cleaning up the corpses, it couldn’t help but felt impatient.

Those are my food!

The little scorpion jumped out, squeaking at the group.

Its appearance quickly brought their attention.

It was very normal to see a scorpion-like creature in a desert.

So at first, none of them paid any attention to it.

But now, even a little critter dares to try stopping them from cleaning up the corpses.

From the look of it, this thing considers these corpses its food?

Little shit...

The closest one to it walked up to step on the little critter.

As soon as he raised a foot, he collapsed.

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What happened?

Everyone else cautiously looked over.

They immediately noticed that their comrade was already dead.

“Enemy attack!”

The first person to react shouted.

Everyone else drew their weapons and got into battle formation.

They carefully observed their surroundings.

Then they all collapsed at once.

All of them were dead.

Vast clouds green mist slowly appeared from the void of space.

The faint greyish green mist came out from the fresh corpses before being absorbed into the tree.

The tree then became more lush and verdant.

Seeing those people unable to take its food away and instead became the new food, the little black scorpion happily jumped from joy.

It squeaked excitedly to the tree.

The tree's voice resounded: 「 Indeed, it's a very hearty dinner, we'll have enough for tomorrow as well. You should be satisfied now, my child 」

The little scorpion nodded.

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「 Then it's great 」 the tree happily spoke.

Following its voice, all the corpses sunk below the sand and disappeared.

The large oasis in the middle of the desert began to shake intensely.

The sand around it slowly fell down.

A patch of black land about the size of a medium city rose up high, slowly revealing its true form.

This black land——

——no, this wasn't land at all, it was an extremely hard black chitin exoskeleton!

Natural evil-looking patterns covered the entirety of this seemingly endless black hard shell.

Through this natural pattern, the terrifying presence of the creature was thoroughly hidden away, not letting a single bit leak out.

After a few more moments, its body that was hidden below the sand was fully revealed.

It was a giant black scorpion about the size of a city!

Its jet black body was terrifying and unimaginable.

Even if it did nothing but stand still in one place, anything and anyone that observed it would definitely feel their heart beating faster uncontrollably.

This was the natural instinct of all living beings, telling them to stay away from a clear sign of death, unavoidable.

The only place on the scorpion's body that wasn't black was filled with a glowing green light.

—it was the lush, green tree full of vitality that could fight off the sand storm from before.

Except the tree wasn't actually a tree, it was the scorpion's fatal tail stinger.

In this entire Drifting Sand world, perhaps no weapon could compare to this tail stinger in terms of fatality!

「 Let's go home, we've played enough, don't let mama wait for too long 」

The giant scorpion spoke with a deep echoing voice.

The same voice that belonged to the tree from before.

The little black scorpion squeaked, apparently asking for something.

「 Very well, you gluttonous little devil, here's a little snack for you 」 the giant scorpion spoke with a clear happy tone.

A corpse suddenly appeared on top of its back.

The little black scorpion looked at it.

It was the corpse of the man who tried to step on it before.

The little black scorpion happily climbed onto the corpse's face.

It began to eat.

The city-sized giant scorpion began its slow trek through the desert.

「 Do you still want to eat the person who left before? 」 the giant scorpion asked.

The little black scorpion was happily gorging down on its food, so it only replied by pointing at the food in front of it with its little stinger.

「 Hm, that's right, you can eat these rude ones without worry, because besides being food, they don't have any other use 」 the giant scorpion told it, feeling pleased.

Squeak squeak? The little black scorpion looked up and asked doubtfully.

The giant scorpion sincerely taught its child: 「 Politeness is important because within billions of worlds, it represents respect towards the unknown, as well as a scale of measuring of self-tolerance during the times of Apocalypse. Therefore, you must be a polite little fellow as well, to show that you were well-taught 」

Squeak.

The little scorpion answered without fully understanding it.

They slowly went far.

On the other side.

While flying, Gu Qing Shan suddenly landed in an awkward manner.

He then quickly arranged layers upon layers of formations for defensive, camouflage, counter-attack, as well as spirit funneling.

This cost quite a bit of spirit stones.

But it was a necessary expenditure.

Because his spirit energy had entered a state of an uncontrollable and sudden leap, forcing him to use formations to protect himself.

This meant only one thing—

Without any warnings, his second karmic adversity had ended.

Thus, Gu Qing Shan was advancing to Tribulation realm late stage.

Chapter 688

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

Sitting on his cushion, Gu Qing Shan was fully focused on settling his cultivation.

Once a karmic adversity had passed, a cultivator's realm would automatically increase, this was quite a miraculous period of time during a cultivator's life.

Like a tsunami, his spirit energy was increasing in irregular leaps and bounds, manifesting more and more in his body, but Gu Qing Shan had to think of a way to make this increase stable and constant, otherwise, the excess spirit energy would damage his acupoints.

He guided the spirit energy tsunami inside his body towards his Dantian and slowly formed a spiral inside it to slow down the speed of the flow.

This was an intricate task, but it would greatly reduce the strain that the wild spirit energy put on his body.

A day later.

Gu Qing Shan finally opened his eyes.

He was now a Tribulation realm late-stage cultivator.

This time, because he didn't cultivate sword arts alone but together with martial arts, archery, Blade arts, and various others, all of his bodily attributes received an improvement.

Which was an unexpected pleasant surprise.

All of a sudden, a blinking icon in his vision caught Gu Qing Shan's attention.

One of the icons below the War God UI was blinking.

It was the [War God Title]

Finding that a bit unexpected, Gu Qing Shan tried selecting it.

Lines of glowing text quickly appeared from the [War God Title] icon.

[You've reached the lowest cultivation requirement for unlocking a new title]

[Because you've become the Shen Wei General of the cultivation world and your cultivation has reached Tribulation realm late stage, your title: 'You Ji General' has been overwritten]

[You can now use the new title: Shen Wei General]

[Title: Shen Wei General (note: You Ji General and Xiao Qi Chaplain titles have been overwritten)]

[Note: This is the highest rank of General in humanity's allied army]

[Equipping this title, you gain the unique Skill: Quick Attack (Advanced)]

[Quick Attack (Advanced): the user's attack speed is increased by 20%]

Looking at his unexpected new title, Gu Qing Shan was grinning.

Previously, the [You Ji General] title gave him an extra 15% attack speed, now the [Shen Wei General] title will give him 20%.

A whopping 20%!

His swordsmanship mainly relied on speed to win, so an increase of 20% was like giving wings to a tiger.

—no, not just his swordsmanship alone.

Martial arts, Blade arts, Archery, this title would support all of these as well.

This is terrific.

Gu Qing Shan equipped the [Shen Wei General] title, took out the Chao Yin sword, and took a stance.

He swung his sword.

The cold gleam flashed by.

"Ah?"

Gu Qing Shan scowled unexpectedly.

He found that his attack speed had indeed been increased, to the point that he was almost unable to control his sword stance.

This speed is... a bit too much.

Gu Qing Shan carefully considered it before nodding in confirmation.

A sword cultivator that was unable to control their sword was a hazard to themselves more than anyone else.

Gu Qing Shan's attitude became serious.

He stood straight up and began to practice as he did in the past.

He started with the most basic sword techniques, then coordinated strikes, then a full show of his sword styles, then Secret Arts, and finally a sword array.

Through each step, Gu Qing Shan was slowly getting used to the change in speed.

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After practicing for two hours straight, he gradually adapted to the speed of his attacks with the reinforcement of the [Shen Wei General] title.

He put the Chao Yin sword away, sat back down on his cushion and rested.

Only now did he have some time to carefully think about what happened during this time's karmic adversity.

But no matter how much he thought, Gu Qing Shan couldn't figure it out at all.

Strange...

Why did the karmic adversity end in such a simple way?

From start to end, I only got hit by those people a single time.

And even that attack was blocked by my armor, so I didn't get hurt at all.

—was that the entire adversity?

Or did I actually run into some sort of extremely dangerous situation that I didn't know about?

He carefully thought about it, slowly rewinding every detail of everything that happened so far.

With the process of elimination, Gu Qing Shan slowly got closer to the answer.

"Seems like the key factor was that tree..."

He muttered.

As soon as I saw the tree, I had already released my inner sight to check below the desert.

But I didn't sense anything.

If my karmic adversity really did come from that tree, the tree's power must have been far beyond my imagination.

Otherwise, it isn't simple to fool a cultivator's inner sight.

Then...

What exactly happened?

Recalling the little black scorpion that he saw after waking up from meditation, Gu Qing Shan realized something.

After a brief moment of silence, he remembered.

Putting his hand on the Inventory Bag, Gu Qing Shan released his inner sight inside.

The branch that the tree gave him was still silently sitting in his Inventory Bag.

It was a jet black sharp tree branch.

At the time, I was cautious so I used a manipulation seal to pick the tree branch up without touching it and stored it inside my Inventory Bag.

But now—

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At this point, it was because of his conjecture that he felt hesitant to touch the branch.

Gu Qing Shan lifted his hand away from the Inventory Bag and silently sighed.

He quickly made his decision.

—-although I don't know why it decided to leave me alone, but this time was just sheer luck.

I need to be a lot more careful from now on, I was too reckless earlier.

That branch should be more than enough to tell me the truth of this entire matter.

According to Wang Cheng's memories, there are some establishments within the black market that are responsible for appraising rare and mysterious items.

I'll just have them appraise the tree branch for me to confirm my suspicions.

Let's move.

Putting the cushion away, Gu Qing Shan swallowed another spirit energy replenishment pill.

He lightly leapt upwards, flew high in the sky, going past the clouds.

The higher he went, the weaker the sand storm would be.

Finally, Gu Qing Shan reached a point where sand filled the air.

Normally speaking, the higher you were the stronger the wind should be, but this world was the complete opposite, with the wind getting weaker the higher he went.

Gu Qing Shan's gaze extended far.

The entire world was covered by the wind and sand, reaching all the way to the horizon.

There wasn't a single spot where he couldn't see the sand storm.

Occasionally, some places could briefly be seen unaffected by the sand, but would soon be obscured again.

The only reason for that would be because some gigantic creatures or things were moving in the sand, briefly shifting it.

After confirming his direction, Gu Qing Shan turned into a streak of light that cut right across the horizon.

...

Five days later.

Gu Qing Shan finally reached his destination.

He appeared outside a small town, clearly worn out from the trip.

This small town in front of him should be the entrance to the black market, responsible for the verification and arrangement of those who wished to visit the black market.

Large and well-known organizations within the 900 million World Layers, as well as highly developed civilizations, would be allowed direct entry into the black market.

But anyone else who wishes to gain entry must go through a small admittance qualification test.

After a single second of hesitation, Gu Qing Shan decided not to reveal his identity as a member of the Justice Iron Fist Club.

Barry and Kitty are currently in his original world, and due to the transformation it was going through, they would temporarily be unable to leave.

Most if not all other Lord-class Combatants were heavily wounded in the war, currently protected inside Divine Power Frost Crystals and scattered around the Strife Zones.

It isn't smart to reveal my identity right now.

He sighed and walked to the entrance of the small town.

Quite a long queue was already formed here, waiting for their turn to go into town.

The entire line of people was neat and orderly, not to mention highly efficient as they silently moved along.

Everyone was polite and amiable, maintaining a certain level of etiquette.

—-but this wasn't because everyone here was reasonable and patient.

It was because along both sides of the path leading into town were countless severed heads stacked on top of each other, forming two long and tall walls.

The wall of heads stretched from the entrance of the town all the way to the vast desert outside.

These tens of thousands of heads all came from those who disobeyed the rules of the black market.

Under the scrutiny of the countless heads around them, everyone naturally learnt the manner of conduct in this place as soon as they could.

—-to enter the black market, there were two rules that everyone must follow:

No cutting in line.

And don't be noisy.

Aside from that, the other reason why everyone was maintaining silence was that most of these people were carrying a book with them.

Everyone lowered their gaze, silently focused on reading the books in their hands.

After some careful observation, Gu Qing Shan found that above the long queue of people all sorts of books would occasionally appear.

They will randomly linger above the heads of those standing in line, at the same time asking if those people would like to read them to kill some time.

This was free.

Because the owner of this black market wanted as many people who came here to understand this world as well as the market as thoroughly as they needed to.

Looking at those books, Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but sigh.

*Unfortunately—— Wang Cheng didn't know how to read.
Otherwise, I would've known a lot more about the black market already.*

At this time, a green-back book flew over his head and gently asked: [Sir, do you need my service?]

"A, yes, I want to know what kind of knowledge you contain" Gu Qing Shan respectfully asked.

[Recorded on me is the knowledge regarding the 5th destruction of this world, if you are interested, you may read now]

"I'm very interested, thank you"

[You're welcome, then shall we begin]

The book slowly fell into his hand and automatically turned the first page.

And so, while standing in line, Gu Qing Shan read about what happened during this world's 5th destruction.

Chapter 689

Translated by: La0o9
Edited by: Dr.Lock
Proofreader: Arya

There were almost an infinite amount of worlds within the 900 million World Layers.

And among these innumerable worlds, there existed a unique type of world that was different from the rest.

They were the first worlds to be formed into this universe, some of them even before the birth of the Gods.

These unique worlds were formed naturally and not made by the Gods.

Such worlds were commonly referred to as Prehistoric Worlds.

And this world that Gu Qing Shan was currently on, was one of those Prehistoric Worlds.

Through countless years, the struggles these worlds went through far surpassed most other worlds.

Because of a certain characteristic among many that their World Origin possesses.

—Eternal.

Every creation of the Old Gods would naturally come to an end sooner or later.

But Prehistoric Worlds possessed the 'Eternal' characteristic.

Even the historical calamities that were said to have destroyed everything only temporarily destroyed them.

After just a few years, their world Laws would once again fuse the fragments back together.

A Prehistoric World would always reform itself.

Naturally, a Prehistoric World after reformation would have differences as compared to how it was before.

For living beings of billions of worlds, this type of 'Eternal' that came close to that of Gods naturally became the most interesting thing, especially to Combatants who stand at the very top.

This world of sand had gone through a total of 37 owners, 61 times of natural destruction, 9 times caught in the mass destruction of many worlds, and 7,925 times of being destroyed by wars.

The book Gu Qing Shan was reading detailed the events of this world's 5th destruction.

At the time, a Lord-class Combatant of overwhelming power defeated the previous owner of this desert world and took it over.

His power largely came from his unique ability

— — — the power to replicate himself.

He had the ability to perfectly create a copy of himself.

This wasn't the same as cloning or incarnation techniques, as the one created from this ability would become a real living, breathing person.

The newly reborn 'him' would keep all of his experience and memories, losing only his strength.

As long as the new 'him' trained himself again from scratch, he could once again become as powerful as he used to be.

And the Lord-class Combatant would always fully commit himself to nurture his copy after they split.

Just like that, the new 'him' would quickly mature and become powerful in an extremely short amount of time without running into any actual danger on the way.

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When this Lord took over Drifting Sand world, he had already reached 70 copies of himself.

By himself, he had the power of 70 Lords!

The reason why he took over Drifting Sand world in the first place was to study the 'Eternal' Law that this world possessed.

At first, everything was normal.

He received a lot of new understanding from observing the world's natural cycle and operation.

But one day, while this Lord was studying the 'Eternal' Law, he went insane.

10 of his incarnations attacked each other, not only did they kill one another, but they also destroyed the world in the process.

After Gu Qing Shan was done reading the book, he closed it up.

The book asked him: [Do you want to read something else?]

Gu Qing Shan looked ahead.

About a dozen armed guards were observing the queue at the entrance into town.

Whenever someone reached the door, the guards would point their weapons at the person.

Anybody that wanted to proceed into town from that point would have to place their hand on a book that was floating in the air.

It was a particularly thick, silver-back book.

The book had a name, the Life Observer.

The Life Observer would decide whether or not the person would be allowed entry into the town.

And currently, the queue was still ridiculously long, it wouldn't be for a while until he would even reach the entrance.

Gu Qing Shan answered: "If possible, I would like to read more about this world"

[Please wait a moment]

The book answered him and flew up to the sky.

Soon enough, another book hovered in front of Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan took the book, flipped through its pages and focused himself on reading.

This book talked about a certain civilization that was once born in this desert world.

The civilization in question was an orthodox magic-type civilization, telling the story of its journey to the peak of prosperity over 13,000 years.

At the time, this civilization was connected to several billion worlds, and its people were able to freely travel to and from several World Layers at will.

All of a sudden, this civilization stopped their outward exploration.

——they found out that the world they were born in was a Prehistoric World.

So they decided to instead explore the secrets of their own homeworld.

A few years later.

Over a single night, the entire civilization collapsed.

The billions of worlds connected to them before completely lost contact with them.

Several days later, because of their curiosity, the Combatants of other worlds arrived to check the situation.

They discovered that the entire civilization had collapsed, leaving nothing but countless ruins on this world.

Every single living being was dead.

The world simply began its cycle anew.

The scene at the time caused all the witnesses to shake in their boots.

A glorious, thriving civilization suddenly came to an end without any warnings.

Gu Qing Shan closed the book and slightly scowled.

[Would you like to read something else?] the book asked.

Gu Qing Shan looked ahead again.

The queue was still slowly moving along.

“Yes. Please give me another book” he replied.

The book flew back to the sky before another book descended in front of Gu Qing Shan.

Reading this book, Gu Qing Shan once again saw another journey of this world’s destruction.

As he stood in the queue, he finished reading several books, in which this world was always being destroyed and reformed, repeating itself.

No matter if it was a Combatant or a civilization, those who occupied this world all met a terrible end.

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People gradually understood.

This Prehistoric World was most likely hiding a sort of strange ‘curse’, or something of similar nature.

And no one dared to approach this world anymore.

Until 1700 years ago.

The owner of the black market came to this world.

He gave up on ruling this world and only built a black market here.

From the very start, nothing bad ever happened to those who came here purely for transaction purposes.

And because of the owner's might, no one wanted to risk their lives by trying anything.

The owner of the black market also didn't interfere with the various Combatants who arrived to study this world.

He allowed those Combatants to come and go as they pleased, freely studying the secret of the world.

So those Combatants also had no reason to provoke the black market.

In fact, due to its existence here, the Combatants' rest and supplies during their period of research were supported by the black market instead.

Just like that, the black market won the approval of many.

As time passed, the black market grew more and more prosperous.

These were the events of the most recent 1000 years.

Gu Qing Shan closed the book and let the book fly back into the sky.

This time, he didn't ask for a new book.

Because after such a long wait standing in line, there were only two people left in front of Gu Qing Shan, it would soon be his turn to enter the town.

At this time, at the entrance into town.

A man with a sniper rifle on his back placed his hand on the cover of the Life Observer.

He was currently undergoing the silver book's test.

[Technological, Hawk-winged race, allow passage] the Life Observer spoke with an exhausted tone.

The man walked into town under the watchful eyes of the guards.

There was only one person left before Gu Qing Shan.

It was a tall, lanky man.

He walked up to the entrance and placed his hand on the silver book.

The Life Observer paused briefly before speaking in a sluggish voice: [Elementalist, Dark Elemental creature, completely normal]

Hearing that, the lanky man's expression loosened.

But he didn't notice that as soon as the silver book said 'completely normal', the guards all turned their attention to him.

The man began to walk into town.

Behind him, the Life Observer suddenly shouted: [Kill him!]

The prepared guards attacked him all at once without holding back.

The lanky man's expression changed.

He only managed to turn into a huge blob of dark substance before being eliminated without mounting any retaliation.

The dark substance that made up his body collapsed and scattered, disappearing like smoke in the wind.

After dealing with the creature, the guards slowly made their way back.

One of the guards asked the Life Observer: "Sir, what's the situation?"

The Life Observer responded: [A bastard who carries Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling. I could smell the scent of an Order from miles away]

The guard appeared a bit anxious and spoke: "This is already the 15th one, what exactly is the [Demon King Order] trying to do?"

[Don't care, as long as they're related to an Order, they won't fool me] the Life Observer said.

It then called out to Gu Qing Shan: [Your turn, step forward]

The guards all focused their attention on Gu Qing Shan.

Would two envoys of the [Demon King Order] show up in a row?

They once again gripped their weapons tight.

Gu Qing Shan casually stepped forward and placed his hand on the silver book.

I'm not carrying the [Demon King Order].

But I have carried the [Demon King Order], [Angel Order] as well as [Life Order] once each.

Can this book detect that?

Gu Qing Shan felt a bit tense.

Soon enough, he felt a power flowing from the book into his body and made a round trip around it.

This was probably the Life Observer's probing.

Time quickly passed.

But the Life Observer said nothing.

This was strange.

The guards slowly started to show their killing intent.

Gu Qing Shan kept silent and circulated spirit energy inside his body, preparing for battle.

All of a sudden, the Life Observer laughed.

[Gahahahaha!]

It shouted: [A human cultivator—— as soon as he got off the First Zone, he got flung into the space vortex when the Life Order broke down, what an unlucky bastard!]

Gu Qing Shan sneaked a glance around.

The guards' breathing calmed down as their grip on their weapons loosened slightly.

They couldn't help but all smiled at another person's misfortune.

The [Life Order] was supposed to be the method to help novices quickly gain strength.

Unfortunately, with the advent of the path to Godhood, the [Life Order] was broken by the seven Gods' preparations, turning into power for the figure of light.

And this novice just happened to be traveling through the space vortex when that happened, that really is unlucky.

Being able to make it here without being devoured by void monsters is already quite a feat.

However, this also makes him clean.

The 900 million World Layers alliance's Profession Committee had always been strict in their work, so there shouldn't be any problems with a novice who passed their test.

Gu Qing Shan looked at the group to see that they were all grinning brightly.

He could only shrug and smile bitterly as he spoke: "Can't help it, it's my luck"

Hearing that, the guards' grins became even bigger.

[Get in, hapless fellow, hope your luck turns around] the Life Observer told him.

"Thanks"

Gu Qing Shan walked past it.

As he walked, he was still using his inner sight to carefully observe the guards.

Only to see that the guards really did shift their attention away from him onto the next person.

—seems like I passed for real.

He peacefully entered the small town.

Chapter 690

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

As soon as he came into town, an old, tattered book appeared in front of Gu Qing Shan.

It observed Gu Qing Shan and spoke with a hoarse voice: [All esteemed guests can directly enter the black market, but newbies like yourself will need to hear an explanation and tutorial from this old man]

"Then I'll have to trouble you" Gu Qing Shan spoke.

The old book lightly waved back and forth before speaking: [It's my job, no need to thank me— now, let us begin]

It cleared its voice before asking: [Which organization are you from?]

“...I don't follow anyone”

[I already know about what happened at the gate] the book nodded, [which means, not only do you have no backing, you're also a hapless fellow— how pitiful]

“...”

[Then, as a person going into the black market alone, which numbered coin do you use?]

“1—”

Gu Qing Shan stopped.

I don't have a single coin on me.

The chest of #7 coins from before were already used to pay for using the ship.

So I'm now completely poor.

At the time, I tossed the chest of coins so casually, but now it became awkward.

From how this book seems, if I said I don't have any money, I'll probably be kicked out on the spot.

So Gu Qing Shan lied: “I use #7 coins, erm, I have about a chest full of them”

The old book sighed and scoffed: [#7 coins? A grown-up using such low-valued coins, really pitiful]

“I can't help it, I'm here at the black market to make some more” Gu Qing Shan followed up his words.

The old book spoke: [I have two suggestions for you. Firstly, you can take a stroll around this town and spend all of your money on any one random item]

[Or secondly, go left, about 600 meters from here is our black market's labor center, you can find a few jobs there to make money— but we won't accept a soloist, because of how big this world is, a lot of things takes a long time to complete, so we hope that those who accept our jobs will complete them as efficiently as possible]

[Which is why if you're willing to work for money, you had better get a few people, form a party and accept a job together]

Gu Qing Shan doubtfully asked: “Why won't you accept soloists? Wouldn't a particularly powerful Professionalist be able to accomplish a lot on their own?”

The old book asked him in return: [Will those powerful Professionalists you speak of still need to make what is essentially spare change from these simple jobs?]

“...”

Gu Qing Shan was driven to become speechless at once.

[There isn't anybody powerful to that degree in this little town] the old book continued to explain: [Of course, you can get into the black market if you make enough money, or complete an appropriately big job— there are quite a few jobs in there reserved specifically for soloists, but their requirements are also extremely steep]

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Gu Qing Shan sighed and spoke: “Alright, thank you very much, I’ll go take a look”

[Go, seeing how you read so many books on the way in, I’ll give you a piece of advice]

“Please”

[Don’t trust anyone]

“Understood, thank you”

Gu Qing Shan turned around and headed into the black market’s work center.

He was currently very worried.

Yun Ji’s life will be sustained for now thanks to the power of the crystal.

But I don’t know how long it’ll actually last.

So I need to enter the black market as soon as possible and look for a method to heal her.

But I’m currently penniless.

According to Wang Cheng’s memories, only widely recognized treasures and resources can be exchanged for money.

The spirit stones I have on me aren’t even qualified to exchange for a #1 coin.

If I really wanted to earn money, that black tree branch can probably be sold, but I don’t have money to appraise it.

Since the tree branch was something that came from his karmic adversity, Gu Qing Shan didn’t really want to touch it himself, otherwise, he won’t even be able to regret it when something unexpected occurs.

If he won’t touch it, he won’t be able to use the War God UI to appraise it.

So in the end I’m still penniless.

Gu Qing Shan couldn’t help but sigh again.

How did I fall to be this miserable?

While thinking that, he had already reached the work center.

Everything was quite clear here— the rules were literally written on the walls outside of the work center.

Gu Qing Shan seriously read everything over.

It was essentially the same as what the old book informed him, but a lot more detailed.

There were no solo jobs.

A temporary party would allow him to take a few simple jobs.

A permanent party would be able to take higher-ranked jobs that paid better as well.

But as a newcomer, he had to complete at least one job with a temporary party before qualifying to join a permanent party.

This was a kind of test aimed at newcomers.

—if you can't even complete a simple job with a temporary party, then just give up and go home.

While Gu Qing Shan was reading, a voice called out to him.

"Hi, can I ask if you are a newcomer here?"

He turned to look.

And saw that it was a handsome boy smiling as he asked him.

"How do you know that?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"Because other than newcomers, no one would be reading the work center rules like this" the boy answered.

"And so?"

"And so, since we're also looking for members for a temporary party to complete a job for some money, we want to invite you"

"How many people do you have?"

"Three"

"Three should be enough, three people can already form a party"

"We're hoping to complete jobs more efficiently, so we wanted to invite more people"

"What job are you thinking about?"

"A terrain surveying job"

Gu Qing Shan glanced at another wall.

That wall was currently full of people, staring intensely at the various jobs that constantly appeared.

Gu Qing Shan's gaze went past those people and searched on the wall.

He quickly found the job for surveying terrain.

This was a particularly simple job even among those provided for temporary parties.

It doesn't involve any danger, only taking a bit of effort.

And doesn't pay very well either.

Because of this, even temporary parties rarely accept such a job.

After some brief thinking, Gu Qing Shan made his decision.

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...alright, the first job might as well be simple.

A temporary party will let me quickly get used to the process of doing a job.

This job should be quick and not have any conflict with other parties.

After finishing this job, I'll be qualified to enter a permanent party. With my capabilities, I should be able to join a decent permanent party to take on a few high-difficulty jobs to earn more decent money.

More money means I'll be able to enter the black market quicker.

"Where are your teammates?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

The young boy then signaled towards the crowd.

Very quickly, a pretty young girl and a young boy with an imposing aura came out.

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They stood in front of Gu Qing Shan.

As Gu Qing Shan looked at them, he couldn't help but took a deep breath.

These guys are too young, they look to only be about 18-19 years old— and they probably are.

They probably aren't very strong either, otherwise, they wouldn't choose to accept the simplest job.

"You guys are too young" Gu Qing Shan hesitantly spoke.

As they heard him, the three young people gave him a strange look as if they were seeing an idiot.

"Why do you think we're too young? You don't look any older than we are"

The girl asked him doubtfully.

Gu Qing Shan face-palmed himself.

Yes, he had actually forgotten that because he went back in time, he was physically a young man that was barely twenty.

The two boys and the girl seemed to have noticed the implication in his gaze.

The other boy spoke: "Don't look down on us, we're actually very strong, but the job needed 4 people to complete quickly so we had to ask you to join"

"Alright, I'll join you" Gu Qing Shan said.

The boys and the girl exchanged a glad look.

They quickly brought Gu Qing Shan to register into a temporary party and accepted the mission.

Soon enough, the four of them made their preparations and set out.

At first, they wanted to rent a cheap flying vehicle, only giving up after Gu Qing Shan pointed out that the job rewards wouldn't even be enough to pay for it.

Then they suggested having a celebration first.

Gu Qing Shan took out the job description and showed them to make them realize—— it turns out the job they took was a time-sensitive one!

Before they set out, the girl suddenly found that her scimitar was nowhere to be found.

After taking some time to analyze and help her recall, they finally discovered that her scimitar was left propped on a tree where they stood before.

After all of that, the four of them finally set out from the town to the job destination.

At this point, Gu Qing Shan was feeling a bit regretful.

But since he already accepted the job, giving up half-way through would mark him as an untrustworthy newcomer.

He had no choice but to continue with this party until the end.

——and then, with the imposing boy leading them, 20 minutes later, Gu Qing Shan noticed something wasn't quite right.

They stopped, carefully checked the map to see that they had gone in the opposite direction.

From then on, everyone unanimously agreed that Gu Qing Shan would lead.

And they finally reached their destination.

Fortunately, the job itself was simple.

The work center gave them four surveying cards, one for each person to survey the terrain around four separate areas.

When one of them surveys enough ground for the job, their card would give off a small chime.

After all four cards were done, the job was considered to be complete and they could return to the work center.

Gu Qing Shan took the card given to him and followed the job's instruction to travel across a wide area of the desert.

As he reached the end, the card gave off a small chime.

Gu Qing Shan turned the card around and checked it.

The originally blank card now depicted a wide sand dune.

Two lines of text appeared below the sand dune:

[Eastern hill, North Eastern 22nd position, 5th sector]

[The above area's terrain characteristics have been recorded]

A few moments later.

The others also finished.

The four of them gathered and gave the cards to Gu Qing Shan.

When Gu Qing Shan was about to lead them back, he noticed that three of the four cards were still blank.

After some questions, he found out that the other three went the short way around.

They said that this would be a lot more efficient.

Gu Qing Shan didn't express his annoyance, only patiently explained to them why they can't take a shortcut as he showed them the job description.

The three of them realized what they did wrong.

When they hurriedly went back to complete their share of the job, it was already dark.

The time limit was passed.

The job failed.

Gu Qing Shan was shocked.

He really couldn't believe such a simple job could be screwed up to this point.

Seeing them all so dejected, Gu Qing Shan regained his calm and encouraged them: "It's ok, everyone has already completed the job, we just need to learn our lesson and do better next time"

It took him encouraging them for a while more before they stopped feeling dejected.

And now it was time to return.

Gu Qing Shan silently sighed as he led the way back to town.

After taking a few steps, he suddenly noticed that it was silent behind him.

So he turned around.

The three young people stood still, silently watching him.

"What is it?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

At this point, he had already let go of the failure and smiled amiably.

Among the three of them, the one who looked the most attractive and most sheltered of the three, the girl, stepped forward.

She sneaked a glance at Gu Qing Shan with a nervous and uneasy expression.

"I..." the girl hesitated to speak.

Gu Qing Shan encouraged her: "Don't worry, if you have something to tell me, go ahead"

"Really?" the girl looked at him full of expectations.

"Um, you have to be a bit braver, in fact, if there are any problems you have to communicate it properly. If you won't say anything, I wouldn't know what you want either" Gu Qing Shan slowed his tone down and continued to speak.

A long pause later.

The girl finally mustered her courage.

She raised her scimitar at Gu Qing Shan and spoke nervously: “Th... this is a robbery!”

Chapter 691

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

Gu Qing Shan was stunned for a few seconds before he realized what the girl just said.

He reached his hand into the void of space and took hold of the Night Rain.

At this point, the night sky was deep, the sand storm in the sky had already scattered to reveal a cold, shining moon.

Standing under the moonlight, Gu Qing Shan was giving off faint killing intent.

Normally, if anyone tried to stop him and say things like these, he would have already attacked them.

But now, he was currently holding himself back from attacking.

No matter what, he was still a veteran who had been through all sorts of thick and thin, so he already recognized these three as actual novices who didn't know any better.

Up to this point, their conduct was sincere and polite.

They were even concerned for him occasionally.

So why are they trying to rob me now?

This was such a rare situation to run into, that Gu Qing Shan couldn't comprehend what was going on.

He tried smiling: “Did I just misheard you or did you say this was— a robbery?”

The girl hurriedly nodded and spoke: “Yes, yes, yes, it's a robbery”

Seeing that he understood what she meant, the girl appeared to be relieved.

Gu Qing Shan stared at her, then quickly glanced over at her companions.

The two boys had already taken position to surround Gu Qing Shan.

Seems like...

It really is that

Gu Qing Shan's finger lightly stroked the Night Rain bow a few times before staying still.

He was holding himself back.

This girl standing in front of him had an innocent expression, spirited eyes, speaking in a shy but sincere tone, her pure white outfit was fluttering in the wind, making her look as if she was an angel from above.

—facing such a well-mannered and pleasant-looking ‘robber’ made Gu Qing Shan a bit hesitant to take the initiative.

He couldn’t help but ask her again: “You said you’re robbing me— do you know what robbing means?”

The girl froze.

“Ah, about that...”

She hurriedly took out a notebook from behind her, flipped through several pages before reaching a certain part.

She then whispered as she read from her notes: “Robbing, a situation when two opposing sides on a chess board had surrounded each other. Under such circumstances, the first person to move will be able to take a piece from the opponent— wait no, I got the wrong one”

She apologized to Gu Qing Shan before continuing to search.

Gu Qing Shan just stood there with the Night Rain in his hand, watching the girl search for an answer.

He wasn’t at all afraid to go against an unreasonable opponent that immediately tried to kill him as they met.

...But there’s no point in fighting such a dumb battle like this.

He silently sighed.

After a while.

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The girl finally puffed up her chest and whispered confidently: “Robbing, means to stop someone on their way and take their wealth”

As she said that, she looked up at the moon in the sky and appeared worried.

“Oh no, I don’t have much time”

She suddenly shouted: “Prohibition Technique!”

Behind Gu Qing Shan, one of the boys turned into a streak of light as he flew into her hand.

The boy just turned into a card!

The girl pointed the card at Gu Qing Shan and called out: “Prohibit weapon— Bow and arrows!”

Before Gu Qing Shan could react, the Night Rain bow in his hand disappeared.

Both the Night Rain and the quiver on his back appeared in the card in the girl’s hand, currently held by the boy.

The girl coldly told him: “Now your attack is sealed, give up everything you have”

Gu Qing Shan didn't panic and only chuckled: “What if I don't?”

He suddenly turned around and punched behind himself——

Divine Skill, [Skyfall]!

Bam!!!

His fist clashed with the other boy, sending both of them flying backward as shockwaves spread.

The girl was a bit surprised: “So you can actually clash head-on with one of my puppets...”

She drew another card from the void of space.

It was the boy that was just sent flying.

Both boys were cards that she controlled!

Holding this card in her hand, the girl kept drawing card after card from the void of space.

Shoulder pad, breastplate, helmet, wrist guard, knee guard...

With a flick of her hand, all of these defensive items equipped themselves on the boy.

With the help of the armor, the boy wouldn't need to pay too much attention to defense.

His attacks would become much fiercer.

“You can't win against me, just give up your belongings!” the girl shouted towards Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan didn't respond.

He suddenly drew a Blade from nowhere, attacking 24 times in a row, forcing the fully-armored boy backward.

Taking that opportunity, Gu Qing Shan tapped his Inventory Bag.

The Shen Wei General armor scattered into its components before quickly assembling on his body.

He wore the golden mask and looked at the girl: “Again”

Seeing that, the girl gritted her teeth a bit before placing her scimitar into the boy's card.

The boy now held a scimitar in his hand.

He once again leapt forward, attacking him with a thick dark slash.

Gu Qing Shan scowled.

Mutated Elements consisted of Wind, Lightning, Light, Dark, and Sound.

This attack was Dark Element being used to its very limit, infusing into a high-leveled Elemental Blade technique.

For a card to be able to do this much!

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While everything sounded slow, it all happened in the blink of an eye.

Gu Qing Shan charged forward with his Blade.

Fierce arcs of blue lightning streamed along the edge of the Corpse King Blade.

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The two weapons clashed.

Boom!

Blue and black Elemental energy exploded before scattering in the air.

Gu Qing Shan leapt backwards quickly, breathed out heavily before purposefully grunting: "You want my belongings? Over my dead body!"

The girl hurriedly waved her hands: "I don't want to kill you, you're a good person"

Gu Qing Shan went silently briefly before feeling a headache.

I was right.

She doesn't have any killing intent.

Then what the hell are we fighting for?

The girl also appeared to be troubled.

"Seems like I have to use enough force to completely overwhelm him to get him to give up huh..." she mumbled to herself.

While she did so, she had already drawn another card.

This card was completely unlike those from before.

The previous cards were all black, but this one was crimson red.

Depicted on the face of this card was a blinding cluster of red light.

With the light obscuring it, there was no way to see exactly what was depicted on the card.

"True Crimson Demon Spear" the girl muttered.

She quickly drew another card with her other hand and threw it forward.

"Demon Scorpion Empress, I summon thee from the Abyss of Sin!"

Bam!

The card turned into a huge cloud of dust.

A human-headed, scorpion-bodied woman appeared in the desert.

A cold aura drifted about her as she raised a small, intricate shield in her hand.

“So there still exists someone that can summon me, what an unexpected surprise”

The woman chuckled.

The girl then threw the crimson red card outward.

The Demon Scorpion Empress caught it.

A spear obscured by a glorious red glow appeared in her hand.

With a shield in one hand and spear in another, she charged straight at Gu Qing Shan.

As Gu Qing Shan saw this spear, his expression turned serious.

He could sense the extreme sharpness that the spear gave off.

He raised the Corpse King Blade again.

At the same time, the girl moved.

She held up the first card and pointed it at Gu Qing Shan again.

“Prohibit weapon— — Blade”

In a flash, Gu Qing Shan’s Corpse King Blade disappeared and reappeared inside the card.

The boy in the card now held a bow in one hand, a Blade in the other with a quiver of arrows on his back.

At this point, Gu Qing Shan’s Blade, bow and arrows were all prohibited.

Seeing the Demon Scorpion Empress about to reach him, Gu Qing Shan leapt and flew backwards.

This so-called True Crimson Demon Spear looked terrifying, he wouldn’t be so arrogant as to think he could block it.

“No need to run, boy” the Demon Scorpion Empress giggled.

She charged forward even faster.

In about two breaths’ worth of time later, Gu Qing Shan would be unable to avoid her anymore.

Seizing what little time he had, Gu Qing Shan formed a hand seal and infused it with his Lightning spirit energy.

Three black holes manifested in front of himself.

Shh— —

Three bolts of blue lightning the size of a chopping board came out of them to attack the scorpion woman.

Lightning Secret Art, [Chaotic Lightning]!

The scorpion woman quickly stopped dead in her tracks and swiftly raised the shield in her hand.

As soon as the three bolts of lightning carrying intense destructive power struck the shield, they disappeared.

About several hundred meters away, the three bolts of lightning appeared and struck the dune of sand there.

Boom!

Under the cold moonlight, sand and gravel were kicked up by the force, scattering in the air.

Gu Qing Shan continued his retreat.

Instinctively, he felt a sense of danger.

Gu Qing Shan suddenly looked up.

The fully-armored boy was coming straight down at him.

The boy had clearly been waiting and perfectly caught this chance.

At this point, the enemy below me had just cast a spell, he had no weapons and no way to stop me.

“Surrender if you don’t want to die!”

The boy waved his scimitar and shouted.

As his voice came, he reached the top of Gu Qing Shan’s head.

Time seemed like it stopped in that moment.

A wild, reckless aura appeared from Gu Qing Shan’s body.

He turned into a black figure that shot straight to the sky, crashing into the boy with extreme force.

When the boy tried to slash him, the scimitar was repelled by an invisible force before it could reach Gu Qing Shan’s body.

A faint shadow detached itself from Gu Qing Shan’s body.

It was a human-headed snake woman that carried a solemn and majestic air.

Dong!

A loud and dull sound of impact resounded across the desert.

Divine Skill, [Unbreakable Mountain Range]!

After this impact, the boy disappeared in a puff of smoke.

Gu Qing Shan’s stance looked like that of a dragon as he continued to soar upwards through the night sky.

Chapter 692

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

The night wind slowly blew.

Gu Qing Shan leapt into the sky and looked down.

The girl was looking up at him.

Their gazes locked.

Gu Qing Shan's eyes were calm.

The girl's gaze suggested that she was worried about something.

As the Demon Scorpion Empress saw the [Unbreakable Mountain Range] attack, she stopped and commented: "That technique is quite the powerful one, but this man's martial arts foundations aren't very solid, he can't show the full power of that attack..."

"Big sis Demon Scorpion, help me catch him quick!" the girl hurriedly spoke.

"Got it"

The Demon Scorpion Empress leapt into the air with her shield and the True Crimson Demon Lance in hand.

Both of the girl's hands quickly moved in the void of space, quickly drawing two full hands of cards.

As she was about to use another card——

An autumn-like blue steel sword carrying a chilling presence swiftly appeared from behind her and lightly pressed against her throat.

The sword was cold as ice.

Holding the sword, Gu Qing Shan was standing right behind her.

"You——" the girl exclaimed in surprise.

Gu Qing Shan lightly pressed against her neck a bit more.

She went quiet.

Then she suddenly cried.

"You want to kill me?"

The girl was sobbing as she asked.

"No, I'm curious about something" Gu Qing Shan replied.

Thanks to the unique characteristics of the Tribulation realm, whenever he would be close to death, he would be able to feel it—— this was a unique type of spirit sense given to him by the karmic adversity.

But during their battle just now, he wasn't able to sense anything related to his karmic adversity.

Combined with the girl's actions so far, he concluded that she was someone who had a lot of powerful cards but held no killing intent towards him.

Her weapon prohibition, humanoid sentient puppets, the Demon Scorpion Empress summon, as well as the True Crimson Demon Spear, any of these would count as an extremely powerful ability in any other world.

—*and yet she claims to want to rob me.*

I'm a newcomer without a penny to my name, what can she actually get from me?

"Dismiss all of your cards, then we can talk" Gu Qing Shan said.

The girl obeyed.

All her cards and summons were dismissed.

The only one who didn't leave right away was the Demon Scorpion Empress.

She landed on the ground, standing in the desert as she silently watched.

"Don't worry, my contract with the card is already over, I'm only staying here to watch because I'm curious" she smiled at him.

Gu Qing Shan glanced at her.

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She is a very powerful entity, but she wasn't serious at all from the very start.

As far as I know, a summoned card will share the card user's thoughts, acting according to the card user's will.

The reason that the Demon Scorpion Empress was slacking during the battle just now was probably because the girl didn't hold a very strong fighting spirit in the first place.

So Gu Qing Shan ignored her and asked the girl: "From the very start, you already paid attention to me and specifically invited me to join your party?"

"Yes" the girl obediently answered.

"So you planned to rob me from the very beginning?"

"Hm"

"But I don't have any money, why did you choose someone like me to rob?"

"I'm not after your money" the girl hurriedly denied.

"Then what did you want?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

The girl lowered her head, her shoulders trembled a bit as drops of tears fell down her face onto the desert below.

It's all over, I tried so hard to get out, luckily ran into a small glimmer of hope, but it still ended in despair.

The girl dejectedly answered: "I just wanted... the card you have"

Card?

Gu Qing Shan was briefly stunned.

He then took out a card.

A bright red card that depicted a giant monster with two vertical irises and a grim pair of wings on its back.

Behind the monster was an endless sea of monsters.

They stood orderly in line, each carrying a weapon in their hands as they gave off a fearless aura.

As Gu Qing Shan took this card in hand, lines of glowing text appeared in his retina.

[You've received the War card: Blood Sea God Army]

[You've received ownership of this card]

[For unknown reasons, Blood Sea God Army had actively formed a contract with you, giving you the ability to call upon and control it]

— in Aboul, when Su Xue Er took Gu Qing Shan's [Predictor of Fate] card, she gave this card to him.

Su Xue Er said that the card would be a deposit in exchange for his.

But in truth, as soon as Gu Qing Shan received it, he had passively signed a summoning contract with the [Blood Sea God Army]

This was one of many ways that Su Xue Er tried to protect Gu Qing Shan.

She was afraid that Gu Qing Shan might run into some sort of danger while she wasn't with him, so she gave the most powerful card she had to him and forcefully helped him sign a Blood Sea contract.

"You wanted this card?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"Ah, yes, that one!"

The girl's eyes glittered as she saw the Blood Sea card, completely forgetting that there was a sword on her neck.

"What do you want this for?"

"Actually, I sneaked out here without permission"

"Hm?"

The girl sighed: "I was being imprisoned by an extremely powerful person. He wanted me to surrender myself to him and become his slave, but due to some restrictions, he wasn't able to do that within a short period of time, similarly, I couldn't escape from the shackles that he had placed on me"

Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but ask: "But you have so many powerful cards— I can tell, you still have a lot more that you haven't used, and you're still no match for them?"

"Hah, when I was in slumber, he used several extremely powerful Law-grade cards to shackle me, so whenever I attacked him, all of my powers would be nullified"

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"And this card here can help you escape from those shackles?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

The girl looked at Gu Qing Shan with a sincere begging expression: "Yes, among all the decks, Blood Sea is a unique series of cards, as long as I have a card from the Blood Sea deck, I would be able to assimilate myself with the Blood Sea deck to fight against him while borrowing their power— which means I will be able to escape from the restraints of his Law-grade cards and escape"

When Gu Qing Shan wanted to ask more, he suddenly realized something.

This was so shocking that it caused his expression to warp.

He exclaimed in disbelief: "Wait a minute— if what you're saying is true, could it be that you were a card!?"

Seeing how much Gu Qing Shan was in disbelief, the girl pridefully lifted her chin and boasted: "That's right, I am a card, one that had just woken up from countless years of slumber, otherwise why would I allow someone to put shackles on me like that?"

Gu Qing Shan rubbed the bridge of his nose, forcing himself to calm down for the moment.

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As soon as I came into town, I got deceived by a card, then was subjected to that 'robbery' just now...

Wait, no, that's not important.

What's important is—

"Don't you know that besides robbing someone, there's a more peaceful way to get something from another person?" he asked.

"You mean that kind of transaction?"

"Yes, I mean a transaction"

The girl looked at him gloomily, lowered her head and stuttered as she spoke: "I'm not 'that' kind of card, no matter what you think"

After a brief moment of silent confusion, Gu Qing Shan suddenly understood what she meant.

He yelled out: "What do you mean 'no matter what I think'! Why are you even thinking about 'that' in the first place!?"

"You were obviously talking about 'that', and here I thought you were a decent guy, turns out you're just as bad as the rest of them!" the girl refuted.

Gu Qing Shan was incredibly shaken by this claim.

He forced himself to control his emotions and not to mistakenly slice off her head.

He inhaled, exhaled, then inhaled again, exhaled again, and finally calmed himself down.

“The transaction I’m talking about is using something that both sides want to conduct an equivalent exchange” he finally spoke.

“Ah? That’s what you mean?”

The girl was stunned, then took out a notebook from behind her and appeared shocked: “I’m sorry, I actually looked at the wrong meaning, so you meant a pure transaction”

“Then, I want that card you have, what do you want from me?” the girl asked.

Gu Qing Shan slowly spoke: “I want you——”

The girl covered her chest: “You pervert”

“I still haven’t finished!”

“As soon as I heard the first few words, I can already tell what you really want!” the girl stared straight at him.

Gu Qing Shan’s veins were bulging, he almost couldn’t help himself from swinging his sword.

“I want you to help me heal a certain person, do you have the ability to heal people?” he said it all at once.

“Ah? Is that what it was?” the girl trembled a bit and asked again.

“Of course that’s what it is, what did you think I was going to say!” Gu Qing Shan shouted.

Watching this on the sidelines, the Demon Scorpion Empress couldn’t help but chuckle, muttering to herself: “Quite a good trip this time...”

The girl replied: “I have a lot of healing cards that can be used for various different types of wounds, no problem”

“What if it’s a wound that not even a Divinity can heal?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“If that’s the case, I’ll have to take a look first, I can’t guarantee anything” the girl seriously answered.

Gu Qing Shan nodded.

If she’s acting that serious, it’s worth a shot.

—if she had boasted about her abilities instead, I wouldn’t have believed her.

Suddenly, the girl’s expression changed: “Oh no, he’s coming to take me back!”

Various black thorned shackles manifested on her body, binding her tightly.

“This is what was sealing you?” Gu Qing Shan looked at the chains and asked.

“Yes, hah, I won’t be able to complete the transaction with you” the girl spoke sorrowfully.

The black chains pulled her to the air before heading in a certain direction.

Gu Qing Shan considered for a split second.

Yun Ji's life is already like a burning rope—

If I miss this chance, I'll have to spend a lot of time and effort to make money, without any guarantees of finding the correct way to heal her.

Not to mention whether or not I can bring that method to her.

Gu Qing Shan's eyes became fierce.

The Six Paths Great Mountain sword suddenly flew up.

Countless stars emerged from the sword like meteors streaking across the sky, slashing the immediate area around the girl

Sha sha sha sha sha!

Secret Art, [Silver Star].

The blinding starlight transformed into soft, thin strings that consecutively struck the intersection of the girl's shackles, cutting them apart.

[Law Breaker]!

The black thorned shackles were broken, fell down, and disappeared.

The sword flashed and returned next to Gu Qing Shan.

The girl appeared to be in joy, before immediately turning into fright.

She shouted at Gu Qing Shan from afar: "He's coming, we need to escape now!"

Gu Qing Shan's figure flashed and appeared next to her.

"If you don't want to be caught, turn into a card now!"

He said curtly.

This time, the girl obediently did as he said and turned into a card.

Gu Qing Shan put the card away into his Inventory Bag.

He then expanded his inner sight to its maximum range and activated [Ground Shrink]!

In a flash, he vanished from the air, reappearing several hundred miles away right at the edge of the inner sight.

Not allowing himself any time to rest, Gu Qing Shan once again activated [Ground Shrink] without minding his spirit energy expenditure!

In just a few seconds, he vanished again and again, quickly escaping far away.

One breath.

Two breaths.

Three breaths.

Where they were fighting before.

A black figure descended from the sky.

Chapter 693

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

Intense black light enveloped the desert, plunging a large area of sand into darkness.

A man appeared right in the middle of it all.

He was wearing a black coat covered in runes, a black hat with a wide rim that was pulled down, concealing his face.

The only place within that area of the desert unaffected by the darkness was the Demon Scorpion Empress.

The man looked around before focusing his attention on the Demon Scorpion Empress.

“Where’s the person?” he questioned.

The Demon Scorpion Empress covered her mouth and yawned: “You’re asking me?”

“Nonsense, of course I’m asking you!” the man angrily snapped at her.

The Demon Scorpion Empress tilted her head and thought for a bit before answering: “Ah, they were here before, but I don’t know where they are now”

“Are you making fun of me?”

“I’m only telling you the truth”

“Good, good, very good, just you wait, I’ll find that card first then we’ll talk about you”

He stomped his feet, about to leave.

All of a sudden, his expression changed and threw out 7-8 cards at once.

Layers upon layers of light covered him, forming a wall of darkness, several thick shields, a golem wearing armor as well as a faint black protective barrier.

—-*bam!*

A streak of light shot straight at him at incredible speed.

Being hit by this light, the walls all collapsed, the shields all broke, the golem was pierced through, only the faint black barrier managed to barely stop the streak of light.

The black-clothed man was sent flying several feet backward.

He crouched on the ground, cautiously looking up at the barrier.

A sharp stinger had pierced through the barrier, sinking more than half-way in.

Just a bit more and the stinger would've gone through the barrier completely.

"Scorpion Empress, were you the one who took that card? Are you asking for a fight!?"

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The man's expression became serious as he drew a card from the void of space, showing it to the Demon Scorpion Empress.

The only thing depicted on the card was a horn.

A war horn.

The Demon Scorpion Empress slowly pulled her stinger back and spoke in a cold tone of voice: "It's useless no matter who you call, anyone who tried to recollect what happened just now will only find that I'm protecting my dignity"

"First you'll find that card, then we'll talk about me?" she mimicked his tone of voice from before.

"How do you think Greyhan is going to judge that? I'm quite willing for a fight right now if that's what you want. I guarantee you will be slowly devoured bit by bit, only after you're thoroughly eaten away will you get to lose your consciousness"

While saying that, the Demon Scorpion Empress was slightly dangling her stinger back and forth.

Her upper half was a rare human beauty, but her lower half was that of a fierce scorpion.

The sharp stinger at the end of her tail was aiming closely at the man's heart as if she was ready to strike again at any time.

"Hmph! If you dare to touch that card, then you're the one who broke the treaty, you're the one who triggered the war" the man spoke again, unconvinced.

The Demon Scorpion Empress grinned.

"I was wondering why that card was able to sneak out by itself, turns out it was because Greyhan left a brainless moron to watch over it. Can't blame anyone else for that" she scoffed.

"When I get the evidence, you won't be laughing anymore" the man spoke in a threatening voice.

He had regained his calm and took out another card.

"Past Recollection!"

The man uttered those words and activated the card in his hand.

From the darkness, strands of light began to gather and formed the projection of a card.

In just a few moments, several dozen projections had manifested.

The man walked in front of each card and carefully checked them.

The humanoid card puppets, the scimitar, the True Crimson Demon Spear, as well as random equipment cards— every card that the girl had used in this place reappeared as a projection, showing itself in front of the man.

He checked each one until he saw a certain card.

[Abyss of Sin summoning – Monarch’s Descent]

The man’s expression changed.

He finally understood, the Demon Scorpion Empress was actually summoned here.

Which instantly cleared her name and proved her innocence.

Considering his tone from before, he really did offend her.

However— —

Why is the Demon Scorpion Empress doing such a redundant thing?

The man looked at the Demon Scorpion Empress again and spoke in a low voice: “If the summoning has been dismissed, why are you still here?”

The Demon Scorpion Empress glared at him: “Are you interrogating me?”

The man paused a bit, then changed his tone: “May I ask you why you are still here?”

The Demon Scorpion Empress answered: “Shit for brains, you still don’t understand that? Because I live in this desert, where else would I go?”

The man froze.

Just like that, everything she’s done so far is justified.

He suddenly realized, regardless if it was her that did it or not, she had already bought more than enough time for the card.

With just my power alone, I won’t be able to track that card anymore.

He sighed.

Such a crucial card suddenly disappearing without a trace made me completely flustered.

I have no one to blame but myself for being too panicked, allowing this scorpion to lead me around the nose like that.

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Thinking that, he no longer hesitated, took out a card and activated it.

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Very quickly, a stern male voice came from the card.

「 Did you find it yet? 」

“Teacher, the card summoned the Demon Scorpion Empress to stop me, so I haven’t found it yet” the man glared intensely at the Demon Scorpion Empress and spoke.

「 The Demon Scorpion Empress? 」

The other side went silent briefly.

A book suddenly appeared from the card and flew in front of the Demon Scorpion Empress.

The Demon Scorpion Empress smiled and placed her hand on the cover of the book.

The book spoke: [The treaty is intact, the Empress was only summoned here!]

The man became flustered and knelt down: “Sir Greyhan, she attacked me!”

「 We will talk about this later, you must immediately go and bring that card back to me 」 the stern male voice on the other side spoke.

“Yes!” the man quickly replied.

Another book appeared in front of him.

The book opened by itself, showing a single card on each page.

「 These are the 537 restraining cards that I placed on that card, I will grant you permission to use them, so get that card back right this instant! 」

“Yes sir!”

The man took the book and immediately flew away.

But the card he used to communicate still remained active.

The man called Greyhan spoke solemnly: 「 Empress, I must inform you sincerely, that card is very crucial for me, I hope you understand that well 」

“What does that have to do with me? I was only taking a stroll in the desert when someone summoned me, I’m still a bit confused here y’know” the Demon Scorpion Empress smiled and answered him.

Greyhan went silent briefly before also chuckling: 「 I also do not believe that you would interfere with my card refining process. After all, this is only my personal matter while you are a noble monarch 」

“Of course, you only just have to focus on managing your black market, and we will live here in peace as we always have, that was the deal”

「 Indeed 」 Greyhan agreed.

“But that disciple of yours certainly does have the natural arrogance of a card user. I personally feel that it’s only causing him to be dumber and dumber”

The Demon Scorpion Empress continued: “Interfering with you isn’t going to bring our Abyss of Sin any benefit, this is as clear as day, so you should’ve believed me instead of that moron who ruined everything from the very beginning”

After a moment of silence, the other side sighed: 「 It couldn't be helped, I have a bit of urgent business on my hand so I can't return right away. I could only leave managing the black market to that disciple of mine. Who could've known he would be that incompetent 」

Greyhan's tone contained a bit of annoyance.

He already saw the results of the recollection and knew that the Demon Scorpion Empress was summoned here.

Our mutual treaty was also still intact.

And just as she said, stopping me wouldn't give her any benefits.

When someone stands at the level of the Demon Scorpion Empress, without sufficient benefit, she wouldn't even bother to look at you.

Which means---

This entire situation really was caused by that useless disciple of mine.

What a fool, card users have a natural advantage against many other Professions, but if one can't maintain clarity and humility, they will surely stagnate due to their own self-righteousness.

This disciple of mine has always been too hung up on his own status.

I have to teach him everything again from the very beginning, to make sure that he can give a sober look at the truth and Laws!

Unfortunately, I'm still several million World Layers away so I can't return right now.

I wouldn't be able to do anything about teaching that dumb disciple or retrieving that card.

And so, even the ever-calm Greyhan was feeling a bit flustered right now.

「 If my disciple had shown any rudeness, I apologize to you on his behalf 」 Greyhan spoke.

The Demon Scorpion Empress replied: "That's fine, it's nothing but a small matter, but I hope you won't arbitrarily bother me like this again. I'm not that free of a person"

Greyhan paused a bit and spoke in a gentler tone: 「 Please don't worry, I have used several hundred restraining techniques on that card, so it will be retrieved and carefully looked-after soon. It won't bother you again 」

"Hm, that's a good thing" the Demon Scorpion Empress replied with a pleased tone.

「 Then I shall excuse myself 」

"Goodbye"

The card disappeared.

The other lingering spells also vanished.

The Demon Scorpion Empress silently stood there and fell into silence.

A while later.

She exhaled lightly: "I can only help you two so much"

...

Within the endless desert.

Gu Qing Shan was still running away.

He didn't see anything or anyone chasing him, but he still felt anxious and restrained.

To be able to imprison a card of this level, the other party must be incredibly formidable, and most likely unbeatable.

If this card was really as crucial as he thought it was, the other party wouldn't only have a single layer of security on it.

After a while, Gu Qing Shan's expression changed.

The anxiety in his mind suddenly shot up, he was feeling a faint sense of death from his spirit sense.

Unlike other Professions, cultivators must go through a Tribulation to advance to the next level each time, making the process extremely difficult.

But there was also a certain benefit, that was they gained a highly sensitive spirit sense that allowed them to faintly predict future situations ahead of time.

Even though Gu Qing Shan was now a long distance away from where they fought before, he could faintly tell that the chase had only just begun.

Something was after them.

Gu Qing Shan stopped.

He tapped his Inventory Bag and released the card from it.

As soon as the card appeared, it turned back into the girl in a white outfit.

"Try using your spell cards to see if we're safe yet or not" Gu Qing Shan told her.

"Definitely not" the girl spoke worriedly, "I still have many card-type restraints on me right now, some of them must be tracking techniques"

Gu Qing Shan took out the [Blood Sea God Army] card and showed her: "If I give this card to you, can you remove those restraints and tracking techniques from yourself?"

"I need some time" the girl answered.

Chapter 694

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

The night sky.

With a book in his hand, a black-clothed man was flying in a determined direction.

The book was opened in front of him.

One of the cards gave off an invisible presence that surrounded him.

This card was bringing him along with its flight.

Only after reaching its target would the card's power disappear.

And so, for now, the black-clothed man didn't have to do anything at all. He only needed to rest and prepare himself for the moment when he finally catches up and does his job.

With nothing to do, the black-clothed man checked the various other cards in the book.

He quickly had an expression of admiration.

—because all of his Teacher's cards inside this book were specifically chosen for the sake of restraining that unique card.

Simply reading the card descriptions and how they were arranged in this book was beneficial to him.

When will I be able to reach Teacher's level?

—perhaps not too long, after all, I'm the most excellent among my peers in this generation. Even Teacher had to admit my exceptional talent as a card user.

The black-clothed man sighed and imagined the day that would become a reality.

At this point, the night sky had stagnated as the wind no longer blew.

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Within the card book, the tracking card shined brightly.

This signifies that I'm about to catch up.

The black-clothed man prepared himself for battle.

A second later, he landed.

Boom!

Sand and rocks scattered everywhere.

Gu Qing Shan and the girl stopped.

Within the cloud of sand, a black-clothed man could be seen.

Even though it was incredibly delayed, he still made it here.

And since he knew that the other party had the ability to track them, Gu Qing Shan wasn't foolish enough to use all of his spirit energy for escaping.

If he did, the two of them would eventually be caught up, but Gu Qing Shan wouldn't have the power to counter-attack.

Gu Qing Shan readied himself.

He took out the Night Rain and put a quiver of arrows on his back.

“Is that him?” Gu Qing Shan asked in a low voice.

“No, that’s his disciple” the girl quickly answered.

She was currently holding the [Blood Sea God Army] card, a blood-colored light slowly drifting around her body.

—she was trying to communicate with the Blood Sea, hoping to erase her previous status and become a card that belonged to the Blood Sea deck.

Hearing that, Gu Qing Shan became less tense.

He could tell, the other party wasn’t powerful to the point where he couldn’t defeat him.

But his opponent was still a true card user.

A natural powerful Profession.

“It’s no good! I can’t beat a card user, I can only buy you some time, run!”

Gu Qing Shan shouted.

“You— don’t have to do such—” the girl bit her lip.

Why is this person so kind? He and I don’t know each other at all, but he’s willing to use himself as a decoy for me.

With tears in her eyes, she quickly ran away.

Gu Qing Shan stood between them and immediately attacked.

He immediately started off with Shifting Flurry!

Like blurred shadows in the darkness, arrows drew unpredictable arcs as they were shot out.

Seeing that, the man scoffed.

“An archer? Decent archery skills you have there, but such a low-ranked Profession won’t be able to win against me”

A card appeared in his hand.

Depicted on the card were several shields glowing in different colors that were constantly changing places.

Until finally, a blue shield appeared in the middle of the card.

The card vanished and instantly turned into a spherical barrier.

[Ranged attack barrier, this barrier will quintuple your defenses against ranged attacks, but lower your defenses against magical and melee attacks accordingly]

As soon as the barrier manifested, Gu Qing Shan’s arrows reached him.

Pock pock pock pock!

The arrows hit their marks, but none of them managed to pierce through the barrier.

“Pitiful archer, unless you are at least three times more powerful than I am, none of your attacks will even reach me”

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The black-clothed man crossed his arms and pretended to sigh regretfully.

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His archery skills are certainly very decent.

Unfortunately, that level of archery is completely insignificant in the face of a card user.

This was a simple natural difference in quality between Professions.

Unless he can advance from this basic Profession of ‘archer’ into a higher-ranked Profession that has more unique ranged attacks, the result of this battle is already decided.

The black-clothed man drew another card.

Enough theatrics, I need to catch that card quickly and report back to Teacher.

While thinking that, he noticed that the archer just dropped his bow.

“I surrender” the archer screamed out in despair.

The black-clothed man froze.

Tch, so not only is his Profession shitty, even the person is shitty.

If that’s the case, I can actually enjoy myself by torturing him to death.

After he completely disarms himself and kneels down begging for forgiveness, I’ll kill him.

His expression of despair and fury at that time would definitely feel exhilarating.

As for that unique card on the run—

The black-clothed man glanced at the book of cards in his hand.

This was Teacher’s book, all the spell cards used to restrain that unique card are in here.

She won’t be able to get away.

After thinking everything through, the black-clothed man quickly made his decision.

He slowly spoke: “Surrender? A wise choice, but first, throw the quiver behind your back down as well, quickly!”

“Yes”

The archer quickly took off his quiver and tossed it to the ground.

His direct and decisive actions made the black-clothed man feel even more contempt.

But this was natural, as he never had a chance to win against me in the first place.

The black-clothed man glanced at the bow and the quiver in the sand and relaxed a bit more.

“Now, kneel”

While ordering that, he was staring at him, waiting to see his expression of despair and humiliation.

Of course, to prevent the reckless lashing out of a cornered rat, he maintained a card in his hand, preparing to use it at a moment's notice.

The archer hesitated for a bit before puffing out his chest and mustered all his courage to shout: “A soldier can be killed but not humiliated!”

Then he turned and ran.

— as a long-ranged attacker, his Profession required him to be swift, so his running speed was indeed fast.

But what use is that?

The black-clothed man chuckled.

He put away the defensive card he prepared before and then he randomly drew a movement card and threw it out.

The card was activated.

The black-clothed man vanished and suddenly reappeared in front of the archer, perfectly blocking his path.

The archer was shocked.

As he was dashing for his life, he couldn't possibly stop in time, rolling several times on the ground before struggling to regain his balance.

Not a bit more, not a bit less, he happened to stop perfectly at a distance of 10 feet from the black-clothed man.

“Is this what a card user is capable of?” the archer muttered at a loss.

The black-clothed man gracefully twirled a card in his hand and slowly replied: “Of course, for a card user, instantaneous movement within a short distance is nothing but child's play, not at all a struggle like yourself”

He sighed: “Pitiful archer, choose, do you want to die, or kneel”

The archer also sighed.

His expression of shock and despair disappeared completely as he coldly spoke: “You are too arrogant. In truth, both arrogance and prejudice are nothing but danger to yourself in a fight”

Hearing that, the black-clothed man had a bad feeling.

— but there's no one else around here, both his bow and arrow were already thrown away, what sort of danger could there be?

Trusting his instinct, the black-clothed man wanted to draw a few more cards.

But he realized a horrifying truth.

—-he was unable to draw any card, he wasn't even able to move his hand.

This seemed to be some sort of restraining power.

But where is the enemy?

Damn it, I still have almost a hundred cards, countless abilities, and powers that I still haven't shown.

If I were to fight at full power, this world itself would be shaken!

Who restrained me!

With deep confusion and unwillingness, the black-clothed man's world turned to darkness.

During his final moments, he seemed to have seen the archer holding a sword and swung at him from afar.

Sha—-—

His blood spilled everywhere, but quickly got scattered by the violent sword-infused wind that followed.

The body wasn't able to handle the power of the sword phantom either, as it was finely diced and chopped up.

The spherical barrier was extremely potent in defending against ranged attacks, but it failed to even slow the sword down.

—-in fact, according to the rules of the card, this attack was actually considered a melee attack.

Secret Art, [Life Seeker].

Within 10 feet, I seek out your life and extinguish it!

Gu Qing Shan ignored the corpse.

Because a person who approached a battle with a sense of superiority and arrogance wasn't worthy of further attention.

He simply looked at the void of space in front of himself.

On the War God UI, the number that represented his total Soul Points value was increasing at a rapid rate.

Chapter 695

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

On the War God UI, lines of glowing text were quickly scrolling through.

[You've bypassed the difference in strength and killed a card user several times stronger than yourself]

[You've obtained an excessive amount of Soul Points]

[As he was a user of the Death deck, a more powerful deck than normal card decks, you've received

extra Soul Points]

[In total, the amount of Soul Points you've received from killing the card user are as follows: 100,000 + 20,000 = 120,000 Soul Points]

[Remaining Soul Points: 193,000/600]

When Gu Qing Shan saw this huge amount of Soul Points, he was initially ecstatic, but as he recalled that to upgrade [War God Skills] he needed 1 million Soul Points, his excitement went away.

Followers of the seven Gods were currently lighting their Trees of Divinity one after another.

Those followers would soon obtain the method to travel the path to Godhood.

In the upcoming era, if I'm unable to keep up, I'll be dependent on other people sooner or later.

Gu Qing Shan shook his head and glanced at the book that landed a bit away from the corpse.

A book of cards.

Gu Qing Shan willed it to move.

The book flew into his hand.

[Restraining Book of Death]

[This card binder comprises of 573 restraining cards, all of which were arranged to seal a particularly unique card]

[Because you did not receive permission to use this card binder, you are unable to activate any cards within this binder]

Gu Qing Shan threw the [Restraining Book of Death] out.

The Six Paths Great Mountain sword suddenly flashed and pierced the book.

As if it was alive, the [Restraining Book of Death] let out a sharp screech.

But since the Six Paths Great Mountain sword had pierced through it, no matter how much the book struggled, it couldn't escape.

Gu Qing Shan's eyes sharpened.

Countless black sword shadows appeared from the sword, slicing through the book and the cards inside.

Poof!

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The [Restraining Book of Death] was reduced to colorful confetti with runes that scattered everywhere.

The confetti quickly faded into the void of space.

This looked very similar to what happened in Aboul when the big rooster destroyed the Blood Sea Barrier.

All of a sudden, a black jet of light shot out from the void of space and squarely hit Gu Qing Shan's arm without him being able to react in time.

Gu Qing Shan hurriedly took a look at it.

It was a black squiggly rune that blinked twice on Gu Qing Shan's arm before disappearing without a trace.

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

[For killing a follower of the Death God, you have been marked by the Death God's Law]

[Your blasphemy towards the Church of Death has been notified to high-ranking Death Cardinals]

[From now on, you must avoid the Church of Death's territory, otherwise apostles of Death stronger than yourself will be notified of your presence and pursue you]

Reading that, Gu Qing Shan went silent briefly and asked: "System, are there any ways to remove this mark?"

[Ting]!

The System answered with a chime: [Among the infinite worlds, there are always one way or another to resolve your problem, please seek it out yourself]

Gu Qing Shan calmed back down.

—as long as there is a way.

He went to the corpse and searched.

A few moments later, he found a particularly heavy small bag.

[Death Apostle, card user, God's Chosen Steeple's senior student, Kara's bag of belonging]

[To open this bag, you need to have a profound understanding of spatial expansion techniques]

His gaze leaving the War God UI, Gu Qing Shan decided to put this small bag away for now.

I'm currently penniless without a coin to my name, so I'll need to think of some way to open this little bag.

—among countless Professions, card users are famous for being among the wealthiest.

After cleaning up, Gu Qing Shan formed a hand seal.

An elementary-level Fire Lighter technique.

Flames began to appear on the pieces of the body, sizzling as they burnt.

Soon enough, no traces were left.

Gu Qing Shan released his inner sight to check again.

No leads remained.

—or at least, with his abilities, he couldn't find anything that could become a lead.

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Nodding in satisfaction, he leapt up and flew away.

He followed the direction that the girl ran in and quickly found traces of her.

In truth, the battle just now didn't go on for very long.

Most of the battle was just him luring the black-clothed man into a false sense of security, the only actual part of the battle was his final strike.

The girl couldn't have ran away very far.

Gu Qing Shan's figure flashed and landed in front of her.

As soon as she saw him, the girl stopped.

"It's over" Gu Qing Shan lightly told her.

The girl looked at him and froze for a few seconds.

Then she started sobbing.

While sobbing, she spoke in a determined voice: "You died to save me, please rest in peace, knowing that I would rather die in the battle against that man than to let them catch me again"

"..." Gu Qing Shan.

Did she think I died in battle?

While he was thinking that, the girl had already clasped her hands together to pray for him: "O' restless soul, lay yourself to rest, there is no longer anything that troubles you in this world, for you will enter the realm of eternal peace..."

Gu Qing Shan helplessly sighed: "That's enough, I'm still alive"

The girl looked back at him.

With a clear look of confusion, the girl stared at his eyes, then checked his shadow before hesitantly speaking: "You're still alive?"

"Of course" Gu Qing Shan answered her.

"Then—— where's the crook from before?" the girl asked.

"I killed him" Gu Qing Shan answered.

The girl blinked a few times, looked at him from top to bottom and asked doubtfully: "Killed him? Just you alone?"

Gu Qing Shan was speechless.

He suddenly wondered if he owed this card something in his past life.

But the girl wasn't a real idiot.

She closed her eyes, sensed herself before happily cheering: "My restraints have all been undone!"
"I'm free!"

She was so glad that she cried, loudly bawling her eyes out.

Gu Qing Shan simply stood and waited until she calmed down again.

A few moments later.

The girl rubbed her now reddened eyes, took out the [Blood Sea God Army] card and gave it back to Gu Qing Shan.

“You don’t need it?”

Gu Qing Shan asked as he received the card.

The girl replied: “The Law-grade cards that restrained me are now all gone, so I won’t need to seek refuge in another deck anymore”

“Hm, that’s good then, I heard that if a card wanted to leave its own deck, it must pay a really heavy price. Then if an independent card wanted to join another deck, it would have to undergo countless trials and tests, paying an equally heavy price” Gu Qing Shan commented.

“That is very true” the girl sighed and nodded, “that’s how I got here, it was because I decided to leave ‘that’ deck that I had to fall into such a long slumber in the first place”

Silence.

The girl suddenly covered her own mouth and shouted: “Aaaaaaa, why did you ask my secret!”

Gu Qing Shan helplessly shrugged: “Oi, get your facts straight, you said it by yourself”

The girl was still unconvinced: “I don’t care, you crook, you definitely did that on purpose!”

Gu Qing Shan tried his hardest to maintain his calm: “Be reasonable, I’m not a card user, I don’t know anything about you”

“You must have some ulterior motives when you questioned my past, didn’t you!” the girl whimpered in shock.

“...” Gu Qing Shan

If he didn’t need to depend on this card to save Yun Ji, Gu Qing Shan felt like he would have already turned around and left.

Chapter 696

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

The Holy Church of Death.

An ancient coin was being twirled among 5 fingers of a hand, moving up and down. (1)

The flexible fingers changed its movement suddenly and flicked the coin.

Ching———

As the coin landed on the large round table, it didn't fall to the ground right away, but rather it began to spin.

Within the solemn great hall of the church, everyone held their breath and said nothing.

The coin continued to spin attracting everyone's gaze.

A while later, a dignified voice resounded.

"This was supposed to be the most important matter to the Church, but after the appearance of the path to Godhood, everyone simply forgot about it for the time being"

The voice went quiet.

A black-clothed man stepped forward and knelt down by the round table.

"I'm sorry, Pope, this was due to my own carelessness. I, Greyhan, express my sincere apology to everyone here" he spoke.

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Greyhan, one of the eight Cardinals of the Holy Church of Death.

He was lowering himself greatly to admit his mistake.

The atmosphere of the great hall became a bit less tense.

With a voice full of consideration, the Pope spoke: "Greyhan, I heard that your disciple was killed, I understand your grief"

"He did not perform his duty to the best of his abilities, death is the only escape from his sins" Greyhan replied.

"Now, what do you intend to do next?" the Pope asked.

"I will personally return, seek out the person who ruined the grand plan of our Holy Church and take back that card" Greyhan answered.

"Personally? Has your Tree of Divinity been lit?" the Pope asked.

"It is still a bit from completion" Greyhan sighed.

The rest of the people around couldn't help whispering among themselves.

If Greyhan were to do this personally, he would have to give up on lightning his Tree of Divinity half-way through.

This would be the same as giving up walking on the path to Godhood, the greatest form of punishment for oneself in these times.

But who could he blame?

In fact, if it was not to light his Tree of Divinity, Greyhan wouldn't have left Drifting Sand world.

If the path to Godhood hadn't appeared, he would have continued to remain in that world and continued to protect that crucial card.

But now, it was just known that all the means they used to restrain that card had already been destroyed.

Several thousand years of the Church's time and effort; wasted.

Making such a big mistake, Greyhan deserved this punishment.

Hearing that, the Pope deeply sighed.

He was very pleased with the current situation.

Greyhan has always been known as a capable person.

Now I can simply give Greyhan a helping hand and gain both the gratitude and loyalty of a Cardinal in power.

While thinking that, the Pope muttered: "God's Teachings"

As they heard these words, everyone in the room quickly stood up and knelt on one knee.

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The Pope carefully took out a metallic black box.

And opened it.

Oong!

A heavy shroud of darkness emerged out of the box and quickly enveloped the entire hall

In the darkness, the teachings of the Death God from countless years ago directly resounded within everyone's hearts.

The shroud of darkness only lingered for a single breath's worth of time before disappearing.

Everyone had a look of enlightenment.

"Are you all clear?" the Pope asked

"Yes sir" a Cardinal answered: "When the path to Godhood appeared, all apostles must walk the path as their number one priority, we may not stray from or violate the path"

The Pope looked at Greyhan and smiled: "The path to Godhood is the path that the Gods showed us, we cannot violate it, so you do not need to leave for now, stay here until you've finished lighting your Tree of Divinity"

Greyhan appeared extremely grateful.

—if they had a choice, who would willingly give up the chance to become a God?

A voice suddenly came: "Pope, sir, I object"

Everyone turned back to see that it was a Cardinal who usually didn't get along with Greyhan.

He angrily protested: "After so many years of preparation by the Church, we finally got a once-in-a-thousand-year chance to capture that card at her weakest, but Greyhan let all of that go to waste, shouldn't he be subjected to some sort of punishment?"

The Pope amiably replied: "The reason why Greyhan left Drifting Sand world was because he heeded the call of our God, he returned to light his Tree of Divinity"

"While the matter of the card was something that the Church planned by itself"

"When comparing the two, Greyhan returning at the will of God was the correct choice"

"Perhaps God didn't want us to look into that secret in the first place and summoned our devout Cardinal Greyhan back"

The Cardinal's lips twitched, still unwilling to let things go: "But still, Greyhan——"

The Pope cut him off and spoke curtly: "The path to Godhood is the order of God, or do you think that your personal views are more important than God's will?"

With those last words, the Pope's tone was already cold.

The Cardinal hurriedly answered: "Not at all, that is not the case"

The Pope glanced around.

No one else objected.

This was God's Teachings, something that the Death God himself arranged countless eons ago.

Who would dare to violate the will of God?

With the tacit agreement of everyone, Greyhan slowly stood up and spoke gratefully: "Thank you, Pope"

"You don't need to, the will of God is above all, it will not be violated" the Pope replied.

At this point, the atmosphere in the hall slowly calmed down.

That's right, the Gods have already arranged for all of this countless years ago.

How would a God not be able to predict their Church's own direction?

Perhaps God really did not want the Church to look into the secret of that card.

Everyone silently thought that.

They couldn't help but glance back at the round table.

The spinning coin on the table was finally slowing down.

If your sight was good enough, you would be able to tell what was depicted on the two faces of the coin.

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The 'head' depicted a sleeping young girl.

Around this girl were various mysterious and mystical runes.

The runes were protecting her at the very center.

The 'tail' of the coin depicted constantly surging primal chaos, the more you looked at it, the faster your heart would beat. (2)

Indeed, this was one of the 1001 types of numbered coins, the third-ranked coin: [Sleeping Girl].

If this #999 coin appeared elsewhere, it would be hard for most to even recognize its true name.

Because there was only one each of the three highest-ranked coins.

— — — and also because there wasn't even the most basic information depicted on this coin, unlike the others.

This was one of the three most mysterious coins of the entire Strife Zones.

This coin doesn't represent wealth.

It represented a secret that far exceeded what could be measured by wealth.

If Gu Qing Shan were here, he would be shocked to notice as the girl depicted on the coin looked exactly the same as the girl that he rescued.

Unfortunately, it would be a long time until he finally found out about this.

The Pope's voice resounded in the grand hall once again.

"Then this matter will be settled here, Greyhan will remain and continue to light his Tree of Divinity as God willed him to. The rest of you as well, before lighting your Tree of Divinity, none of you may leave"

"Issue a huge bounty to the entire Strife Zones for that man"

"All followers should make achieving Godhood their highest priority, leave everything else aside for now!"

"Next"

"Anna will soon return"

"The path of Godhood was opened jointly by her and Su Ke Er of the Church of Fate, this represents the favor of the Gods, as well as peerless honor"

"Discuss among yourselves, how we should reward her"

...

Drifting Sand world.

The great desert.

Within a sand dune covered by countless layers of formations.

Gu Qing Shan made a hand seal.

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The sand and gravel parted ways to show the ice crystal inside to him and the white-dressed girl.

Within the ice crystal, a beautiful woman covered in blood and wounds had her eyes closed, fallen into a coma as she was lingering on the verge of death.

The Lord-class Combatant, Yun Ji.

“This is the one you wanted me to save?” the white-dressed girl asked.

“Yes, please take a look at her for me” Gu Qing Shan said.

The white-dressed girl came forward and knelt down in front of the blue ice crystal.

“[Divine Power Frost Crystal] huh, how nostalgic”

The white-dressed girl slowly tapped the surface of the ice crystal and commented while being full of emotions

Gu Qing Shan’s eyebrows twitched and hurriedly asked: “You know what this is? Then can you tell who performed this technique?”

The girl shook her head: “This Divine Craft is ancient, and there are quite a few Divinities who can use it, so I have no way to determine for sure who did it”

“Next, I’ll try to heal her, don’t say anything for now”

“Got it” Gu Qing Shan replied.

The girl began to draw card after card from the void of space.

She stuck each card on the outside of the ice crystal, then quickly gathered all of them.

Within the ice crystal, Yun Ji’s expression visibly became better, her wounds were also starting to heal.

Seeing that, Gu Qing Shan was joyful.

But the girl put all her cards away and stood up: “It’s not good, I can’t save her”

Gu Qing Shan froze.

He encouraged: “What you did just now seemed to have healed her a bit, don’t give up, maybe you can try again”

The girl shook her head: “The current me won’t be able to do anything”

She took out a book and drew a card from it.

The girl looked at Gu Qing Shan and sighed: “Seeing how you saved me, I will release my wisdom”

The card scattered into a cluster of lights and gradually got absorbed into the girl’s body.

She stood still without moving.

But her aura clearly changed.

Her gaze became solemn, her movements also gained a sense of indescribable holiness.

The girl didn’t explain anything and placed her hand on the ice crystal again.

“Show me your secret, o’ technique of Divinity” she muttered.

With the girl’s actions, the ice crystal became unstable, shaking horribly.

Gu Qing Shan was faintly alarmed.

If the ice crystal broke now, Yun Ji would definitely die without a doubt.

But if the girl was able to shake this ice crystal formed from divine power by simply touching it, she must’ve found some sort of solution.

For now, Gu Qing Shan didn’t even know if bringing the girl here was a good idea or not.

While he was still unsettled, the girl had pulled her hand back and stood up again.

She wiped the sweat off her forehead and told Gu Qing Shan: “The situation is very complicated, you must listen clearly to what I’m about to say”

Gu Qing Shan nodded.

The girl explained: “On the outside, this is only a single ice crystal, but in fact, there wasn’t only a single of these crystals. According to what I can feel from the Divine Power, there should be a total of 381 ice crystals”

Gu Qing Shan kept silent.

Most likely, Lady Darksea only managed to save only that many people, the rest of them must’ve died in battle and got their souls eaten by the monster.

The girl continued: “These 381 pieces of Divine Power ice crystals form a closed cycle-like structure. This cycle structure allows them to form an energy absorption tool— similar to formations that cultivators like you use”

“This formation-like tool has the ability to absorb various types of power within the void of space in the Strife Zones to replenish its own expenditures”

“This way, the ice crystals will be able to exist for a long time, sustaining the final breath of those stored inside and keep them from dying”

“But this is also where the problem lies, only when someone has the ability to heal all 381 of these heavily wounded people all at once, will all the ice crystals release and awaken each person fully healed”

Gu Qing Shan seemed to not understand: “Why do it this way? Why couldn’t they be saved one by one?”

The girl looked closely at the ice crystal and had a look of praise.

“In truth, this Divine Craft can be used so that they only need to be saved one by one, but the user purposefully set it up so that they have to be saved all at once, this has its own profound meaning”

“What kind of profound meaning?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“Until your power grows to an exponential degree that allows you to save everyone at once, there is no meaning in saving them at all. If that’s the case, they might as well be temporarily hidden so that no one can find them— I think this might be what the user wanted to convey” the girl told him.

“How did you deduct so much from that? That’s illogical” Gu Qing Shan replied.

“Because of the wound— her wound came from an eerie source, something that the Divinities feared, mortals cannot defeat it, and all things will be destroyed by it” the girl softly answered.

Note:

(1) Coin twirling: Check this [video](#) to see what’s being described

(2) primal chaos: there are two words for “chaos” in Chinese, but they mean very different things.

“混乱” is “Chaos”, an adjective that by itself means the state of disorderly, not being arranged and what generally you think of when you hear that you have to babysit a young, disobedient child.

“混沌” is “Primal Chaos”, a noun that describes the state of all beings before anything else. In the Chinese myth of origin, everything – deities and gods included – began from the “primal chaos”, it’s not “nothingness”, but rather “everything at once”. If you are familiar with the Big Bang theory, primal chaos would be the state of the universe immediately after the big bang.

Chapter 697

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

Gu Qing Shan thought briefly and asked: “Can you save all of these people at once?”

“I can’t, my abilities aren’t exclusively used for healing, so I’m not able to do that” the girl answered.

Gu Qing Shan’s eyes lit up and asked: “In other words, there are still ways to save them?”

“Yes”

The girl took out a book and gave it to Gu Qing Shan: “The fastest way is to become a Divinity. According to the records of history, the God of Life was only a mere Daemon, but its understanding of healing and curing were top-notch, if you learn the highest level of Life Divine Craft, you will be able to save all of these people all at once”

Gu Qing Shan looked at the book.

Written on it was: [Life Divine Craft elementary research and practice]

Gu Qing Shan could only smile bitterly.

Not too long ago, to search for a safe way to travel through the space vortex, I temporarily became a follower of the Church of Life.

But as soon as I got the answer, I quit being a follower.

If I knew I still needed to become a Divinity, I wouldn’t have given up faith so quickly.

But now, I’m no longer a follower, and can’t enter any of the Churches again for life.

What now?

It wasn’t just Yun Ji, Chen Wang might still be alive as well.

Chen Wang already helped me and Shifu a lot.

Big Bear, the mechanical arm as well as Barry's other comrades might also be barely hanging to their lives.

If they could become comrades of Barry, they must be decent people, and they treated me quite well during our first meeting.

I also have good impressions of them all.

But my path to Godhood is already cut off!

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With the book in his hand, Gu Qing Shan felt a bit dejected.

"There, I've already given you the method, just do your best, one day you'll become Divinity and save them" the girl urged him.

After being done with her end of the deal, the girl's expression returned to normal.

Gu Qing Shan thought briefly and directly admitted: "I probably can't become Divinity"

He quickly told her the reason.

But he didn't expect the girl to sigh after silently listening to him.

"So you won't become Divinity, that's a good thing, if you really wanted to become Divinity, I would've taken my chance and ran away" the girl spoke in relief.

"Why is that?" Gu Qing Shan asked in surprise.

"I hate Divinities" the girl squinted her nose and scoffed.

"...Fine then, are there any other ways to save them?" Gu Qing Shan patiently asked.

"Do you really want to save these people so desperately? You need to understand, with your current strength, you'll have to put in an extreme amount of effort to achieve what you want"

"You mean I'll have to become a lot stronger?"

"It's even more than that, you will have to surpass the amount of effort that is put in by the majority of people in the current 900 million World Layers, so much so, that an entire life's worth of effort might not be enough"

"That is the path I want to walk"

The girl silently listened as she looked at Gu Qing Shan with a hesitant look.

She seemed to be considering something extremely important.

"One very important question" the girl spoke after some consideration, "do you hate card users?"

Gu Qing Shan was surprised.

Although he didn't understand how this question is supposed to be important, he still answered: "I don't hate them"

“Then what about cards? What do you think cards are?” the girl asked further.

“A very unique type of existence”

“Do you hate cards? Or to be more precise, do you think an existence like mine is eerie and strange?”

“I don’t, there are infinite worlds in this universe with many indescribable creatures and lives, compared to them, you are considered cute” Gu Qing Shan sincerely answered her.

He was recalling the Devil Kings and Fiend Kings he met.

The Tianma have a wild but charming outer appearance, Asuras are decent looking, but aside from these two types of fiends, the other fiends and devils were radically beyond a human’s sense of aesthetics.

Hearing his answer, the girl unconsciously showed a faint smile but quickly tensed up her expression again.

She sighed: “If that’s the case if you really want to save these people so badly, I have another method”

Gu Qing Shan happily spoke: “Then please tell me how”

“It’s a very troublesome method, and if you use it, I’ll have to put in a lot of effort” the girl sighed again.

“You’ll have to put in a lot of effort?” Gu Qing Shan asked in surprise.

“That’s right, when a complete novice who doesn’t understand a single thing like you use that method, I’ll have to spend a lot of time taking care of you” the girl worriedly said.

Gu Qing Shan clasped his fist: “Please teach me that method, I will greatly appreciate it”

“How will you show your appreciation?” the girl asked.

“You can decide” Gu Qing Shan spoke without a thought.

“I have just woken up not too long away, so I’m still unsure of how to live. From now on, you have to take care of my meals and accommodations” the girl said.

“That’s a simple matter, no problem!”

Gu Qing Shan immediately accepted.

Apparently, he forgot that he was penniless.

Hearing that, the girl appeared pleased.

“I’ve been observing you, so I know you’re a good person. I’ll trust you just this once”

Saying so, the girl took out two things.

A brush.

And a grey bucket of paint.

She put the bucket of paint on the ground and held the brush in her hand, looking at Gu Qing Shan.

“What are you doing?”

“Don’t talk”

The girl’s expression turned serious.

She circled around staring at Gu Qing Shan for about half an hour until she asked: “What’s your Profession?”

“A chef”

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“Fighting Profession”

“Ah, sword cultivator”

“Take out your sword”

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Listening to her, Gu Qing Shan took out the Chao Yin sword and Six Paths Great Mountain sword, one in each hand.

“Stay right there, don’t move, do not move even a little bit, don’t talk either” the girl told him.

“Hm”

Answering her through his nose, Gu Qing Shan sincerely stood absolutely still.

No one could blame him for trusting her this much, as all of her knowledge up to now, the way she triggered the Divine Power crystal, even the Life Divine Craft book that she gave him was real.

Not to mention the cards that the girl used up to now were a bit too powerful.

The only reason why she lost to him was partly because she sealed her own wisdom, and because she didn’t want to go all out.

The girl took a few steps back and looked at him from top to bottom.

“No, you should hover a bit, that way it’ll look better”

She clapped her hand and commented.

So Gu Qing Shan lightly hovered about half a feet of the ground, still holding both his swords in hand.

The girl looked at him, then said: “A bit higher”

Gu Qing Shan went a bit higher.

“No, wait, a bit lower”

“Too low, a bit higher”

“There”

The girl was finally pleased.

At this point, she lifted her bucket of paint and dipped her brush in it.

The girl began to draw various intricate runes and patterns in the void of space around Gu Qing Shan.

While drawing, she was also silently chanting an incantation.

Her gaze was careful and focused as if she was afraid of making even the smallest mistake.

Every action, every stroke of the brush, she only put down after careful consideration.

During this entire process, her chanting never stopped.

Time slowly passed.

The night was over.

The suns were rising up on the horizon bringing with them the heat of the desert.

The girl finally stopped her brush.

She seriously observed her work from top to bottom before nodding in satisfaction.

With a deep sense of fatigue, the girl told Gu Qing Shan: "Remain still, no not move"

Standing across from her, Gu Qing Shan's entire body was now standing within a rectangular border or runes.

The grey runes were giving off a mysterious and mystical aura, statically floating in the air.

Gu Qing Shan had never seen such intricate runes ever before.

As he carefully observed these runes, a sense of desolation could suddenly be felt welling up from inside him.

Gu Qing Shan silently sensed himself.

No sign of karmic adversity.

No reaction from his spirit sense.

The girl didn't show a single bit of hostility from start to end.

But then, what exactly is she doing right now?

The girl sternly requested that I don't move or even speak.

And she's already beginning to chant another long and mystical incantation.

So it isn't time to ask yet.

Gu Qing Shan had no choice but to keep his questions to himself and continued to float.

Luckily, as a Tribulation realm cultivator, this didn't feel tiring at all to him.

After finishing her chant, the girl picked up her brush and continued to draw more grey runes around Gu Qing Shan.

A long while later.

Finally, she stopped and deeply sighed.

“It’s almost done. Don’t move yet, after the painting is done, I still have one last step”

The girl told him.

So Gu Qing Shan continued to stand still.

He was feeling quite strange, as if he was showing his battle stance for someone to paint a picture of him.

This is a first for me.

Can this really save Yun Ji and the rest?

In fact, can this actually make me stronger at all?

Gu Qing Shan was completely clueless.

He looked at the girl.

The girl put the paint and brush away, rubbed her hands together, and held her breath.

Gu Qing Shan maintained silence.

I already decided to trust her, let’s wait until she’s done before saying anything.

Gu Qing Shan silently thought so.

Time passed by.

Gu Qing Shan’s expression suddenly changed.

A few glowing lines of text scrolled past his retina.

[Attention]

[You are about to turn into a card]

Chapter 698

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

[Attention]

[You are turning into a card]

Reading that on the War God UI, Gu Qing Shan completely froze.

It might sound egotistical to say that Gu Qing Shan personally felt like his ability to forcefully keep calm was already quite impressive, but the notification just completely blew all of that away.

Without waiting for him to think too much, the girl had finished her preparations.

The girl lightly tapped the center of her own forehead.

A sprite of light that gave off unimaginable majesty came out from between her brows, perfectly caught in between her fingers.

As soon as this sprite of light appeared, the entire world seemed to disappear.

Time and space no longer existed.

Only this sprite of light that illuminated the entire world existed.

Billions of worlds and all creatures within them seemed to prostrate themselves before this light.

Even Gu Qing Shan himself couldn't help but feel the urge to worship it.

The girl carefully held his sprite of light as she walked before Gu Qing Shan.

She lightly muttered: "Allow conversion"

The light was then pushed into Gu Qing Shan's chest.

A blinding glow appeared around Gu Qing Shan's body.

For a brief moment, he felt that the world itself went away from him as he quickly sank into a world of darkness.

Myriads of unknown creatures were hidden inside the thick darkness, but as Gu Qing Shan appeared, those creatures happily cheered at his appearance.

At the same time, glowing lines of text were quickly scrolling past the War God UI.

[You are becoming a card]

[You've violated the Laws established by the Gods]

[The will of the Gods is about to execute you]

[You've obtained the only conversion permit that exists since the Age of Old]

[Following the unified vow of the Gods, you have the permission to convert]

[You have completely transformed into a card]

The glowing text stopped here.

A card suddenly appeared in the center of the War God UI.

It was a grey border card, depicting an endless mist of primal chaos on the back, and Gu Qing Shan holding his two swords on the front, hovering in the air.

Below the card, a few lines of text were written.

[Grey card sword cultivator Gu Qing Shan]

[Grade: Grey card Lv0]

[Partner: Condemnation Angel – Dusk]

[Residence deck: Fugitive Deck]

After Gu Qing Shan read through the details of his own card, the information flashed and disappeared, replaced by new lines of glowing text.

[Accepting the position: Envoy of Condemnation]

[You have become an Envoy of Condemnation]

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As the final line of text appeared, endless light shone itself on Gu Qing Shan.

The mysterious world disappeared from his vision.

Gu Qing Shan noticed that he had returned to the desert on Drifting Sand world.

The grey runes that had surrounded him before disappeared.

He slowly landed on the ground and tried moving his body.

—-nothing really changed.

“The conversion was successful!”

The white-dressed girl joyfully cheered.

Gu Qing Shan looked at her.

She was smiling in a close and intimate manner unlike before while giggling happily: “From today onwards, you are my one and only partner”

She raised both hands into the air, jumping for joy: “Amazing, I finally have a partner!”

“Wait a minute, I still don’t understand what’s going on” Gu Qing Shan stopped her.

The girl looked at him: “Didn’t you say you wanted to save those 300 or so people?”

Gu Qing Shan replied: “Yes, I did”

The girl continued: “And you can’t become a Divinity anymore right?”

Gu Qing Shan replied again: “Yes”

The girl clapped her hands: “That’s why I converted you into the same type of existence as me”

“...You mean a card?” Gu Qing Shan muttered.

He almost felt like he was dreaming.

“In other words, I’m also a card now? I’m one of your cards now?” he couldn’t help but asked.

“No, you’re the same as me, an Envoy of Condemnation” the girl shook her head.

Gu Qing Shan asked: “I’ve never heard of that name before in my life, what is that?”

The girl was about to answer him.

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When the entire desert suddenly began to tremble.

This was such a huge earthquake that when Gu Qing Shan and the girl hovered in the air, it wasn't until several dozen seconds later that the quake stopped.

The two of them landed again.

"Strange, as far as I know, this world has never had an earthquake ever before" Gu Qing Shan wondered.

The girl carefully sensed her surrounding as her expression tightened: "Oh no, I have to tell you everything now, there isn't much time"

"Go ahead" Gu Qing Shan replied.

"You know what a Prehistoric World is right?"

"I do, they're worlds that existed before the Gods"

The girl spoke: "And this world is one of those Prehistoric Worlds, which includes the Law of 'Eternal'—and the 'Eternal' Law will sometimes allow a Prehistoric World to give birth to creatures that are even more powerful than the Divinities. Those creatures are usually mindless, besides knowing how to hunt Divinities to fill their stomachs, they can only derive joy from havoc and destruction"

"Sounds terrible"

"They are, whenever such a type of Eternal-born creature is created, it is a huge calamity for the Divinities"

"Fortunately, the Divinities have one point of superiority— the fact that they can create weapons and powers that far exceed their own power"

"And the Envoy of Condemnation is one of them?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"Exactly, you're very quick on the uptake" the girl praised him and continued, "everything that can threaten the Gods are unanimously deemed by them to be sinful"

"The Envoy of Condemnation was created by the power of seven Daemons, given the power that far exceeded those of themselves and a mission to protect the seven Daemons, eliminating the sins that obstruct their way" (1)

Gu Qing Shan asked: "How many Envoys of Condemnation are there in total?"

The girl shook her head: "How many? To create just one of me, the seven Daemons used up all of their powers"

"To fight the sins that they themselves cannot win against, the seven Daemons created many powerful items and artifact, granting them to me to form the Condemnation Deck"

"With the protection of the Daemons as my mission, I traveled through the infinite worlds, killing or sealing those creatures away and ensured the safety of the seven Daemons"

"During my final mission, the seven Daemons discovered that the Prehistoric world we are currently standing on will birth a particularly powerful sinful existence, so they ordered me to act"

"As the Envoy of Condemnation, I came without hesitation"

"But the situation at the time was extremely hard to deal with, I had no choice but to use all of my powers to put the sinful creature to sleep temporarily"

"Now that I think about it since those Divinities knew me so well, they probably chose the most

powerful creature on purpose, using it to get rid of me”

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“Wait a minute, you said that they got rid of you?” Gu Qing Shan couldn’t help but ask.

The girl sighed: “Yes, at the time when I sealed the creature when I had used up all my powers, the Divinities used their traps they laid beforehand to ambush me and seal me together with the creature”

Gu Qing Shan thought about what he just heard for a bit and asked: “Could it be, they were afraid of you?”

The girl answered: “Yes, during the final period of time that I was with the seven Daemons, I gradually gained my own thoughts and feelings, no longer a simple tool— I could never forget the look of fear they showed the first time I expressed my feelings to them”

After a brief moment of silence, she continued: “After sleeping for countless years, I slowly reawakened”
“And found that the outside world has changed so greatly that I couldn’t recognize it anymore, the seven Daemons were also nowhere to be seen”

“Furthermore, there were no other Envoys of Condemnation in this world, instead there existed card users”

“I think this might be because the Divinities were afraid of another Envoy of Condemnation who formed their own emotions like me, but weren’t willing to just discard the potent power that they meticulously crafted, so they adjusted the Law of the cards, turning it into the significantly weaker card users of today”

“Then how did I become an Envoy of Condemnation?”

“Because as I was created the four Pillar Gods granted me a conversion permit that allows me to turn any person I chose into a Envoy of Condemnation— but I think both the Pillar Gods and the Daemons thoroughly regretted that decision”

“Besides that, there was another reason” the girl stared closely at Gu Qing Shan and spoke: “Just like me, you are an existence whose soul has been released— the seven Daemons don’t have the ability to release the soul of mortals, only the four Pillar Gods can”

“Which means, the only cooperation between the Daemons and the Pillar Gods resulted in the birth of me, the Envoy of Condemnation”

Gu Qing Shan went silent.

So I was seen through.

In truth, if it weren’t for this girl being like this, he wouldn’t have held back against any enemy, eliminating them so that his secrets never get out.

But now, this girl just casually revealed to him that she knew, and even tried her best to help him convert, forming a mutual secret between the two of them.

— even having a released soul is only the most basic requirement, an existence strong enough for even Divinities and Gods to fear, it could be seen just how powerful an Envoy of Condemnation is. Isn’t this exactly what I was looking for?

“And now what?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

The girl continued her explanation: “After I woke up, I discovered that the sinful creature was still within my seal”

“Together with myself and the entirety of the Condemnation Deck—— the only thing I managed to regain was my consciousness”

Gu Qing Shan scowled: “Gods shouldn’t have made this kind of elementary mistake, how did such a thing happen?”

The girl explained: “After a long time of sensing the outside world, I discovered the reason. A church-like organization was moving large amounts of personnel and resources to study the seal—— they wanted to obtain the unimaginable power of the Condemnation Deck”

“So while they still haven’t succeeded, I began to plot my own escape”

“I gradually found out that I would only be able to escape the seal by entering slumber again after scattering all of my powers and sealing my wisdom away, becoming the weakest since my birth”

“But this would cause a certain problem”

“What’s the problem?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“Once I leave the deck, the sinful creature that even Divinities couldn’t go against will soon wake up” the girl answered.

Gu Qing Shan gradually understood what she meant.

“So in the end, you still fell into slumber, turned into your weakest form and escaped the seal” he commented.

The girl looked straight into Gu Qing Shan’s eyes and sincerely spoke: “In truth, that wasn’t my decision. It was because that church insisted on obtaining the power of the Condemnation Deck—— slowly but surely, they managed to undo the seal, if only for the blink of an eye”

“I took that chance, turned all of the Condemnation Deck into the Fugitive Deck and scattered all of my powers”

“And I escaped the seal”

“Sure enough, the church quickly discovered me and tried to bring me out from deep inside the Abyss of Sin” the girl said.

“You turned the Condemnation Deck to the Fugitive Deck...” Gu Qing Shan repeated.

This was the same as what the War God UI told him.

“Why is it called the Fugitive Deck?” he asked.

The girl answered: “Because I’ve lost the majority of my power, didn’t you already know what that means?”

Gu Qing Shan trembled a bit and realized.

“That’s right” he muttered, “now that you’ve left the seal, the creature that the Divinities were afraid of would soon awaken as well”

The girl added: "That world-wide earthquake just now was most likely the creature turning in its sleep, I assume that it will completely awaken very soon"

"Which means, we need to escape right away?"

"Exactly"

"How much time do we have left?"

The girl extended a single finger.

"One day. After one day, all living beings of this world will surely become the creature's food" the girl slowly told him

TN: Please forgive the confusing use of the terms "Divinity" and "God" in this chapter, there is no easy way to explain them to not be confusing without spoilers, so please bear with the author and myself.

(1) Daemon: This is what Dusk refers to the seven Gods as, if you want a refresher on what Daemons are, check the glossary for confusing terms.

Chapter 699

Translated by: La0o9

Edited by: Dr.Lock

Proofreader: Arya

"One day? That's not a lot of time" Gu Qing Shan commented.

As he glanced at the girl, he found that she was absolutely calm.

So he tried asking: "What's your plan for running away? Tell me and we can consider it together"

"Plan?" the girl was slightly surprised and answered him: "My plan is already over"

"What do you mean?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"Do you still remember what you told me?" the girl said.

"What I told you?" now it was Gu Qing Shan's turn to be surprised.

The girl casually said: "Yeah, from now on, my accommodations will be taken care of by you, which means— I'll be relying on you to run away"

"..." Gu Qing Shan.

That's true.

The conditions she put out for helping me was that I had to take care of her accommodations.

And I did accept those conditions.

Wait a minute—

What did she actually help me with?

Gu Qing Shan regained his thoughts and asked: "I know I turned into an Envoy of Condemnation, but how is that going to save my comrades?"

The girl explained: “You need to quickly advance through the levels, and I also need to regain my power”

“And then what?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

The girl continued: “After we’re powerful enough, we will go in search of a certain card—— it’s currently residing in another deck, it is one of the things that the seven Daemons set up for their own protection”

“That card is able to heal even Divinities, so naturally it will be able to heal your comrades”

“Can’t we go look for it now?”

“With our current strength, we won’t even be able to detect it, let alone use it. Worst case scenario, we might even die”

“... Alright then... First get stronger, seems like this will be the first step no matter what I want to do” Gu Qing Shan muttered.

At this point, the girl looked at him and muttered: “I still don’t know your name”

“My name is Gu Qing Shan, the same one I used when we registered” Gu Qing Shan answered.

Hearing that, the girl smiled and spoke: “Hm, my name is Dusk, since you’re the only other one of my kind, you can call me Little Dusk”

The girl called Little Dusk stretched her back and said: “I’ve been working for an entire night to convert you so I need some rest for now. I’ll leave the escaping part to you”

Gu Qing Shan looked at the desert, then at Little Dusk, and couldn’t help but asked: “You’re going to sleep here?”

“No, you’ll be taking me with you” Little Dusk answered.

She suddenly turned into a lapis-colored card that fluttered in front of Gu Qing Shan before falling into his hands.

“Put me away to safety, if you need something, call me” Little Dusk told him from inside the card.

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Gu Qing Shan held the card up and looked at the description written on the War God UI.

[Lapis Card: Angel of Condemnation – Dusk]

[Grade: Lapis 5 stars]

[Partner: Sword cultivator Gu Qing Shan]

[Resident deck: Fugitive Deck]

[Description: Due to losing most of her power, Angel of Condemnation – Dusk’s grade has been lowered to Lapis]

“Little Dusk, do you have any plans or thoughts about how we should escape?” Gu Qing Shan tried to ask.

Little Dusk waved her hands inside the card and simply explained: “From back then until now, I only know how to fight. And after being sealed for such a long time, I had to scatter the majority of my

powers to escape, now I don't have much power and am not familiar with the world, so it will all depend on you!"

Gu Qing Shan: "..."

Fine, he silently consoled himself—she has helped enough, she even spent the effort to convert me into an Envoy of Condemnation. It's now time for me to do something.

He then recalled something and spoke: "If this world is about to be destroyed, we have to bring the Divine Power Frost Crystal that contains my comrade away as well"

"Ah, why didn't you say that before, I was already falling asleep" Little Dusk unwillingly complained.

She turned back into her real form, crouched in front of the ice crystal, and placed her hand on it.

"Minimize!" she uttered.

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The blue ice crystal was then turned into a card.

Little Dusk gave the card to Gu Qing Shan and complained: "Aaaa, I'm so tired, I want to sleep, don't wake me up!"

She turned back into a card and flew into Gu Qing Shan's hands.

On the card, she had already changed into her pajamas and directly laid herself on a huge bed, soundly sleeping.

—seems like she was really tired.

Gu Qing Shan only took a short look at her before checking the ice crystal card.

—the description was quite simple, it only informed him that this was an empty card that temporarily held an item inside.

Looking at the two cards, Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but sigh.

What happened today was simply too out of this world, so much that he felt like it was all a dream.

I suddenly became an Envoy of Condemnation.

Come to think of it, if I didn't have the Blood Sea card with me, I wouldn't have even caught Little Dusk's attention.

During the job, both sides got to know each other better.

And most importantly—

During the final moments, I decided to save her, even helped her escape from the black-clothed man's pursuit.

It was because Little Dusk saw everything that she became less aloof compared to before.

And also because Little Dusk noticed that my soul was already released from the way I fought, that she had the idea to turn me into an Envoy of Condemnation.

So now, in this entire universe, there are only a total of two Envoy of Condemnation: Little Dusk and me.

Gu Qing Shan glanced at Little Dusk's card.

Having gotten a partner and the promise to be taken care of, she directly went to sleep without worry. Seriously...

Gu Qing Shan shook his head.

As the Angel of Condemnation, she was once so powerful that Divinities were afraid of her, but through their interactions, Gu Qing Shan felt that she was still a very naïve girl.

Perhaps all those years ago, besides how to fight, the Divinities never taught her anything else. Or they were probably unwilling to.

This means, from the day she was born, she had been treated as a weapon and tool to be used, then finally sealed away, what a tragic life she had.

Gu Qing Shan sighed.

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Alright, I've already made her a promise, so I'll keep to it.

He took out a box made of top-quality spirit jade and put the cards inside.

As soon as Little Dusk went into the box, she was able to sense the excess spirit energy flowing around inside.

She tossed and turned satisfyingly inside her card, muttered random things in her sleep before quickly falling into deep slumber.

Gu Qing Shan carefully put the box away.

Now, there should be about a day left until this world is completely destroyed.

An eerie creature born from the Eternal Law is about to appear.

I'll definitely be devoured if I stay here.

But if I want to leave Drifting Sand world as fast as possible and travel safely through the space vortex, I need a decent-quality flying transit.

But I don't have any money!

Not even the bare minimum required to enter the black market!

What should I do now?

I can travel through the space vortex by myself as well.

But unlike the outside world, the Strife Zones' space vortex is full of dangerous monsters.

And I don't even know the direction to another world.

Gu Qing Shan fell into thought.

There's only one day...

There really is too little time...

White Rock world.

This was the world closest to Drifting Sand world.

A loud laughter of joy was coming from a certain large building.

“Ahahaha, the bounty that the Holy Church of Death put up is simply to kill a novice in Drifting Sand world!”

A towering and muscular grey giant laughed.

One of his subordinates flattered him: “Boss, we have the absolute advantage, we only need to travel half a day to arrive at Drifting Sand world”

“That’s right Boss, this bounty is really generous, not only will we get quite a few #600 coins, we can directly summon a person from the Holy Church of Death”

“Yeah, the Church will allow us to enter the Holy Church of Death, the cardinal will do everything in their power to teach and help us light our Tree of Divinity as well!” another subordinate called out.

Hearing that, everyone in the group smiled.

The grey giant once again laughed without holding anything back, while the others around him were holding their expressions of laughter, not even one of them dared to scowl.

“Ahahahaha, this is the heaven above shining light on our Torturous Death bounty hunter squad! All of us are followers of Death!”

The grey giant ripped the wanted poster off the wall and loudly declared: “Everyone, move out, we’re going to Drifting Sand world to kill that brat!”

“And then— we’re heading to the Holy Church of Death!”

“We’re all going to become Gods!”

Chapter 700

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Drifting Sand world.

The great desert.

At dawn, the sandstorms began to ravage the surroundings once again.

Gu Qing Shan stood still, silently thinking of a way to escape this world.

He only had a single day left, so there wasn’t much time.

But right now, he couldn’t even use his status as a member of the Justice Iron Fist Club.

Because the other side had a lot of leads to follow, including his appearance as well as the official job he took with a temporary party.

I killed the black-clothed man.

So the authorities might have already sent out personnel to search and surround both Little Dusk and

myself.

Since the black market is most likely under the Holy Church of Death's control, going back there is the same as committing suicide.

— —but without going there, I wouldn't be able to get on a flying transit to leave Drifting Sand world. What a headache.

After a lot of thinking, he suddenly recalled something that happened just now.

Little Dusk turned into a card so that I could carry her around.

Yeah, I'm now an Envoy of Condemnation as well, can I also turn into a card?

As Gu Qing Shan had such a thought, the grey border of runes manifested around himself.

The grey border of runes just silently hovered in the air, apparently waiting for his order.

Gu Qing Shan had a realization.

— —I can turn into a card at will.

And he quickly tried.

Gu Qing Shan disappeared from the desert, replaced by a grey card.

Inside the grey card, Gu Qing Shan was excitedly checking his surroundings.

He found that he was currently inside a narrow area, surrounded by a thick grey mist, but as he reached his hand out, he felt a solid wall.

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Little Dusk's card was enough to put her own bedroom inside with a king-sized bed, why is the inside of my card just a tiny space like this?

While Gu Qing Shan was thinking, some information arrived from the grey mist into his mind.

[You need to increase the grade of your card to expand the space inside your card]

— —so that's why.

Having come to an understanding, Gu Qing Shan pressed his hand against the border of the grey runes and looked outside.

He found that he was able to observe the desert from inside the card.

How miraculous.

Gu Qing Shan silently praised.

With a single thought, the grey runes around him disappeared as he came out of the card and returned to the desert.

After some thinking, Gu Qing Shan had formed a plan.

“Shannu”

“I’m here, gongzi”

Shannu appeared from the void of space behind him.

“I have a little plan” Gu Qing Shan said.

“Please tell me what I need to do” Shannu replied.

“First, use [Mystery of All Beings Equal] to turn into a human”

“Yes”

Not too long after that, a streak of light flew in from the horizon, landing near the entrance of the town.

A blue-dressed girl appeared.

She seemed to be a female cultivator with a clean background, as the book and guards at the entrance didn’t stop her.

After going through their test, she successfully entered the town.

As she didn’t have any money, the female cultivator went straight towards the work center, formed a temporary party, and accepted a small job.

This was one of the simpler jobs for temporary parties, quite similar to the terrain surveying job that Gu Qing Shan accepted before.

The job’s objective was to travel to a particular part of the desert and collect a few unique rocks.

The rewards were 40 coins each.

——#1 coins to be exact, which depicted a type of drifter void monster that liked to eat trash within the space vortex.

This was the lowest valued coin in the Strife Zones.

Although there were 40 pieces, that amount was only enough to eat a single meal in this town.

Even so, for novices and newcomers, this was a job that they had to complete.

As soon as they went out of town, the female cultivator expressed how she didn’t have much time and hoped that the other two in her party could take her hand so that they would move together.

Following that, she moved like she was teleporting, again and again, quickly bringing the entire party of 3 to their destination after just a few blinks.

Obviously, both of her companions were shocked.

“I can’t do much else, but I have an ability to travel through space” the female cultivator explained.

The other two quickly understood.

That was true, if someone had this impressive movement ability with similarly excellent fighting prowess, they would’ve already entered the black market rather than staying in town to do these kinds of menial jobs.

Jobs for temporary parties were extremely simple, the only hard thing was getting people to actually do them.

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So the party of three quickly finished the job.

Just like before, the female cultivator brought the two other members and blinked through space a few times to return.

The entire process took a total of 10 minutes.

The party turned their jobs in, said their farewells, and quickly went their own ways.

Everyone here only formed a temporary team in order to complete the first job and gain the qualification to enter a permanent party.

The two quickly went to find a team that they wanted to be in.

The blue-dressed girl stopped at the black market's work center with her meager work income and looked for the party registration desk.

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"I want to form a permanent party" the female cultivator spoke.

"To form a permanent party, you need at least three people, as well as a fee of 20 #1 coins, gather your party members here and I'll register for you" the receptionist told her.

The female cultivator nodded, bowed, and left.

She came to a secluded corner of the town and took out a card from inside her sleeve.

"Gongzi, we need three people to form a party" she worriedly reported.

Inside the card, Gu Qing Shan spoke: "I heard it as well, let's go, we'll register together"

He jumped out from the card and activated [Mystery of All Beings Equal].

Gu Qing Shan quickly took Wang Cheng's appearance.

Shannu looked at him and spoke: "There's still only two of us, we need one more"

"Just leave everything to me" Gu Qing Shan said.

The two of them returned to the work center.

"We want to form a party" Gu Qing Shan said.

The receptionist looked at the two of them and curtly answered: "20 #1 coins, at least 3 people are needed to form a party"

Gu Qing Shan signaled Shannu to give him the money.

He sneakily gave all 40 coins to the receptionist and smiled: "Our party member will arrive soon, please help us register first"

The receptionist accepted the money and slightly loosened his eyebrows.

Without saying anything else, he began to go through the registration process for them.

The procedures were quite simple so it didn't take much time, and then there was only one last step.

This part required each party member to record their appearance as well as voice.

Shannu placed her hand on a square rock and spoke: "Shannu, cultivator, Bai Hua party member"

Then followed by Gu Qing Shan.

He also put his hand on the spoke: "Wang Cheng, Devil Summoner, Bai Hua party member"

The receptionist's attitude was much better now and asked: "What about the last one of you?"

Shannu glanced at Gu Qing Shan.

"Please wait a moment, I'll go call him" Gu Qing Shan smiled apologetically.

He quickly dashed out.

A few minutes later, an imposing-looking man came in.

The man quickly came up and apologized to the receptionist: "Sorry I'm late"

The receptionist didn't say much and gestured to the stone with his chin.

The man placed his hand on the rock and spoke: "Qi Yan, Elemental cultivator, Bai Hua party member"

The receptionist took the rock back and gave Shannu a simple medal.

On behalf of the money he got, he added one more thing:

"From now on, your party will become official, I suggest you start with simple jobs, slowly get to know this world and learn how to truly make it big in this place"

"Thank you"

Shannu and Qi Yan both clasped their fists in thanks.

They came out of the work center and looked through the jobs on the wall.

"Gongzi, look" Shannu called him.

They both looked where she was pointing.

Sure enough, at the very top of the job board was a wanted poster with Gu Qing Shan's picture.

And not just his, but one of Little Dusk as well.

These were probably pictures taken when the two of them took the job from before.

Below their wanted posters were the huge sum of rewards being offered for their bounty.

People all around squeezed themselves as close to the job board as possible to look at the wanted poster.

“The Holy Church of Death is officially issuing a job like this, Drifting Sand world is going to get rowdy soon”

Someone clicked their tongue.

“Forget about it, there’s no way we’re getting anywhere with that job, though the big guys in the black market might be able to” another person commented.

Most people silently nodded in agreement.

But they still couldn’t help themselves staring at the generous rewards being offered on the bounty.

Gu Qing Shan silently watched this.

So I did become wanted by the Holy Church of Death huh, let’s be a bit more careful around the Strife Zones from now on.

“Gongzi, what now?” Shannu asked.

“Of course we’re going to take some jobs, earn money and get into the black market as soon as we can. Let’s hurry”

Gu Qing Shan glanced across the entire job board before stopping at a certain one.

“We’re taking that job” he told Shannu.

Shannu looked where he was pointing.

The job description was written there: [The black market public guard issued a crucial request: Collect all information related to the bounty target of the Holy Church of Death, once your information has been verified, the following rewards will be given out]

[Black market entry qualification]

[#10 coins: 1000 pieces]

[Depending on how crucial the information provided is, the rewards provided will increase]

[Attention: If fraudulent conducts are confirmed, immediate execution!]

Reading the job description Shannu froze.

She sent her voice: “Gongzi, you know that they want to catch you, right? You’re really going to report information about yourself to them?”

Gu Qing Shan nodded: “Yup, after all, we know more about this than anyone else, the authenticity can be 100% guaranteed”