

Chapter 2661

Taking Care of the Star Tree

In a garden on a mountain in Outer Sky, Liyu Zhen met with another Very High man. They began watching the video that Liyu Zhen had taken, which showed Han Sen slaying the star beetles. "Li Xue Cheng, what do you think after watching this?" Liyu Zhen asked, staring at the man in green clothing. "He is very strong. He might even be stronger than a Very High of the same level. Who is he?" Li Xue Cheng asked, not taking his eyes off the video of Han Sen.

"He is the silkworm Exquisite selected. His name is Han Sen, and he is a crystallizer," Liyu Zhen answered.

"I think Exquisite is very lucky to have gotten a silkworm like this," Li Xue Cheng said with a nod.

Liyu Zhen smiled and said, "What does it have to do with us if she had good luck? To be straight with you, she is a very precious person amongst the Very High. We, on the other hand, are just breeding machines."

Seeing Li Xue Cheng frown, Liyu Zhen said, "After seeing this video, do you not have any opinions to share on it?"

"What do you mean?" Li Xue Cheng frowned again.

"When Li Keer gets her silkworm, the fights between silkworms will start. There are thirteen silkworms in total. So, which of them do you think is going to win?" Liyu Zhen asked.

"From what I can see here, Han Sen seems pretty good. But he is just a King class with nine tiers. Most of the silkworms are half-deified. One of them was even born deified. Judging from the power I have witnessed, I think the born-deified is the most likely to win," Li Xue Cheng quietly said.

"Your reasoning is sound, but I have analyzed Han Sen and the other silkworms. Han Sen is amazingly strong, and he has many treasures. He even possesses the true god weapon Shield of the Medusa's Gaze. I think he has a high chance of winning." After Liyu Zhen was embarrassed in the star tree contest, he had taken the time to investigate and learn more about Han Sen. He now knew more about Han Sen than most of the Very High did.

Outer Sky had many resources, so the Very High never lacked anything. They only ventured out into the rest of the universe to find silkworms and people with peculiar talents.

So, the Very High paid little attention to most of the races in the universe, and Han Sen was just a King. Even an ordinary deified wouldn't garner much attention from the Very High.

Liyu Zhen passed the information he had collected on Han Sen over to Li Xue Cheng. The file included a video of Han Sen using the Shield of the Medusa's Gaze to turn Meng Lie into a statue.

"This actually happened?" Li Xue Cheng was shocked. He went quiet, and then he said, "If this video is real, he does stand a chance of winning the battle between silkworms. It is just a chance, mind you. His victory definitely isn't guaranteed. After all, using the power of a treasure doesn't make you as good as a real deified. There is still a big difference in level. But if he can use a weapon like the Shield of the Medusa's Gaze, he might actually win."

"What if this silkworm fight bars the use of treasures?" Liyu Zhen suddenly laughed.

"With his power, of course, he cannot challenge a genuine deified. The video demonstrated clearly that he couldn't kill the deified star beetle no matter how strong he was. His power is no match for a deified yet. His skill will matter little in the face of such absolute power." Li Xue Cheng paused and said, "But the fight between silkworms doesn't prohibit the use of treasures."

"It didn't in the past, but this time will be different. I have a reliable source with sway in this matter. This time, the silkworm fights will ban the use of treasures," Liyu Zhen said with confidence.

"Did your family member..." Li Xue Cheng seemed to have guessed something unsavory about Liyu Zhen. But before he finished speaking, he thought better of it and closed his mouth.

Liyu Zhen smiled. "You just need to know that this silkworm fight won't allow the use of treasures. That is all. Right now, there are only four people who know about this. And you and I cannot tell anyone. The other two won't tell, either."

"But what does this have to do with us?" Li Xue Cheng still didn't understand what the other man meant.

"Did you forget?" Liyu Zhen asked coldly. "Silkworm fights are normally so boring, but this one will be rather interesting. If you send out information about Han Sen, do you think others will be like us and believe Han Sen will win the silkworm bouts?"

"That might be possible... After all, the born deified silkworm is just primitive. He is actually weaker than Meng Lie. With his treasures, Han Sen would probably win," Li Xue Cheng quietly said. As he spoke, his eyes brightened. He finally understood what Liyu Zhen had been implying all along.

"You want everyone to gamble and place their bets on Han Sen, so you can take their money?" Li Xue Cheng's eyes flashed with interest.

"Yes. And after everyone loses because of their faith in Han Sen, do you think they will be nice to him?" Liyu Zhen laughed.

"You are so evil. You'll be ripping off many people with resources, people that Han Sen might have to visit. If they don't like him, it might be hard for him to earn resources," Li Xue Cheng said, understanding.

“I, Liyu Zhen, won’t allow something stolen from me to remain stolen.” Liyu Zhen chuckled darkly. Then he said to Li Xue Cheng, “They will soon announce that this silkworm fight will ban the use of treasures, so you better move quickly. We need people to place their wagers before the news circulates.”

“This seems like quite the opportunity. Why don’t you do this yourself? Why did you have to bring me into this?” Li Xue Cheng asked, somewhat befuddled.

“I have a background with him,” Liyu Zhen said, shaking his head. “If I bet that Han Sen will lose, people will grow suspicious. You don’t know him, however. We can share this business half and half.”

“You are right. With your relationship to Han Sen, if you bet that he will lose, they will know that there must be something going on behind the scenes.” Li Xue Cheng laughed and said, “Sure. Then it’s settled.”

Information about Han Sen soon spread across the Very High. The Very High became interested in him, aside from those that studied Very High Sense, of course. They simply didn’t say anything. Most of the Very High believed Han Sen had a chance of winning the silkworm fight, as a result.

Li Xue Cheng was able to use this opportunity to make lots of wagers with the Very High.

The results were just as Liyu Zhen had predicted, as well. Soon after the last of the bets came in, the Very High leader announced that the silkworms wouldn’t be allowed to use treasures in the bouts. Many of the Very High thought Li Xue Cheng had scammed them, and they hated Han Sen, too.

Things would be fine if Han Sen won the silkworm fight, but if he didn’t win, many of the Very High would lose their money because of him. Even though Han Sen was completely innocent in this scheme, he was affected.

Han Sen didn’t know that any of this had happened. He continued fishing in Underworld Lake, and after ten days, he returned to the star tree.

The old man under the tree was gone. Han Sen took over the guardianship of the tree. He spent some time searching through the tree’s branches, but he found no more pesky star beetles occupying the tree. It seemed as if the old man had cleared them before he left.

“The star beetle swarms come every two to three months. You don’t have to stay here all the time. Only come when the bugs arrive. Then, you just have to kill them,” Exquisite said to Han Sen.

Chapter 2662 The Geno Art in Reverse

Because Li Keer had yet to select her silkworm, the silkworm battles were still being postponed. That went on long enough for the star tree to experience another bug invasion. It hadn’t been very long since the beetles had last been cleared, though, so Han knew that there wouldn’t be many of them in the swarm. He left the rock giant and the other King xenogeneics near the star tree to safeguard it. Once he was assured of the tree’s safety, he went back to Underworld Lake to practice and fish to his heart’s content. “Huh? Why am I not getting any more yellow sheets of paper?” A month later, when Han Sen was reeling in his next catch, he noticed that he had brought up a broken shield instead of the usual piece of parchment. That shield was old and broken. It was caked in rust. Han Sen gripped it with his hand, and even a tiny portion of his strength was enough to crush it.

“What the hell? How did I fish up this piece of crap?” Han Sen thought, both disappointed and insulted. But then he thought to himself, “If I’m no longer pulling up sheets of paper, does that mean I have finished collecting the last of them?”

Since Exquisite wasn’t around, Han Sen brought out all of his yellow sheets of paper. He lined them up according to their numbers and placed them within the cover. It really was a complete book now.

“Three hundred and sixty-five pages. That is a magically-significant number.” Starting from the first page, Han Sen read the contents again.

Usually, Exquisite was there. Whenever she was present, Han Sen didn’t dare to think or practice. He only practiced God’s Wander and Very Real Body in front of her; both of those were the geno arts Exquisite had given to him herself. Having only those two techniques to practice had gotten quite boring, but now that he was looking at the Xuan Yellow Sutra, his interest and vibrancy were coming back to life. This book fascinated him.

Even though the Xuan Yellow Sutra had no text and there were just pictures, after Han Sen observed it in-depth, he started to feel a chill.

The entire situation was weird. How could a paper that was fished up from Underworld Lake contain pictures of the human body?

Han Sen considered the possibility that the pictures weren’t depicting humans, but a race that simply had similar features to humans. But after a thorough investigation of the red and blue lines that crisscrossed the figures in the pictures, goosebumps began to flare up across Han Sen’s body.

The lines in the pictures were like the Blood-Pulse Sutra. No. This geno art wasn’t similar; it was the opposite. It was like the Blood-Pulse Sutra, but in reverse.

Han Sen didn’t know what would happen if one was to practice the Blood-Pulse Sutra in reverse, but that was what the Xuan Yellow Sutra appeared to be.

“Is someone trying to use this Xuan Yellow Sutra to trick me?” Han Sen frowned. He had no idea what to make of this situation.

He had fished up a human geno art from the Underworld Lake. And rather than being some random skill, it was a reversed version of the geno art Blood-Pulse Sutra. It was all so very weird.

But it didn’t make sense that this was being orchestrated by someone who was trying to mess with him. Underworld Lake connected with the anti-material world. No one was able to actually go there. And even if someone had gone down there, no one should have known Han Sen could practice the Blood-Pulse Sutra and given him the same geno art in reverse.

Han Sen looked at the Xuan Yellow Sutra with a complex expression. He didn't dare practice it. He didn't even want to think about it.

He actually wouldn't have to practice it. If he ever wished to use it, he just had to cast the Blood-Pulse Sutra in reverse.

But Han Sen had no idea what would happen if he tried that. The pages of the Xuan Yellow Sutra didn't suggest what would happen, either. He couldn't guess what the ramifications of running the geno art in that manner would be.

"What is going on?" Han Sen wanted to find someone from Blood Legion to ask, but he was in Outer Sky. He was now disconnected from the outer world. He couldn't simply call up a Blood Legion member now.

Han Sen put away the Xuan Yellow Sutra. He didn't dare look at it anymore. If he was still interested in it in the future, he could cast the Blood-Pulse Sutra backward. God only knew what might happen if he did that, though.

"It would be great if Mr. White was here. With his knowledge of the universe, he should be able to help me analyze what this Xuan Yellow Sutra is all about."

Han Sen wished he had spent more time studying. Now, he really regretted that he hadn't taken the time to study the Xuan Men knowledge. If he had, he might have been able to tell what exactly was going on here.

While he was thinking furiously about what to do, the small jade figure's triangle symbol lit up again. Han Sen quieted his mind and forced himself into thinking about the Very Real Body.

Not long after, Exquisite teleported nearby. She wasn't alone, however; she had brought Li Keer along with her.

Han Sen hadn't seen Li Keer since they parted ways in the core area. She looked a bit sad, now. She clearly wasn't as happy as she had been at the beginning of the year.

Exquisite introduced Li Keer to Han Sen. Li Keer remembered Han Sen, but she had no idea he was her coveted Dollar.

"Han Sen, there is something I would like you to help me with." After Exquisite introduced them to each other, she spared no time in making a request.

"What can I do to help you on this fine day?" Han Sen asked, raising an eyebrow in surprise. He was an outsider in Outer Sky, so there wasn't much he would be able to do. This must be a very unique request if Exquisite had come to ask for his help in particular.

"There have been difficulties in Li Keer's search for a silkworm. She has been unable to find a suitable one, and therefore, she still needs one," Exquisite said.

Li Keer shook her head. Continuing to look down in the dumps, she said, "Third Sister, you don't have to beat around the bush so much. The silkworm I selected rejected me, and he will never want to see me again. Therefore, I have to choose a new silkworm."

Han Sen carefully avoided thinking about that. He was afraid that Exquisite would notice his thoughts and dredge up a disconcerting truth or two.

He knew Li Keer was talking about Dollar, but she had accused him wrongly. He hadn't been absent from the core area because he was avoiding her. In fact, he hadn't been making any effort to hide from Li Keer. He had simply been trapped inside Outer Sky, where going to the core area wasn't an option.

"What can I help you with, then?" Han Sen asked, looking at Exquisite. He didn't know what Exquisite wanted from him. He had already agreed to be Exquisite's silkworm, so he didn't know what he could do to help Li Keer.

"The time limit is almost up, and my little sister won't be able to find a good silkworm before the deadline. Therefore, I'm asking you to help. If you can convince Lone Bamboo to become my little sister's silkworm, we would really appreciate it," Exquisite said.

"I really can't do that. If Lone Bamboo was willing to come, he wouldn't have chosen to go to prison rather than become a silkworm. Nothing that anyone says to him will change that. He is his own man," Han Sen said, raising his hands helplessly.

"You're saying that even with the friendship between you two, he won't listen to you? I thought he was willing to go in your stead," Exquisite said while staring at Han Sen.

"I'm sorry, but I really cannot help you with this." Han Sen shook his head. He knew how tenuous his situation was.

Despite having the small jade figure, he still had to remain vigilant at all times. It was harder than being a thief inside a police station. If he wasn't careful, Exquisite would do a deep dive into his mind.

He was already in such dire straits, but he didn't want Bamboo to suffer the same fate.

"If you cannot convince Lone Bamboo, then there is only one other way in which you can help us." Exquisite giggled to Han Sen while she spoke.

"What is it?" Han Sen asked, feeling a little dread settle upon him.

"It's exactly what you're thinking. Please be my little sister's silkworm, too," Exquisite said, speaking Han Sen's worry into reality.

Chapter 2663 Twice the Benefits

"How would that work, exactly?" Han Sen looked at Exquisite in shock. "What's strange about it? Since you're already being watched by one person, being watched by another is practically the same. You just need to share your experiences with one more person. It won't be detrimental to you in any way, and you can double the benefits you receive. You will receive the same amount of resources from me and my little sister. Effectively, you'll be receiving double what others receive. Wouldn't that be wonderful?" Exquisite said to Han Sen with a beaming smile. "I suppose you're correct, but I still think there might be a problem with this plan," Han Sen quietly said.

“What could go wrong? Aren’t you happy about being able to receive twice the resources?” Exquisite thought about it a bit, and then said, “If you become Li Keer’s silkworm, you can even receive more star fruit.”

“But the elder is no longer here. I thought the star tree would stop giving out fruit,” Han Sen said.

“I’m just giving you an example. There are many more resources like the star tree on the path ahead, and you will be receiving a double portion,” Exquisite said. Then, she clapped a hand on Han Sen’s shoulder and teleported away. They went straight to the altar where Han Sen had signed his contract with Exquisite.

Han Sen signed another contract to become Li Keer’s silkworm.

Because Exquisite was there, though, Han Sen kept his mind carefully blank. He waited until he was alone, out of Exquisite and Li Keer’s range of connection, before thinking things over some more. He was in a bad situation.

“I wonder if the small jade figure can absorb two marks. If it can’t, I’m going to be exposed.” Han Sen quickly brought out the small jade figure as he mulled over his situation. He moved to transfer Li Keer’s branding onto the small jade figure.

Fortunately, Han Sen’s biggest worries didn’t come to fruition. The mark was successfully applied to the small jade figure.

“Since the jade figure managed to absorb the additional mark, this situation is a good thing, I suppose. It makes little difference if I’m watched by one person or two. And if it means I can earn double the resources, where is the harm in that? I guess this is a lucky turn of events?” Han Sen still couldn’t convince himself that this was a good thing, though. He felt as if there was something dangerous about the situation, but he couldn’t quite put his finger on what it was exactly.

“Exquisite has been talking a lot about these rewards that I’ll be earning. I wonder what they are? I hope I can get my hands on some deified xenogeneic genes,” Han Sen thought to himself.

In the meantime, Exquisite and Li Keer were standing in a hall, signing Han Sen up for the silkworm bouts. That was the rewards Exquisite had been talking about.

The silkworm fights provided many resources to the victor, but the silkworm had to earn them. The higher rank they were, the more resources they would receive.

There were 13 Very High students and 12 silkworms. If someone ended up outside the top 10, their rewards would be practically nothing.

Ranks five to ten weren’t much better. Their rewards were fairly small, but things got much better for those in the top five. Going up sequentially, each rank gave double what the last received.

The prizes had been structured in that way to inspire the silkworms to work their hardest in battle. The Very High wanted them to bring out everything they had.

It was important for the young Very High to feel the life and death fights of their silkworms. They needed to feel every ounce of emotion such battles could draw out. And they could do it all from the comfort of their seats. They could experience the dire straits of mortal combat without ever putting themselves in danger. Only the Very High had a system that allowed their students to do such a thing.

The Very High were surprised to find out that Exquisite and Li Keer were sharing the same silkworm. It had happened before in the history of the Very High, but it was a very rare occurrence.

The Very High that practiced the Very High Sense didn't comment on the arrangement, but the Very High like Liyu Zhen were less reserved with their opinions.

"Li Keer and Exquisite are using the same silkworm. That Han Sen is quite lucky. He has benefitted from our people yet again," Liyu Zhen said coldly.

Li Xue Cheng laughed and said, "Being the silkworm of two Very High masters won't be good for him, all things considered. Although he can earn double the resources, his responsibilities will also be doubled."

After pausing, Li Xue Cheng went on to say, "Plus, once he causes many of the Very High to lose their wagers in the silkworm fights, it will be very difficult for him to gain resources anyway."

"You collected the bets?" Liyu Zhen laughed.

"I collected them all before it was announced that silkworms wouldn't be able to use treasures in the battle. I won't let the gamblers bail now." Li Xue Cheng's eyes sparkled. "Han Sen just needs to not get first place in the silkworm fights. Then, we will be rich. The resources we gain will be enough to make us deified. They will take us to larva class, at least. And some of the treasures are so rare that we couldn't have bought them with all the resources in the world. But if we lose, there is no way we can pay it all back."

"How could we lose?" Liyu Zhen said with a laugh. "Every single silkworm is at least half-deified. They are half a level higher than Han Sen. And if push comes to shove, the born-deified will be mopping the floor with him. No matter how strong Han Sen is, he will never get any further than number two."

"You are right. No matter how strong a ninth-tier King is, they cannot beat a deified. Plus, that born-deified is very talented. He isn't much weaker than the Very High students themselves. He is very good when compared to our members at the same level. Beating a mere King will be a trivial task for him," Li Xue Cheng said with assurance. He was confident he was going to win this bet.

When Exquisite and Li Keer finally explained the "rewards" that they'd been promising, Han Sen shook his head. "This is the 'good stuff' you've been talking about? I will have to fight for my life in there. And I can only join as a single person. Why would there be double benefits for me?"

"You will have both of us to support you. Isn't that twice the benefits?" Exquisite said flatly.

Han Sen and Li Keer looked at Exquisite, gobsmacked. Han Sen didn't know if Exquisite was just fooling around, but Li Keer was especially surprised by seeing how Exquisite was behaving. It was hard to believe this was the same Exquisite she had grown up with.

"Why are you looking at me like that? If you have the time, read the files I've sent you about your opponents. And remember, the higher the rank you achieve, the more resources you receive. If you can reach second place, you will get a deified treasure amongst many other resources," Exquisite said calmly.

"What about becoming number one?" Han Sen kept looking at the information he was giving while he asked.

"There is a born-deified participating in this fight. He will probably secure first place. You just need to try your best to be second," Exquisite said with a small shrug.

"A born deified is joining? And I can't use treasures? I suppose I will have to settle for second, then," Han Sen said with a nod. If he couldn't use his peacock king soul robe and the Six Core Snake Bow, he didn't think he could beat a deified elite. Not even a primitive one, which was the lowest tier of deified.

Chapter 2664 Deified Set

Li Keer and Exquisite departed Underworld Lake. Li Keer turned and looked at Exquisite with confusion. "You aren't going to tell him about all the bets that have been placed on his performance?"

"What is the point in him knowing that? Are we going to make him fight for his life against a born-deified? I don't want to have to find another silkworm," Exquisite said.

"You're right," Li Keer said, tilting her head in acknowledgment. "It is impossible for a King to beat a born-deified. Plus, that deified has no lack of talent himself. He's as good as a student of the Very High. It won't be easy for anyone to win against him, and Han Sen is just a ninth-tier King."

Li Keer sighed and continued, "The people who have placed big bets on Han Sen—who believed he would earn first place—are going to lose the items they have wagered. They won't be able to do anything against Li Xue Cheng. They'll definitely take out their anger on Han Sen, even if they don't hold him personally responsible. Wherever he goes, I'm sure trouble will follow close behind."

"That is something that cannot be avoided. We just have to find a way to sort this out, or at least mitigate the fallout," Exquisite glumly said.

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Han Sen spent some time reviewing the information he had been given. There descriptions and short bios of the twelve silkworms he would be squaring off against. The information was comprehensive, and whoever had been responsible for compiling it had done an excellent job. It was like a bona fide restaurant menu.

There was an image of every silkworm in the documents he received, too. Han Sen saw the born-deified fellow on the first page.

Shale: Lionheart Mutant

Level: Primitive Deified

Sex: Male

Primary Geno Arts: Lion Killer

Hobbies and Interests: Dessert

The content of the documents was very detailed, but most of the information was also pointless for Han Sen's purposes. He didn't need to know the hobbies of his competition. He didn't need to know what color of armor they wore or the things they liked to do for fun. There was no mention of their powers. All he learned was that the deified had a geno art called Lion Killer.

"So far, reading this is no help at all." Han Sen shook his head.

Han Sen kept on reading, and he noticed that every profile was the same. When he flipped over to the fourth contestant, he saw the description of Yu Shanxin. Again, the introduction was the same. It only described his looks and the fact that he was skilled in the Extreme Evil Path. That was about it.

Han Sen kept flipping through the profiles, page by page. He memorized the faces of the silkworms, their names, and their races. The other information was useless for him to remember.

Han Sen flipped through the character information and reached the last page. There, he saw his own profile.

Han Sen: Crystallizer (serving Sky Palace)

Level: Ninth-tier King

Sex: Male

Primary Geno Arts: The Story of Genes, Teeth Knife, Under the Sky knife skills...

Owned treasures: Charming God's Jian, the Shield of the Medusa's Gaze, unknown feather clothes, unknown bow...

"Wait, what is this?" Han Sen was frozen. The information he had on the other silkworms was practically useless. But the profile on him was surprisingly detailed. It said everything quite clearly, and explicitly mentioned the treasures he wielded. It even separated each one to describe each geno art and treasure in a grossly detailed fashion. It was all so very elaborate.

“Who created this d*mn folder? Why has the writer only gone and exposed my powers?” Han Sen felt as if he wanted to kill someone. He didn’t know anything about his enemies, but the enemies knew everything about him. This was bullcrap.

At the end of the information, there was a summary. “The genius that can suppress thousands of races that composed the fabric of the wonderful universe we live in. The one that stands out the most can become the greatest silkworm. Aside from Shale, who we know can fight, the other has yet to be decided. He is the most popular winner in the silkworm bouts.”

“You motherf*cker.” After reading the summary, Han Sen felt fairly sure that he had been set up.

Han Sen flipped through the book a few more times. He finally saw the last sentence at the back of the book, too, then. It said, “Editor: Li Xue Cheng.”

“Who is this Li Xue Cheng? Why is he turning everyone against me?” Han Sen wondered, bewildered. He didn’t recall encountering a man that went by that name before. In fact, he’d only met a few of the Very High since he arrived in Outer Sky. He didn’t know anyone called Li Xue Cheng, so there was no way he had offended him.

“Are Li Xue Cheng and Liyu Zhen working together?” Han Sen wondered to himself. Aside from Liyu Zhen, he could think of no other person of the Very High who would want to see him down like this.

Thinking of this, Han Sen was given a shock. He realized that the silkworms bouts wouldn’t be as easy as he initially presumed.

Han Sen flipped back through the folder and read the details of his opponents again and again. They were all top-class fighters. There were many of the Extreme King there, and Yu Shanxin was one of the Sky.

And in regards to Shale, who was a Lionheart, it was actually a nameless race. There was only one half-deified among his people. Shale just so happened to be the son of that half-deified, but for some reason, there was a gene mutation when he was born. It led to him becoming deified. He was extraordinarily talented.

After the God Spirit Touch’s test, he was registered as a ten armor talent. Following his lead, the race of the Lionhearts had gained wider renown. If he hadn’t been selected by one of the Very High students to become a silkworm, he would have been planning a fight for a lantern.

Shale was chosen to be a silkworm four years ago. He had been practicing in Outer Sky for a long time, and he was so talented... With all that extra time to practice and refine those talents, it was easy to imagine how scary he would be as an opponent.

“If I can use treasures, I’ll definitely be able to beat Shale and reach first place. If I can’t use treasures, then I will fail to defeat Shale, and possibly all the other silkworms as well. Even setting aside the others, I’ll have to fight Yu Shanxin. That guy will be very hard to deal with,” Han Sen thought to himself.

At the back of the folder, there was a list of all the rewards one could receive from various placements in the silkworm bouts. When Han Sen saw the reward for first place, his mouth gaped.

“What is a deified treasure set?” Han Sen was confused, and so he continued reading. After reading it, he could only think, “The rich are stubborn.”

The so-called “deified treasure set” was a set of armor composed of powerful treasures. The chest piece was a deified treasure. So was the belt. The gauntlets and the boots were four deified treasures. With the helmet, that made seven deified treasures. It combined to become a deified treasure set called the “Apollo Set.”

Han Sen continued to read. He noticed the Apollo Set wasn’t just a deified treasure composed of seven pieces. Each piece was an individual deified treasure. They were all primitive class. If Han Sen used them all together, it would allow him to make use of special substance chains. That would put him at transmutation level.

The second-place contestant would receive one deified treasure. There were other resources that would be awarded as well, but none of them were deified. There was a wide gulf of prestige separating the rewards for second place and the rewards to be earned in first place. The folder included a photo of the Apollo Set. The entire thing shone silver like a polished mirror. It looked badass and mysterious. It seemed to radiate glory.

Han Sen read the description of the Apollo Set, and after reading it, he felt himself starting to drool. If a user hadn’t reached deified, they couldn’t activate the Apollo Set’s power. But if multiple people used the pieces of the set simultaneously, the seven-piece set could activate Apollo’s Wings, which were the substance chains. They had primitive power, and a King could control them.

Chapter 2665 Very Difficul

“This is good stuff. The Very High can hand out rewards like this for something that is little more than a game to them? Other races wouldn’t have this many resources to play with,” Han Sen sighed. The Very High were f*cking rich. Han Sen would protect any deified treasure he found like it was his own child, yet the Very High were handing out seven of them as little more than prize money. He couldn’t think of another race that could match this level of wealth. The Extreme King called themselves the number one race, but compared to the Very High, they were nothing but turtles. Their society was measly in comparison.

“If I can take down Outer Sky...” As soon as Han Sen had this thought, he shook it off. He knew he couldn’t risk entertaining thoughts like that. He could never think such dangerous things during his time there. If Li Keer and Exquisite found out what he was considering for the future, it wouldn’t end very well for him.

Han Sen kept turning the matter over and over in his head. Eventually, he thought, “I really want that Apollo Set. Maybe I can deal with those other silkworms. I can handle those fights, but that Shale... I really don’t know how I’m going to bring him down. I can’t use beast souls, and I can’t use my super god spirit body, because they all know me as Han Sen. How can I beat a born-deified, then?”

Han Sen thought about this for a long time, but he couldn’t figure out a solution. After all, he didn’t know much about Shale. According to the information he’d been given, there was little known about the man.

When Exquisite and Li Keer came back, Han Sen asked them if they had more information on the other eleven silkworms. Exquisite already had it prepared for him. She handed over the documents that she and Li Keer had spent the last few days gathering.

“By the way, who is this Li Xue Cheng? Did I offend him in some way?” Han Sen asked, pointing to the first folder. He showed them the back and the name of the editor that was written there.

“He is connected to Liyu Zhen,” Exquisite admitted after a moment of hesitation.

Han Sen couldn't read Exquisite's mind, but he was a very observant person. Exquisite was obviously reacting strangely. He knew there was something between the lines here.

“Has Liyu Zhen done something?” Han Sen asked.

Exquisite remained silent and didn't answer, but Li Keer said, “I think we should let Han Sen know. It will be for the better. He should know so he can be prepared for the fallout, regardless.”

“What is going on?” Han Sen frowned again.

Exquisite explained the wagers that the Very High had made with Li Xue Cheng. And then, she said, “Actually, this has little to do with you. This is simply a whole bunch of people being scammed by Li Xue Cheng for a host of resources and treasures. I'm afraid they might not let it go easily, though.”

Han Sen smiled wryly and asked, “Do the Very High like gambling this much?”

“Those who study the Very High Sense have no interest in gambling, but the other branch of our crooked tree... I think Outer Sky is too safe. The Very High on the other side don't know what it is like to fight for your life in the face of adversity and death. Some things come too easily to them, and as a result, they don't treasure what they have.” Li Keer shook her head and sighed.

“If we make them lose so many resources and treasures, are they going to be mad at me?” Han Sen asked.

“They won't come after you, but I can tell you that they won't be happy with you, either. Li Xue Cheng only wanted to get those resources and treasures, and to do that, he used you,” Exquisite said.

“Maybe they won't get scammed. If I help them win a lot of resources and treasures, wouldn't they be more inclined to help me out in the future?” Han Sen said with a dark laugh.

“Of course. They control many of Outer Sky's resources. It can be difficult to avoid interacting with them, and if they like you, things will go so much easier for you.” After that, Li Keer looked at Han Sen with shock. “What are you going to do?”

"It's simple, isn't it? To solve all of this neatly, I just have to end up number one in the silkworm fights," Han Sen growled.

"You're right, that would fix it, but... Shale is the unsurmountable challenge you have ahead of you. His talents are scary. There is no doubt about that. In his short four years here, he has learned many geno arts. That includes proficiency with God's Wander. He can use space teleportation. If you want to fight him, I don't think anything you can throw at Shale will work," Li Keer said.

"If I haven't yet tried, how can you so easily think that I can't beat him?" Han Sen was very calm and composed throughout all this. He quietly opened the new documents and began to study them.

Li Keer and Exquisite looked at each other. They could sense the confidence that had spurred Han Sen to the lofty heights he frequently reached. He now seemed quite confident that he had what it took to defeat Shale. But they couldn't understand where that unbridled confidence came from.

"Third Sister, don't you think this is a bit weird? Why can we feel his confidence, but not where the confidence comes from? Unless he is a blindly confident bag of grass, we should be able to feel what is inside him that gives him the confidence he needs to take on this challenge," Li Keer said to Exquisite after Han Sen left. She didn't think Han Sen was a bag of grass.

"His mental control power is so strong. He can control his thoughts. Aside from direct emotions, it is nearly impossible for us to discern what he is thinking," Exquisite said.

"The hardest thing to control is your own mind. Even the Very High need the Very High Sense to do it, yet he can do it on his own. Third Sister, your choice in silkworm is exceptional," Li Keer said with a sigh.

"I'm not sure where his confidence comes from, but I think he wants to reach first place. If he succeeds, it will be good for you and me," Exquisite said.

"I only fear that he is overestimating his capabilities and will die in some tragic way because of it. Then, we will have to go and find a new silkworm." Li Keer wasn't very confident about this, and she thought to herself, "If he was Dollar, I'm sure he would be able to do this."

Sometimes, the things people wanted most were the things that they couldn't have. Li Keer still missed Dollar.

Han Sen investigated the eleven silkworms, and he started to develop a headache. None of them would be easy to fight. There were many difficult people in the competition in addition to Shale, who topped them all.

One of the silkworms was actually a Very High. It was very rare to have a Very High as a silkworm. Although all the Very High were very strong, their powers were too similar. And they had all been raised in the same environment. Having a Very High as a silkworm wouldn't allow the master to learn as much, and so not many of the Very High would agree to take one of their own as a silkworm. Plus, ordinary Very High thought that only low-life creatures deserved to become silkworms. They wouldn't want to ruin their own reputation by becoming a silkworm, so it was very rare to see this amongst the Very High.

"A Very High half-deified. That will mean he is stronger than Exquisite, right? I don't think that will be someone easily defeated. And that's not to mention the bigger trouble further ahead like Shale. Winning these silkworm bouts won't be easy, at all." Han Sen dropped the documents for the time being and

went back to practicing his geno arts. There were two geno arts he had to learn before fighting Shale. If he didn't get good at those, he had no chance of winning.

Chapter 2666 Mysterious Desert

"I want to go to the core area. Is there any way for me to do that?" Han Sen asked Exquisite the next time he saw her.

He seemed to remember that when Li Keer was in the Very High, she frequently traveled to the core area. But Exquisite had told him that being in Outer Sky shut off his access to the core area. He thought she might have been telling the truth, since the many times he tried to access the core area had all ended in failure.

"There is a specific place in Outer Sky that you can go to that allows you to open the core hall door. But this is a place that not even students of the Very High can go to. If you have an urgent emergency that requires you to access the core area, perhaps I can help you." Li Keer looked at Han Sen with curiosity. She was curious why Han Sen wanted to go to the core area so badly.

"I want to go to the core area to find a friend. Perhaps he has a way that I can win the silkworm fights," Han Sen said.

Li Keer could sense that Han Sen wasn't lying about his general reason for going to the core area. In regards to the friend he had mentioned, she could tell that was partly true, as well. As for the identity of this mysterious friend, she had no idea.

Han Sen had done his best not to think about it, but when he mentioned finding a friend, he hadn't controlled his thoughts perfectly. That was unavoidable. But still, Han Sen did his best to keep his thoughts away from anything incriminating. And that was enough for Li Keer to be unable to tell the identity of the person he wished to see.

"Sure. I will look for a way. I will come back to you with an answer later. Mind you, this will be very tricky. There is every chance that this won't work, so don't get your hopes up." Li Keer was shocked by how well Han Sen could clamp down on his thoughts, but she knew he wasn't lying. Therefore, she set aside the idea of asking him again.

Han Sen waited half a day, but Li Keer didn't return. In the meantime, Exquisite came to Underworld Lake.

Han Sen didn't speak, but Exquisite could tell what he was thinking. She was surprised and she said, "Little Sister agreed to help you enter the core area?"

"She said that it might be difficult and it might not work." Han Sen was worried Li Keer might have been away for so long because she had some bad news to deliver.

Exquisite laughed and said, "This is a complicated matter. According to the theory, there is only one place in which Outer Sky can allow access to the core area. But this place is forbidden by our people. Not only is it a restricted zone for outsiders, but even most of the Very High are forbidden to go there. Not

many people can do what she is doing. Little Sister is one of the very few. If she wants to help you and your luck isn't too bad, it might work."

"What is this place that you're talking about?" Han Sen asked with curiosity.

"I once told you that Outer Sky resides between the real world and the anti-material world. This place exists between those two realms. Because it connects those two opposing powers, everything here is very... strange. Connecting to the real world and opening a door to the core hall can be complicated." Exquisite didn't explain much beyond that. "Because the process can be dangerous, we forbid Very High students from entering the core hall. But Little Sister's father is the guardian, and she is much loved. It shouldn't be difficult for her to convince her father to give you a chance."

"I see." Now, Han Sen understood.

After waiting for another hour, Li Keer finally returned. She came bearing good news, which made Han Sen feel relieved.

Li Keer used space teleportation to guide him to their destination. After a few jumps, they reached a desert. That desert appeared endless. It must have been as big as a solar system.

Even with Han Sen's eyesight, he couldn't see the end of that desert. It was difficult to imagine how large it was.

As they stood in the desert, Li Keer suddenly shouted into the endless wastes. "Dad, I've brought him here! Can we go now?"

A crazy wind suddenly spawned in the quiet and dead desert. The raging wind threw yellow sand into the sky, then morphed to present the face of a Very High man.

"Remember, don't go past the three lines," shouted the Very High man. He looked like a sand god, and his voice sounded like thunder.

"I know. It doesn't matter how many times you say it, I won't forget and go beyond the three lines. We only want to go to the core area. That's all," Li Keer said nicely.

The sand deity-looking man shook his head. He couldn't stop Li Keer from doing this. The wind blew and then the sand collapsed back onto the ground. The sand god disappeared, and silence returned to the desert.

"Let's go," Li Keer said. Then, she ventured forward into the big desert.

Han Sen followed her. Li Keer kept walking and said, "The area around here is unstable. Please don't use space teleportation powers here. And don't exert too much strength. Otherwise, you might find yourself being dragged into the anti-material world. If that happened, not even our leader could retrieve you."

Han Sen nodded. Now he understood why Li Keer had to walk instead of just teleporting them forward.

The two of them walked through the desert. Sometimes, Han Sen noticed old, weird buildings leering out of the sand. There were ancient stone structures and really advanced metal buildings. There were even battleships and airships scattered here and there in the yellow sand. God only knew how long they had been there. Even the platinum, which should have been impervious to time, was rotten. When the wind blew, platinum boards broke loose and scattered like dust across the sand.

There was a statue that was 100 meters high, and there were the remains of thousands of beasts. There was a dead tree in the sand that looked like a real dragon. The whole huge desert felt very weird.

But there was no consistent style to the relics in the desert. They were obviously a mish-mash of random items stemming from a variety of different points across history. They seemed to have been tossed into the desert and left there like trash. The sight was disconcerting, somehow.

After reading Han Sen's mind, Li Keer explained, "This is a crossroads between the real world and the anti-material world. There are always items from the real world or the anti-material that get lost, twisted, and thrown in here. Every now and again, powerful items end up in here. My dad once found the xenogeneic body of a butterfly class creature. But that was just a stroke of luck. Most of the things sent here are just useless trash."

A loud boom interrupted Li Keer as she was speaking. It shook the two of them as if the sky had been cracked open. Then, Han Sen saw something very large emerge from a crack above them.

Han Sen stared up in shock. The head of a giant beast pushed its way through a gap in the twisted, crooked sky.

The beast's head was silver, and it looked like some artwork made of precious metal. Three horns emerged from its face. It kind of looked like a triceratops, but it was much bigger than a triceratops. The head alone was ten meters long. Blood gushed from its mouth.

Boom!

The giant beast fell from the sky and landed in the desert in front of them. The impact of its body hitting the ground shook the sand like an earthquake.

Chapter 2667 Meeting Destiny Again

Han Sen stared at the giant beast that had fallen into the sand. It looked a lot like a triceratops, but its body was silver and white, and a large pair of wings spread from its back. It was hard to say what race it belonged to. It seemed badly injured, and grievous wounds covered its entire body. It was struggling to get to its feet. Blood poured from its mouth and body, dyeing the bottom of the sandy crater crimson. A small red lake was forming beneath the beast. "A xenogeneic has fallen!" Li Keer rejoiced. She quickly raced toward the crater.

Han Sen followed behind her. Even though it was injured, he could feel the fierce presence exuded by the giant monster. It was deified class, that was for sure.

"Back off, guys!" Before they could even get close to that xenogeneic, a plume of sand rose near them. It took on the shape of a sand god; it was Li Keer's father again.

Before Li Keer could answer, a sandstorm swept over them and sucked them in. Within a second, they were tossed far, far away.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

As they got back to their feet and watched from a distance, they saw countless sand dragons emerging from the ground. They looked like ancient, deadly creatures. They followed the sand god's commands to go for the injured beast.

The beast roared angrily. It quickly stood up, and an endless silver light erupted into a wild storm that consumed the sky. It battered against the sand dragons that now surrounded it.

The ancient-looking dragons had been shaped from sand, and they couldn't withstand the power of that silver light.

Pang!

The silver light then swept over to shine on the sand god's body, blasting the shape of the sand god back into nothing, as well.

Han Sen watched with wide eyes. It was very fortunate that they had been pulled away from the creature. If they hadn't, the creature's remaining dregs of power would have been enough to destroy them.

Li Keer stared at the sight in terror. If her father hadn't appeared in time to keep them from getting close to the giant beast, the creature would have killed them in a moment.

"Li Keer's father can't have gone down that easily, surely." As Han Sen pondered this, he saw the sea of sand swell and boil like a tumultuous sea. Fountains of sand sprayed everywhere, and a pillar of sand shot straight up into the sky, then fell back to the ground, forming itself into the figure of a sand god. That process then repeated itself over and over, creating an army of the sand beings.

The sand gods raged as the remaining dragons roared. The surface of the desert had become a battlefield for ruthless giants. Despite the distance between them and the battlefield, the ground was shaking so violently that Han Sen and Li Keer were having difficulty staying on their feet. They had no choice but to retreat.

They finally reached a safe distance from the fight, but Han Sen could still detect that frightening presence. He could no longer see the actual fight, though. He could only see the distant clouds of sand as some of the sand creatures were ripped apart. His ears reverberated with the sound of dragons roaring at deafening volumes.

"My father's real body is deep inside the Three World Desert. These sand gods are just manifestations of his power," Li Keer explained with a laugh. She could sense that Han Sen was worrying about the safety of her father, but she knew he would be safe since he was deep within the sand.

Han Sen couldn't see what was going on in the fight anymore. That whole desert was shrouded in screens of sand. After a very sad scream, the scary rumblings in the desert came to an end. And then, all the dust settled. A sand god appeared on the horizon and came toward them, telling them they could proceed.

"Father, you killed the xenogeneic? What was its level? Why was it injured and still so scary?" Li Keer curiously asked the sand god.

"I don't know. It was dragged into the anti-material world," the sand god answered. Then, it disappeared.

Li Keer wished to ask something more, but he was already gone. So, she resumed her journey across the desert with Han Sen.

The massive battle had changed the sandy landscape. Many of the weird buildings and items had been revealed from beneath the sands that once buried them. And the buildings and battleships that had once been there were now gone. Han Sen didn't know if they had been destroyed, or buried deep beneath the sands of the desert, or what.

Han Sen looked around. When they reached the location where the giant beast had fallen, a large section of the desert was dyed red. But they couldn't see the body of the giant beast anymore.

"It is a shame that the beast was sucked into the anti-material world. Despite its injuries, it was able to do battle with my dad for so long. It must have been a larva class deified xenogeneic, at the very least." Li Keer looked at the red sand regretfully.

Han Sen felt that it was a shame, too. If he had been able to stab the creature once, he might have been able to nab a beast soul. That xenogeneic was so strong, and its beast soul might have been equally powerful.

Han Sen kept walking, looking around as he went. Then, suddenly, he froze. Some distance away in the desert, Han Sen saw a tower that was built from stone.

That old tower was leaning visibly, and it looked as if it might fall over any second. Han Sen looked at the stone tower's plaque. Written there were the two words, "Destiny's Tower."

The tower was styled just like the Destiny's Tower controlled by the Extreme King.

Han Sen was stunned at the sight, but he immediately clamped down on his thoughts. He wasn't going to let out any memories associated with this tower. He had to suppress everything he knew about Destiny's Tower.

Li Keer could feel that Han Sen's mind was struggling with something. She looked at the stone tower, too. After a while of looking at it, she said, "I've never seen that stone tower before. It must have been revealed by the battle earlier. Do you recognize it?"

"It is exactly the same stone tower I saw when I was with the Extreme King." Han Sen knew he couldn't hide this from Li Keer completely, and so he had to explain it a bit.

Li Keer thought for another moment. She nodded and said, "Now that you mention it, I think I remember something like that. When I visited the Extreme King, I once saw a tower like this, too."

"Let's go. We should check it out," Li Keer suggested, and so they went toward it.

She wasn't interested in the tower, but she could feel Han Sen doing his best to suppress the desire to visit the place. Han Sen was trying to keep his thoughts away from the nature of Destiny's Tower so Li Keer wouldn't be able to see everything he knew about the structures. But that sort of control on his mind suggested to Li Keer that Destiny's Tower had some relevance to Han Sen. If it didn't, Han Sen wouldn't have tried so hard to control his thoughts about the place.

"Being watched sucks." Han Sen sighed and followed Li Keer toward Destiny's Tower.

The tower looked very old, and it was impossible to tell how many years it had been there. While the structure might have been old, it wasn't broken. Li Keer reached the door and twisted the handle. The stone door swung open smoothly.

The two of them walked inside. The tower was full of dust and sand, but otherwise, it seemed to be empty. It looked like an ordinary watchtower.

"Let's go up and see." Li Keer walked toward the stairs.

Han Sen followed Li Keer, trying to keep a lid firmly over any sensitive topics that might otherwise come to mind.

The second floor was still so empty. There was nothing there. Li Keer didn't give up, though. She kept ascending the tower. The whole tower seemed to be empty until they approached the seventh floor.

"Huh? There is someone here." Li Keer looked at the top floor's stone platform in shock.

Chapter 2668 Empty God

On a large stone platform, a man was sitting with his legs crossed. The man was very still, and Han Sen couldn't sense any presence of a lifeforce within him. It looked as if he had been petrified in that position. Han Sen's face looked weirded-out, and he couldn't help but think, "This is so similar to what I saw in the Destiny's Tower of the Extreme King. The man over there looked quite a bit different, though." Li Keer heard Han Sen's thought, and she looked at the man atop the platform with shock. "Weird. It is a creature, but why does it not have a lifeforce?"

As a look of confusion crossed Li Keer's face, the man on the stone platform opened his eyes. He looked at them and said, "I am Empty God. The fact that you have met me today is surely the working of fate. I can fulfill any wish you speak. You can make any request you desire."

"Not again." Han Sen's heart jumped.

Li Keer looked at the man coldly and said, "How dare you call yourself a god in front of the Very High. Not even the Ancient God would refer to themselves as proper gods."

After that, Li Keer swung a swordlight at the man.

She struck too fast for Han Sen to try to stop her. The swordlight came down on the man's head, but the man didn't even have to move. The swordlight crashed against one of his eyebrows.

Pang!

The man's eyebrow wasn't even ruffled. Li Keer was hurled back by a scary force. The power was so strong that it swept past all of Li Keer's defenses. She was thrown into the wall hard, and she coughed up a mouthful of blood. She passed out and fell into a coma. Her lifeforce faded quickly.

"How dare you challenge a god's dignity and question his authenticity. This is your punishment, but seeing as this is your first infraction, the punishment will not be severe," the man said in an icy voice.

Han Sen quickly ran toward Li Keer and checked her vitals. She had only fainted, and while her lifeforce was fading, it was seeping away slowly. She was in no immediate danger. He thought to himself, "This god seems different from the other one I met. I remember the man in the Extreme King's Destiny's Tower shouted 'Empty God.' Is this the Empty God he was referring to?"

"Now, make your wish," Empty God said, looking at Han Sen.

"My life is perfect as it is, thanks. I have a wife, a happy family, great kids, and I always get what I want, anyway. Add to that, I'm super-rich. I have everything. I don't need anything more. Can I choose not to make a wish?" Han Sen looked at Empty God as he spoke.

Han Sen didn't know if this Empty God was the same as the other god. If it was the same, then this really was just a statue. It wasn't the true self of the god it represented. Therefore, he didn't have to worry too much. The black crystal armor could wipe it out in a heartbeat.

If this was the god's real body, though, then a fight might be a bad idea. Han Sen wasn't sure if the black crystal armor could also defeat these gods in their real forms.

"No," Empty God said coldly.

Han Sen's heart felt ill. He ignored Empty God, picked up Li Keer, turned around, and started to run.

Empty God only looked at Han Sen peacefully. He didn't look as if he was going to stop Han Sen from leaving.

Han Sen was trying to figure out whether or not Empty God was really going to fight. He was also doing this to test the black crystal armor, and sense if there was any movement from it. But its lifeforce was hidden, so he couldn't feel anything.

Empty God didn't stop Han Sen, either. Still holding the unconscious Li Keer, Han Sen departed the seventh floor. He went down floor by floor without being stopped by any aggressive powers. Finally, he reached the first floor of Destiny's Tower.

But when he reached the first floor, Han Sen froze. There should have been a door at the bottom floor of Destiny's Tower, but there was none. There was only another stone staircase leading farther down into the tower.

"I've already reached the bottom floor. Why are there more stairs that can lead me down even farther? Have I remembered it incorrectly, and this is actually the second floor?" Han Sen quickly dismissed that idea. Destiny's Tower only had seven floors, and with his exceptional memory, he couldn't have been wrong.

Han Sen reached out a hand to where the door should have been, but there was just a wall there. It wasn't an optical illusion. There really wasn't a door.

Pang!

Han Sen threw a punch at the stone wall. With his strength, even a mountain would have been destroyed by one of his punches. But the stone wall didn't buckle, and there wasn't a single scraped left on its surface.

Han Sen frowned. He knew that nothing would be achieved by using brute force. He looked at the stone staircase, then turned and continued walking down.

When he reached the floor below, he noticed that there was another stone platform. The stone platform had that same man on it—the one who had called himself Empty God. It was exactly as it was on the seventh floor.

"Make your wish," Empty God said, staring expressionlessly at Han Sen.

Han Sen gnashed his teeth. Still holding Li Keer, he continued trying to descend the stairs. There were more of them, and he swiftly descended another seven flights. He was still unable to find the first floor and its door. He only found more and more stairs.

After walking down the stone stairs for a while, Han Sen realized he always came back to the seventh floor of the tower. There, he saw Empty God again.

"Is this some sort of space power? Does it connect the seventh floor and the first floor to create some sort of weird Mobius strip? If that is true, no matter how far I walk, I will never reach the exit of this tower. I will just keep looping the same route over and over again." Han Sen tried using teleportation powers, but it was to no avail. No matter where he tried to teleport to, he always reappeared inside the tower, just in a different location each time.

"Make your wish." Whenever Han Sen saw Empty God again, the man would repeat the same phrase. He never said anything else.

But his expression seemed to say that Han Sen had no other choice, and that sooner or later, he would have to make a wish.

Han Sen knew that if he made a wish, some of his lifespan would be taken by those men that called themselves gods. And the wish he made would be twisted by the so-called gods. Even if the wish came true, he would have to pay too high a price.

If he didn't make a wish, though, there was a chance that he and Li Keer would never be able to exit the tower. Han Sen couldn't figure a way out of this dilemma.

He couldn't attack Empty God. Li Keer had demonstrated that inability all too well. The only chance he had to attack was if he could somehow make use of his black crystal armor. Attacking Empty God in any other way was practically a death wish.

"Li Keer's father must know we walked into Destiny's Tower. If we don't emerge anytime soon, he will surely come here in search of Li Keer." Han Sen was placing his chips on Li Keer's father.

Empty God seemed to see through what Han Sen was thinking, and he coldly said, "Have you heard of power that warps the passage of time? You might stay in this tower for a thousand years, but only a second will pass outside. If you are expecting a rescue team to come and find you, you'll be nothing but bones by then."

"Do I really have to make a wish?" Han Sen looked at Empty God and sighed.

"If you and I have met, it is something that was always meant to be. You deserve this. You cannot escape from it." Empty God spoke slowly in a bone-chilling voice.

2669 Answer of the Origin

"It looks like I have no choice except to make a wish." Han Sen started to consider what sort of wish he wanted to make. The last time he made a wish in Destiny's Tower, the statue's eyes had ended up being destroyed. Now, it seemed as if it might happen again. Perhaps it would have the same effect.

But even if Empty God's eyes exploded, it wouldn't help him much. The statue would still have its power, and it would still threaten Han Sen and shorten his lifespan.

"No matter what wish I make, unless the black crystal armor attacks him, my lifespan is going to be shortened. Why don't I ask a question I have always wanted to ask instead? Perhaps I can at least learn some useful information out of this," Han Sen thought. Then, he looked at Empty God and asked, "Can my wish be a question that you will answer?"

"Of course. I can do anything. I can answer any question you seek to ask," Empty God said coldly.

"I want to know, are you and I the same? Are you a creature of this universe, too? Or do you come from someplace outside the universe? Regardless of the answer, I want to know where God was born," Han Sen said, posing his question.

Empty God's eyes flashed. He looked at Han Sen slowly and said, "Are you sure you want to ask me this question? It is useless for you to know this."

"I told you already that I don't lack anything. But I'm curious about you. If you must make me compose a wish, I would like to know this answer," Han Sen said.

Empty God looked at Han Sen and frowned. "There were three questions. You can only receive the answer for one."

Han Sen looked at the Empty God for a long moment, then asked his ultimate question. "Please tell me, Empty God. Are you a creature of this universe?"

Han Sen had always been suspicious about God coming from the geno hall. Even mighty beings like the Ancient Water God had been killed in a single blow when they tried to enter the geno hall. The power of the beast within that place was far too shocking. Aside from those who called themselves gods, Han Sen couldn't think of any other being that possessed such power.

But if Han Sen asked the god where he was born, Empty God could answer by telling him a name that he wouldn't recognize. If Han Sen had never heard of the place, then he wouldn't know if it was in the universe or not. So, Han Sen eventually decided to ask the simplest of questions. He needed to confirm if the god was a creature that came from the geno universe. This was the root of all questions he would later want to ask. With knowledge of its origin, he would have a more solid basis for formulating theories and asking future questions. This was very important.

Empty God didn't hesitate this time. He answered straight away. "No. I am God. I come from God Place."

When Han Sen heard the answer, he nodded. The way Empty God said it was so vague. He had, perhaps deliberately, twisted the answer. But Han Sen had still received the answer he had wanted.

God wasn't a creature that came from the geno universe. This answer was enough for Han Sen to confirm, at the very least, that the god he was facing was something more than a deified elite. This being was even more almighty.

These guys called themselves gods. But Han Sen thought they were more like devils that had invaded the ordinary world.

Han Jinzhi and Blood Legion had been dealing with scary beings like this for a long time. The effort they had put in was unimaginable for normal people.

When Han Sen received this answer, he felt his power start to fade away. His power drained so rapidly that it actually physically pulled him toward Empty God.

Han Sen had already experienced this before, and he knew it was his lifespan being reduced. But this time, it was fading much faster than it had upon his first wish. He could see his lifespan fading away like an avalanche.

Empty God looked at Han Sen coldly. A weird light shone around the statue, making him look both godlike and insubstantial at the same time.

A moment later, a century's worth of lifespan had left Han Sen's body. It made Han Sen feel tired and worn out. The drain didn't stop, though. Han Sen was now losing years at an even greater speed.

Han Sen was prepared to give up a lot of his lifespan, so he didn't mind sacrificing a few years. After all, nabbing secrets right from God's mouth wasn't easy.

Han Sen had already received a big boost to his lifespan from the previous god doll. He could accept this kind of loss.

But the next second, the black crystal armor inside his Sea of Soul reacted. While Han Sen continued to lose years, the black crystal armor's mysterious presence exploded with energy. That power spread over Han Sen's body.

The spreading black crystal armor gave Han Sen a unique feeling. It was as if someone's presence was surrounding him.

Han Sen was quite familiar with this presence. He tried to think it over, and he finally remembered where he had felt that presence before. It was the same presence he had sensed when the black crystal armor blew up the statue of the previous god.

Han Sen didn't have time to think. The black crystal armor glowed with a strange godly light. It flew out of the Sea of Soul, then punched Empty God, who was still sitting atop the stone platform.

Empty God had been blithely sucking in Han Sen's lifespan without ever realizing that something like this might happen. Plus, he hadn't even realized that there was a power out there that could harm him. So, he hadn't remained vigilant against a sudden attack. He had grown lax in his security.

Pang!

What Han Sen had witnessed before was now happening again. Under the tremendous force of the crystal armor's punch, Empty God's body shattered. A massive surge of lifeforce rose from the crumbling statue.

"Lifespan +1... lifespan +1..."

The announcement of his lifespan increasing repeated over and over. That new power entered Han Sen's body, stretching out his potential lifespan.

At the same moment that the god doll was destroyed, in a hall inside an empty realm, Empty God's eyes blazed with terrible fury. And he said, "Sky armor power... Sky armor god... I only destroyed your god doll's eyes, how dare you destroy my god doll! This isn't over yet..."

Han Sen had no idea, but due to these meetings, he had started a fight between two gods.

The black crystal armor returned to Han Sen's Sea of Soul. Han Sen had gained more than a thousand years of additional lifespan.

"Of course, if you're going to become rich overnight, I guess killing a god is a reasonable way to do so." Han Sen was delighted by this result. After all, he had just received a big boost to his lifespan and a great deal of lifeforce. His whole body was brimming with a scary presence.

Han Sen didn't dare stay in Destiny's Tower a minute longer. He picked up Li Keer and resumed his flight down the stairs. This time, when he reached the first floor, he encountered the door that would lead him outside. There were no more stairs leading down, keeping him inside a loop.

“What just happened?” Li Keer, who had been unconscious up to this point, slowly shook herself awake.

“I’m not really know. That geezer was a bit weird, wasn’t he? After you punched him, you got blasted into a wall and you passed out. But the man was shattered into bits, and he became a pile of rubble,” Han Sen said, lying to Li Keer with a straight face.

“How could that happen?” Li Keer looked at Han Sen with suspicion. She didn’t believe his story, but she couldn’t be certain from his thoughts whether he was lying or not. She went back into the tower, and at the top floor, she saw a pile of rubble just like Han Sen had described.

Chapter 2670 Geno Hall’s Message

Although Li Keer was a little bit confused and continued to search through the tower, she failed to find anything particularly suspicious. Eventually, she gave up the search and left Destiny’s Tower with Han Sen. They went back to crossing the wild dunes of the desert. As they walked, Han Sen continued to spot strange shapes rising out of the sand. None of the shapes seemed to be recognizable, and he had no idea where they might have come from, either. After they reached an oasis, Li Keer told Han Sen, “The dimensional space here is more stable, so you can open the core area door from here. You won’t be dragged into the anti-material world.”

Han Sen thanked Li Keer, then tried to open his core door. This time, the core door opened like usual. Han Sen entered the core area again.

Han Sen wanted to go to the core area because, once he entered, he would be far away from Li Keer and Exquisite. They would be unable to feel his thoughts, and Han Sen could practice his secret geno arts in privacy and safety. He wouldn’t be spied on.

Han Sen hadn’t dared to practice his true geno arts in Outer Sky. If he had, the secrets of his four sacred geno arts would have been revealed to Li Keer and Exquisite. That would needlessly complicate his life, he believed.

So for the duration of his stay in Outer Sky, Han Sen spent his time practicing the geno arts Exquisite had given to him. Out of the geno arts in his private roster, he only practiced The Story of Genes. The Rebate and Sky Palace already knew about its existence, and if they knew, so did the Very High. There was no point in hiding it.

And it didn’t matter if the two Very High women saw The Story of Genes. Aside from Han Sen, no other person could learn it.

Once he was in the core area, though, Han Sen could practice his other geno arts. But that wasn’t the only reason he had come. He wanted to practice Heart Connection. If he couldn’t use beast souls in the upcoming silkworm battles, that might be his only attack that could deal damage to his deified nemesis, Shale.

In addition, Han Sen also wanted to meet up with Gu Qingcheng and Elysian Moon. He wanted them to do something on his behalf. Fortunately, Gu Qingcheng and Elysian Moon had already been practicing in

the core area, and they weren't too far from Han Sen's position. Han Sen quickly contacted them and arranged a meeting.

"How does it feel to be a pet of the pretty ladies in the Very High?" Elysian Moon mocked Han Sen with a smile.

"It feels terrible. It's like I'm naked 24/7. I have no privacy at all," Han Sen glumly admitted.

"You have come looking for us in a rush. Did something happen?" Elysian Moon could tell that something must have gone wrong.

"I have a geno art, but I'm not sure what it does. I can't leave the Very High, and I can't risk trying it myself. So, I want you to take this geno art and find someone. Have him take a look at it and figure out if it is useful," Han Sen said. Then, he passed his Xuan Yellow Sutra to Gu Qingcheng.

"Who should we give it to?" Gu Qingcheng asked as she accepted the Xuan Yellow Sutra.

"There is a man called Mister White among the Extreme King. I have a way to contact him, but with my current circumstances and my soured relationship with the Extreme King, meeting him might prove difficult. So, you guys need to be careful. After you have contacted him, make sure you are safe. And make sure you listen to what Mister White tells you," Han Sen told Gu Qingcheng. He quickly explained how the women could get in touch with Mister White.

Han Sen only wanted to know what might happen if he activated the Xuan Yellow Sutra. If there were no issues that could arise from it, he could just use it freely. He wouldn't even need to practice it, either. He only had to perform his Blood-Pulse Sutra in reverse, as that was what the Xuan Yellow Sutra taught.

After Gu Qingcheng and Elysian Moon left, Han Sen found a quiet place to practice Heart Connection in the core area. If he wanted to heavily wound Shale, he would probably need that skill in his repertoire.

There was also Break Six Skies, as well. Han Sen had some experience with that technique. Break Six Skies was extremely powerful, but it was an area-of-effect skill. Therefore, the power wasn't as concentrated as Heart Connection. But it was still one of the strongest geno arts Han Sen possessed.

Things didn't seem to have gone smoothly for the two women. Han Sen waited four days before Elysian Moon and Gu Qingcheng returned to the core area.

"I gave the items to Mister White. He said he would need some time to investigate. You can expect a response in two weeks," Gu Qingcheng said.

"Two weeks?" Han Sen couldn't help but shake his head in dismay. There were only three days left until the silkworm bouts began. If it took two weeks to get the results back from Mister White, he wouldn't be able to use the geno art in the fights.

But Han Sen hadn't planned to use the Blood-Pulse Sutra in the upcoming fights anyway, so he wasn't too disappointed.

Han Sen asked Gu Qingcheng about Planet Eclipse and the situation with Sky Palace. Then, he practiced his geno arts for another couple of days. When his time was up, he departed the core area.

"Why did it take you so long to come back?" Exquisite, seeing Han Sen, felt relieved. There was less than a day to go until the silkworm fights began. If Han Sen hadn't returned in time, he would have been in a lot of trouble.

"My friend didn't arrive in the core area as soon as I had hoped. I had to wait for a few days before I ran into him," Han Sen said.

"What happened?" Li Keer asked.

"It was a waste of time. He didn't have enough time to figure anything out," Han Sen said, putting on a pained expression.

"You really wanted a way for a ninth-tier King to beat a deified elite?" Li Keer asked. "It wouldn't have mattered how long you waited. That is an impossible feat. Unless you can make use of your treasures, it won't be happening. And it has already been decided that all treasures will be barred from use. It is obvious that Shale will rank first in this competition."

Han Sen thought she was most likely correct. The Very High's decision sounded as if they wanted Shale to be number one, though.

"What's going on with that Shale? They're pretty much handing him the number one spot. Why?" Han Sen asked, looking at Li Keer.

"Time is almost up. We need to go to the valley and join the silkworm bout. Let's talk while we walk," Li Keer said, and then she quickly departed the oasis.

As they traveled back across the sand, Li Keer explained the situation to Han Sen.

Because Shale was born deified and possessed a ten armor talent, he might become a true god, assuming he had enough resources and a little luck.

The most important thing was that the Very High man who had signed a contract with Shale was a very important figure, too. The Very High seemed to be grooming him to be the very best. They wanted him to be capable of fighting and breaking open the Geno Hall. So, even the man's silkworm would receive the best care possible to boost the Very High man's chances.

"The Very High want access to the Geno Hall, too? What is inside the Geno Hall?" Han Sen asked with curiosity.

"I don't know. One of our ancestors entered the Geno Hall and brought back some information regarding the place, but the information he provided us was very vague. It was like there was someone that wanted us to come to the Geno Hall, and I think they were asking for help," Li Keer said.

"I thought that getting into the Geno Hall meant you would become a god. Why would someone inside signal for help?" Han Sen asked with confusion.

“That is what we want to find out, but we have yet to find an answer,” Li Keer said.

Chapter 2671 Silkworm Bouts Begin

The valley was a giant basin in Outer Sky. The entire basin was shaped like an enormous bowl, and it was ringed by unfathomably tall mountains. The landscape of the basin itself was very harsh and complicated. Every silkworm fight would take place inside this valley. Li Keer and Han Sen reached the valley right before the silkworm fights were going to begin. When Exquisite saw them both heading toward her, she sighed in relief.

She expected Han Sen to lose at least one of his fights, but if he didn't participate in the contest at all, the Very High would hate him even more.

The time of rest was over. When the eleven silkworms entered the valley, Exquisite didn't ask anything of Han Sen. She allowed him to proceed into the basin of combat.

The moment Han Sen set foot in the valley, the entire valley was sealed by a huge barrier. The bai sema would keep the destructive power of the combatants contained within the valley, but it wouldn't stop teleportation or the bodies of the contestants. If the silkworms teleported outside the seal, they would immediately lose the fight.

When the silkworm fights began, few Very High had come to watch the fights. Only the masters of the twelve silkworms actually showed up in person.

The Very High that practiced the Very High Sense had zero interest in such a contest, and the other members of their society had other means of spectating. There was no need for them to go all the way to the valley.

Only the masters of the silkworms had to watch the fights unfold up-close. They needed that proximity to gain the battle experience and knowledge of those they were watching.

“It finally begins. Now, if the other eleven silkworms meet Han Sen, they will do their best to fight him.” As Li Xue Cheng watched the stream of the fight preparations, he cackled wildly.

“Of course. We made Han Sen, who is only a ninth-tier King, into a powerful contender who is only second to Shale. The half-deified silkworms won't be happy about this. Even if we were nice people, this still would have put them in a competitive mood, right?” Liyu Zhen squinted his eyes.

“Han Sen might drop out before he even gets to Shale,” Li Xue Cheng agreed and nodded.

After Han Sen entered the valley, he wasn't in a rush to bump into another silkworm. He flew around a nearby mountain that rolled up and down. The valley was as big as a planet, but for half-deifieds or deifieds, that sort of area wasn't too big. It wouldn't be difficult for the silkworms to locate each other.

Suddenly, Han Sen felt an impressive surge of power up ahead. Someone was already fighting.

“This power... Is that Yu Shanxin?” As soon as Han Sen felt that power, he noticed how familiar it felt. And so, he quickly headed toward where that fight was taking place.

The area of combat wasn't too far away from him, and so Han Sen quickly reached the outskirts of their battlefield. There, he found Yu Shanxin and a half-deified of the Extreme King standing on a mountain. They were watching each other. They were both utterly still. The only movement Han Sen could see came from their powers, which were spilling out and shaking the mountains all around them.

Han Sen recognized Yu Shanxin's opponent. According to the information he had received, the Extreme King fellow was called Gru. Although he wasn't of the same bloodline as King Bai, his king body was very strong, certainly no weaker than any of the royal children's. He had a nine armor talent, and he was a very experienced fighter. He was quite a skilled swordsman, as well.

At the moment, Gru was really quiet. And he was holding a steel greatsword. His body was fizzing with a powerful swordmind, and before his weapon even moved, his swordmind came for Yu Shanxin. It rushed forward so fast that it pushed aside the clouds in its path.

Han Sen frowned. Gru's swordmind was no weaker than his own. The man had reached deified class with it, for sure. He might have only been half-deified, but his swordmind was remarkably developed. Gru was definitely a very powerful half-deified. It was no wonder the Very High had selected him as a silkworm.

Yu Shanxin's presence was harder to anticipate. Sometimes it raged like fire, and other times it was soft like water. It made it very difficult for those watching to determine what sort of power he had.

“It is fortunate I'm getting to watch this fight. It means I can observe Yu Shanxin and see what Extreme Evil Path can do.” Han Sen maintained a careful distance from the battlefield so he could observe without getting caught up in the fight.

“Yu Shanxin, I have heard you being called the strongest non-deified in the universe. I, Gru, am going to see what is so special about your Extreme Evil Path.” Gru looked at Yu Shanxin coldly as he spoke.

Gru didn't like Yu Shanxin for one simple reason; the Extreme King were supposed to be one of the top three races of the universe, but they didn't have any half-deifieds that were as strong as Yu Shanxin from Sky Palace. Now, the silkworm bouts had given him a chance to fight Yu Shanxin. In truth, he wanted to take this opportunity to kill Yu Shanxin.

“People who say such things are too kind. I assure you that those comments are not true. Compared to the illustrious Extreme King, I'm nothing noteworthy.” Yu Shanxin smiled coldly.

“Huh. Let's fight and see.” Gru didn't plan on letting Yu Shanxin go that easily. His swordmind rose as he gripped his steel greatsword, and a swordlight spread across the sky as it headed for Yu Shanxin.

The silkworm fights didn't permit the use of treasures, so the steel greatsword must have been Gru's gene weapon. As the sword moved through the air, even Han Sen was surprised by its power. The Extreme King's sword skills and swordmind were no worse than his own.

But Han Sen didn't think a strike like this would be enough to defeat Yu Shanxin. He stared at Yu Shanxin, wanting to see how he might deal with such an attack.

Yu Shanxin's body remained motionless. When the swordlight came down, Yu Shanxin reached out both hands as if he wanted to catch the swordlight.

The swordlight stopped when it encountered Yu Shanxin's hands, but the power of the strike was too great. While Yu Shanxin's hands had succeeded in stopping the attack, the raw force of the blow still knocked his body back.

Pang!

Yu Shanxin was pushed back through the barrier of the valley. He lost the silkworm fight.

The silkworm bout had few rules, but there was one rule that all the contestants knew: whoever left the valley first would be put in last place. Yu Shanxin had been the first to get knocked out of the valley, and so he was going to be number twelve.

Han Sen was befuddled. "What the hell is wrong with Yu Shanxin? Gru is very strong, but there is no way Yu Shanxin is that much weaker than him. How did he get blown away by that attack? He must have done that deliberately. I cannot believe this. Even if he couldn't have reached first place, there were many rewards that he could have earned by reaching the top five. Why would he just throw everything away and give up?"

Gru didn't believe Yu Shanxin was that weak, either. The man had been launched beyond the seal by a single attack.

But Yu Shanxin was already out of the valley, and Gru could no longer chase after him. So, the Extreme King turned his head to look at Han Sen.

"If Yu Shanxin was too much of a chicken to fight me properly, then you can fight me. You're also from Sky Palace, after all; it will be good to test the mettle of your people." Gru looked at Han Sen's body.

Han Sen hadn't expected the situation to change so quickly. Before he even realized what had happened, he had become Gru's opponent.

But Han Sen made no effort to run away. He could still fall back as long as he didn't leave the valley, but Han Sen remained within range of Gru. He drew Spell's two pistols.

Chapter 2672 Swordheart Area

Seeing Han Sen preparing to strike, the Very High who were watching the fight suddenly felt very awake. Although many of the Very High were almost certain that Han Sen would lose the silkworm bout, they still held out a tiny slither of hope that he would win. They prayed that maybe, even without his treasures, Han Sen still harbored a bit of that OP power he had become renowned for.

"I would consider Gru's power to be middle-of-the-road out of the twelve silkworms. He can be a whetstone for other silkworms to grind against, and he will be an excellent demonstration of Han Sen's strength." Liyu Zhen looked excited as he stared at the video.

Li Xue Cheng looked nervous as he said, "As long as Han Sen doesn't reach first place, anyone else can claim the metaphorical throne. I do think we may have overreached with our gamble, though. Even Open Sky Elder wagered the fabled Open Sky jewelry on Han Sen ending up in first place. That was so strange... Open Sky Elder knew this silkworm fight wouldn't allow the use of treasures. Why would he still bet on Han Sen reigning supreme? If we lose, we will lose everything we have."

"Don't worry. It doesn't matter who bets on Han Sen winning. He won't be a match for Shale, no matter what." Liyu Zhen spoke as if he was trying to assure himself as well as Li Xue Cheng.

The fact that Open Sky Elder had placed such a heavy bet on Han Sen made them feel quite uncomfortable.

At the same time, Open Sky Elder was smiling as he watched Han Sen and Gru square up against each other. Li Qiyu, another Very High elder, looked at Open Sky Elder and said, "You really wagered the Open Sky jewelry that Han Sen would win this contest? You realize that this entire event has been rigged in Shale's favor, right?"

"I know." Open Sky Elder smiled and nodded. His expression didn't waver.

"If you know, then why are you doing this? You're just handing an item of immense value to Li Xue Cheng and Liyu Zhen." Elder Li Qiyu looked at Open Sky Elder.

Open Sky Elder laughed and said, "You know I've always wanted the Evil Dragon Orb that belongs to Liyu Zhen's father. He guards the item quite greedily and refuses to loan it to me, though. Therefore, I had to think outside the box to come up with a way to get my mitts on it. If Liyu Zhen loses this bet, will he really be able to fork over materials worth the price of the Open Sky jewelry on his own? No. Therefore, he will have to go and see his father. He will undoubtedly have to give up the Evil Dragon Orb."

"But with Shale here, how could they lose?" Qiyu Elder couldn't understand what Open Sky Elder was thinking.

"What if Shale isn't fighting at full strength right now?" Open Sky Elder smiled at the other man as he spoke.

"Not at full strength? What do you mean?" Qiyu Elder asked, entirely confused.

Open Sky Elder laughed and said, "Remember when Shale went to Demon Lake to hunt down xenogeneics? I had a business matter that took me there at the same time. And there, I saw Shale get his hands on something precious."

"What did he get from Demon Lake?" Qiyu Elder wondered out loud. Then, his eyes widened and he said hoarsely. "Did he get Demon Fruit?"

Open Sky Elder nodded and laughed. "I saw Shale holding the Demon Fruit in his own hands. And then, I watched him eat it."

Qiyu Elder looked at the valley in the video in shock. He was trying to see where Shale was. As he searched, he said, "Does that mean Shale has fallen from deified status?"

"Of course. Demon Fruit is a treasure from the anti-material world. Even a born-deified cannot withstand its effects. Shale has been brought down from deified to King class. The Demon Fruit's Demon Baby God can do miraculous things, and even though Shale has become King class, his potential has been increased a level. He already had a ten armor talent. So, after getting the Demon Fruit, he sacrificed his deified level for another armor talent. Although his eleven armor talent isn't genuine like the ones in the legends, it is still a very rare talent level. You won't find anyone else like this in the entire universe."

After pausing, Open Sky Elder went on to say, "Now that he's taken in the Demon Baby God, it will be a long time before Shale becomes a deified again. There is now a high chance that Han Sen will win this fight."

"If you knew what had happened, why didn't you tell me sooner? If I had known, I would have increased my bet. I would have enjoyed causing more problems for Liyu Zhen and Li Xue Cheng."

Open Sky Elder shook his head and said, "I'm still gambling. Although Shale isn't deified anymore, he still has the will of a deified. I'm not sure if Han Sen can win. Plus, the other silkworms aren't weaklings, either. Fortunately, Yu Shanxin quit the silkworm bouts. Otherwise, Han Sen's chances of reaching first place would have been greatly decreased."

Qiyu thought about it and deduced that Open Sky Elder was most likely correct. Although Shale wasn't deified anymore, Han Sen still might not be able to reach first place. Open Sky Elder wanted to make a bet, but the end of this fight was still uncertain.

Gru's swordmind shook the sky. The steel greatsword came slashing toward Han Sen, just as it had been swung toward Yu Shanxin earlier.

Now that Han Sen was facing that attack himself, he realized just how scary it was.

That swordmind was like a knife hitting the galaxy. It felt like an entire galaxy might buckle under its weight. And Han Sen was opposing that strike with only his body.

"Yu Shanxin was able to use his hands to hold back that sword light. The fitness of his body couldn't be any weaker than mine." Yu Shanxin was a scary guy.

As he considered the attack, Han Sen's body moved on its own. He vanished, and Gru's attack was now slashing toward empty air. Han Sen had employed God's Wander.

Han Sen emerged on the other side of Gru. However, the Extreme King's swordlight had reoriented itself and was still coming toward him.

So, Han Sen teleported away again. But still, Gru's sword light was able to catch up to him. He teleported a few more times, but none of his jumps shook off the pursuit of Gru's attack.

"Weird. How can he predict where I teleport to?" Han Sen thought, furrowing his brows. His God's Wander wasn't as good as Galaxy Teleportation, but he was still very good at small distance jumps.

Within a short range, he could go anywhere he wanted. He only had to think about it, and he would teleport to where he wished to be.

Gru was teleporting after him and somehow managing to keep up. This fact alone was enough to prove how powerful the man was.

But Han Sen didn't have much information on Gru, and he didn't know what sort of powers the man wielded. He felt a bit confused about it all.

"Why is this happening? How can Gru predict where God's Wander will take Han Sen?" Li Keer was shocked, too.

Exquisite frowned as she studied the two fighters. "If my judgment is correct, Gru cannot predict where Han Sen is teleporting to. Instead, he is tracking Han Sen with his area power."

"Area power? Isn't Gru's area a sword area?" Li Keer asked, trying to recall. In Gru's profile, it said that his area was a sword area, and his king body was sword-based. It made his sword skills stronger.

"It is a sword element, but it is also a very special sword area," Exquisite said.

Han Sen kept teleporting, but he couldn't escape Gru's swordlight. He decided to teleport somewhere far away to put some distance between Gru and himself.

This time, Gru was unable to catch up in time. Han Sen immediately realized how Gru had been predicting his movements. If the man's attack had possessed some sort of automatic tracking function, as Han Sen had first supposed, then the attack would have caught up with him no matter how far he traveled.

"You have a very powerful area. What is it called?" Han Sen asked, looking at Gru. He could tell that this was all the effect of Gru's area power.

"Swordheart Area. My sword goes straight for the heart. Under the power of this area, I will sense your movements in my heart no matter where you go. In my area, no target can escape my swordheart's targeting ability. Even invisible foes and chameleons are visible to me," Gru said coldly.

2673 The Glory of One Sho

Most warriors in the universe were like candles, but to be silkworms of the Very High were like blazing bonfires.

Han Sen had planned to spend more time observing Gru's sword skills, but now he had to fight.

Han Sen's fingers twitched, and Spell's twin pistols roared madly, rapidly spitting out bullets.

The steel greatsword in Gru's hands flashed like the wind, cutting each bullet in half. Not a single bullet could escape the wondrous sword lights.

A heavy steel greatsword spun around Gru like a bolt of pure lightning.

"Those are some good sword skills," Han Sen complimented his opponent.

Gru's skills were inferior to Lone Bamboo's talents, but Han Sen appreciated the fact that these techniques were incredibly stable. Every movement was rigorously practiced and could be used with a solid stance. The man was unleashing the max potential of his skills.

This was the way one should always practice their sword skills. It was a way to beat someone stronger when you were weaker, or take on an opponent who had the high ground. These were the strategies that weaker people should always employ. Being solid and using real strength to crush enemies, disabling opponents to deny them the chance to fight back... That was the real way to use a sword.

"These aren't good sword skills," Gru said. "I began practicing with a blade when I was five years old. When I reached thirty, my sword skills still weren't very good. People always thought I was dumb and unsuitable for swordcraft. But I have a sword king body. It would be wasted if I didn't practice with a sword. And so, I kept on training. It has now been 46 years, and my sword skills still aren't good. All I know is that I am better than my ancestors. But still, that doesn't make me good."

"If you are using what you have learned, believe me when I tell you that you are already quite good. Not many people can perform this well." Han Sen knew that using a sword skill to its max potential was a harder feat than making a brand-new sword skill.

New sword skills could sometimes be created in moments of inspiration, but making perfect use of an existing sword skill—regardless of the environment—would take countless hours of practice and training. It required a lot of effort.

As the two of them spoke, their hands never stopped moving. Swords flashes and gunfire rang out. They kept collided against each other time after time, with Han Sen's bullets falling and Gru's sword lights unable to touch his opponent.

"I cannot believe this Gru is so good. His sword skills are excellent. Even amongst the Very High, these sword skills have to be amongst the best." Li Xue Cheng chuckled.

"Gru was a late bloomer," Liyu Zhen said, nodding. "Even though he doesn't have the speed of Pegasus, he is so stable that it's like he has weathered all the dangers of the world. If his opponent isn't considerably stronger than him, there is no way to break his sword. If the Extreme King used him as a guard, their bases would be as strong as stone."

"It's lucky for us that Han Sen ran into Gru first. With Gru's stability, he should be able to squeeze Han Sen out of every ounce of his power. Even if Gru loses, other silkworms will know what to expect from Han Sen. They'll know his powers, and he'll be worn out." Li Xue Cheng felt at ease now.

Some distance away stood a man with the head of a lion and the body of a human. He was staring at Han Sen and Gru as they conducted their battle.

"It looks like Han Sen isn't as talented as the legends proclaim. Without treasure, that guy is pretty much worthless." A Fox woman laughed as she walked up next to Shale.

Shale looked serious as he said, "Gru's sword skill is King Path Sword, yet Han Sen is fighting him without exposing his moves. That alone proves how strong he is. Even my ninth-tier King body might expose my movements to the half-deified Gru."

The Fox woman laughed and said, "You've only fallen to King class. Did your balls shrink, as well? Where did the fearless Shale go, hmm? Have you seen him? Even Han Sen, who is just a ninth-tier King, can make you react this seriously?"

"I embody the destiny of the lionheart. I do everything I can with the utmost precision and care. I might lose, but I will not fail due to my own negligence," Shale said in a hard voice.

The Fox woman rolled her eyes. She looked at Shale and said, "Anyway, what do you make of Han Sen's power? Can he defeat Gru?"

"Gru is strong, but Han Sen can beat him," Shale answered.

"If Gru is strong, why would Han Sen win?" Fox woman asked, looking interested.

"He might win or he might lose." Shale spoke those six words and stopped talking.

"What about you? Which of you is stronger? You or Han Sen?" The Fox woman looked at Shale, trying to see through his thoughts.

Shale didn't move. "We have never fought before. So, who can tell what will happen?"

On the battlefield, Han Sen and Gru had performed a thousand moves against each other. But still, Han Sen had yet to find a way to beat Gru.

Han Sen had to admit that Gru was too stable for him. Han Sen started to think that if he kept fighting like this, he would die of old age before he found the man's flaws. It seemed impossible to beat Gru through skill.

"If agility doesn't seem to work against him, then it looks like I'll have to approach this more directly." Han Sen teleported away, establishing some distance between him and Gru.

"Gru, I really admire your sword skills. But we have to determine a winner between us. Therefore, I am sorry." Han Sen lifted Spell's guns and took aim at Gru.

"Use all the moves you are able to." Gru gripped his steel greatsword tightly. His face looked placid. It was as if even the sky breaking or the earth shattering would not move him.

Han Sen and the Extreme King were enemies, but Han Sen still admired his foe. Gru was a strong character, and if he became a leader among the Extreme King, their race would gain a great deal.

"What a shame. The Extreme King are controlled by King Bai. Gru will have no chance," Han Sen thought to himself. He aimed Spell at Gru and pulled the trigger.

Pang!

A bullet tore out of the gun with a shriek that sounded like space itself beginning to tear. The bullet was headed straight for Gru, and Gru was frozen. He had held the sword with one hand previously, but now he carefully gripped it with two. He shouted and brought the steel greatsword above his head to swing it down on the bullet.

A sword light glared with blinding intensity as it hit the bullet. The sword strike found its target, but the bullet didn't split in half. Instead, it exploded.

Boom!

It was like a hydrogen bomb detonating. Looking at it was like staring straight into the sun. It covered Gru and most of the land.

When the explosion finally faded, a huge hole had been torn into the mountain. Gru was lying in the crater, soaked in blood. His limbs were all gone, and wounds covered every inch of his body that remained.

"What frightening power." The audience was shocked. A ninth-tier King had used his pure power to defeat the half-deified Gru. That was astonishing.

2674 One Fighting Four

The Fox woman sighed. "You were right. Gru is very stable, but he lacks the sheer power needed to beat stronger enemies. He couldn't topple an opponent who had the high ground. He can't be beaten by anyone weaker than him, but when he meets an opponent who is stronger than he is, he lacks the ingenuity to find a way to take them down."

"It looks like Han Sen is stronger than I thought. Even if I was half-deified, I don't think I would be able to suppress him with my current power," Shale said thoughtfully.

Han Sen looked down on the bloodied-but-not-yet dead Gru. He was going to finish him with a final shot. He wasn't on good terms with the Extreme King, and someone like Gru would definitely be used against him. It would only lead to trouble further down the line. He knew he would need to finish the man off then and there.

But before Han Sen could do anything, a shadow appeared next to the heavily wounded Gru. The man looked at Han Sen, grabbed Gru, and disappeared, teleporting away from the battlefield.

Han Sen didn't need to guess. He knew that the Very High who had taken Gru away was the same man who had signed a contract with him.

"What a shame," Han Sen thought to himself.

"Han Sen really is a legendary dude. The power of one bullet was enough to harm Gru like so. To be honest, it should make us feel embarrassed," said an approaching figure.

When Han Sen turned around, though, he saw more than one person. There were three people following the speaker.

“What do you guys want?” Han Sen asked, looking at the four people. He had seen them in the information booklet he had been given. The leader of the crew was from the Extreme King. Of the remaining three, one was Extreme King, and the other two belonged to other races. If they had been taken on as silkworms, though, then it was obvious they weren’t foes that Han Sen could take lightly.

“You are strong, but we want to get a good ranking. So, we will have to ask you to leave the valley,” the leading Extreme King man said.

After that, the four silkworms surrounded Han Sen.

Although the Very High never suggested that silkworms should team up, cooperative fights weren’t forbidden, and there were no rules stating that silkworms should fight one on one. If things had to be one-on-one at all times, there would have been no reason to stick all twelve silkworms in a single valley.

The Very High didn’t only want to learn from the fighting experience of their silkworms. They wanted to learn what would happen to the mind during heated exchanges, so they could determine which effects were useful and which were not. It would help the Very High determine how to conduct themselves in the future.

“Are you going to leave with your head held high, or are we going to have to send you home in a body bag?” a mantis-man asked Han Sen snidely.

Han Sen laughed and said, “You think you can bully me because you outnumber me?”

“Han Sen, are you naive enough to believe we will fight you one-on-one?” the mantis-man said with a disdainful look on his face.

He and Han Sen were both from small races. Despite that commonality, Han Sen was a famous fellow all across the universe. Even amongst the Very High, he was considered a figure of much prestige.

The mantis-man’s background was similar to Han Sen’s, but he had never spent time in the limelight. That lack of fame led to him hating Han Sen quite a lot.

“It isn’t like that. I’m just giving you a little advice. If you want to bully me, four of you won’t be enough. You should go and enlist a few others before you push your luck,” Han Sen said quietly.

“What idiocy. Come on, then. Show us! Show us how good you believe you are,” the mantis-man grunted coldly, as a purple and red mantis arm suddenly broke through the fabric of space. It slashed forward, hurtling down on Han Sen.

The mantis-man had space power. Wherever the mantis-man’s arm went, a long mark was left in its wake.

Han Sen fell back, but he felt as if the space his body occupied had become distorted. Although he had moved nearly a thousand meters, the mantis-man was no farther away from him.

Han Sen frowned. He looked to the side, and he saw an Extreme King person unleashing a weird area power. He thought it must have been the area power that was distorting the dimensions around him.

As the mantis-arm came down, Han Sen used Spell's two pistols to take aim at the mantis scythe.

Dong!

It shouldn't have been difficult to counter the mantis' arm with Han Sen's power, but when they struck each other, Han Sen felt a surprising amount of power coming against him. He stumbled back a few steps, and his hands ached. He almost lost the tight grip he was keeping on those two pistols.

Han Sen's eyes flicked back to the mantis. A weird, gold light was covering the mantis arm. That gold light was shining on all four half-deified, actually. One of the Extreme King was glowing especially brightly. That was undoubtedly his area power.

Before Han Sen could react, there was an arrow headed toward him. It was a half-deified from the Aichi. The Aichi were born archers, so their talents with a bow were exemplary.

Han Sen was fighting four people alone, which put him at a considerable disadvantage. The four half-deified fighters were all using their special powers in conjunction.

The mantis-man had a rare space power that could break space with a scythe that was practically indestructible. One of the Extreme King fighters could manipulate space, whereas the other could buff the bodies of his companions. They restricted Han Sen's movements while also making their bodies stronger.

The Aichi archer was the icing on the cake. He had a scary proficiency with the bow. He kept harassing Han Sen from afar, and his area could buff the speed of the other three.

Because space was sometimes shortened or lengthened, the distance Han Sen kept between himself and his enemies was no longer reliable. The attacks that he could evade were now no longer avoidable. The distances at which he could attack the enemy were made longer, keeping him from touching them.

"Although Han Sen is strong, the other silkworms are very strong, too. He is fighting four people all alone. Even I, a Very High, cannot do that. He is just one Han Sen," Liyu Zhen coldly said.

Li Keer and Exquisite weren't too worried because they could sense Han Sen's heart. Although it seemed that Han Sen was being oppressed and restrained at every turn, they could feel that Han Sen's heart was like a quiet well. There was a lot of confidence inside him.

Although they hadn't yet figured out where Han Sen's coincidence came from, they knew Han Sen's situation wasn't as dire as it seemed.

An arrow was flying right toward Han Sen's face, and a sword light was coming at Han Sen's waist. The mantis arm and Spell's pistol collided, sending Han Sen back a few hundred meters. Every second of the engagement put Han Sen in a new life-and-death situation. It seemed that if the mantis-man and the others worked just a little harder, they could defeat Han Sen.

The battle raged furiously. Han Sen was attacked by many areas, knife lights, and sword shadows, and despite it all, he kept blocking everything that was thrown at him. He was countering the attacks of four people.

In the beginning, those Han Sen's four attackers had the advantage, but as time passed, they realized with shock that their restraints on Han Sen were becoming weaker and weaker. They could no longer keep him contained within their areas.

In the end, Han Sen was easily engaging all four of them at the same time. He was able to attack and defend as he pleased.

"This guy's battle talents are too scary," the Fox woman said. She was watching Han Sen fight, stunned. Each of the four silkworms was just as strong as she was, but Han Sen could fight all four of them with stability. And he was only a ninth-tier King.

Chapter 2675 Fighting the Mantis Across the Mountains

"I have only heard that the crystallizers were smart. I would never have believed that their bodies have grown this strong," the Fox woman said with shock. "That isn't the entirety of his power. His physical strength is just one aspect of his abilities. He isn't some brainless creature that is tossing his entire strength into this fight," Shale said.

"Do you think you will still be able to defeat him?" the Fox woman looked at Shale with interest.

"I won't lose." Shale looked the same as he always did when saying this.

The four half-deifieds had no idea what to do. They were all fighting Han Sen, but they couldn't beat him. And on top of that, he was gaining the upper hand.

They were the best of the half-deifieds, and they all possessed remarkable power. Normally, they could go toe-to-toe with any half-deified in the universe. Now, however, they were losing a four on one fight. And their opponent was only a ninth-tier King. To say they were shocked would be an understatement.

Li Keer and Exquisite were in shock, as well. They could feel Han Sen's strength. They could also experience what it was like to be in his shoes, fighting in the way he was.

The strange thing was that Han Sen had no interest in simply fighting with his geno arts and his body. It was more like he was playing a game of chess. Watching him play was easy, and each individual move was simple. Yet assembling all those moves together to replicate his overall strategy would be very difficult. You still had to practice it yourself.

"This method of fighting is quite similar to the Very High Sense, but Han Sen has only learned Under the Sky. He hasn't even read the whole of the Textless Book, and yet, he can do all this. His talent is scary to behold," Li Keer said.

Exquisite nodded with glee and said, "This is a good thing. This will actually help us develop our proficiency with the Very High Sense. This is something other silkworms can never do."

Pang!

A bullet struck the arm of the mantis-man and exploded with the scary power of Break Six Skies. It blew the mantis-man away. Even his exoskeleton was covered in cracks, and blood started to seep out of them.

These four weren't like Gru; there were flaws in how they fought. Han Sen finally found an opportunity to create a distance between him and his enemies. His Spell pistols began to fire without reprieve.

For most of the fight, Han Sen had been too close to them to use Break Six Skies. He had been afraid he would blow himself up, so he used less destructive geno arts to fuel his bullets. But now that he had some distance, he no longer had to worry about injuring himself.

The bullet was fired. A scary power exploded close to the four half-deifieds. They threw their arms over their heads and ran away like rats. They no longer dared to get close to Han Sen.

A bullet infused with the power of Break Six Skies wasn't something they would risk trying to withstand. They didn't dare to continue the fight now. They ran as fast as they could, trying to leave the radius from which Han Sen could attack them.

Han Sen didn't pursue them, though. He waited until they were far enough away, then put his hands together. He combined the two Spell pistols and transformed them into a sniper rifle.

Han Sen raised the gun and took aim at the mantis-man. He pulled the trigger.

Pang!

A bullet flew through the air, and the mantis-man felt the power coming toward him. He knew he couldn't use his arms to block it.

He had only been able to use his mantis arm to repel Han Sen's power earlier due to the boons provided by the Extreme King area. But now, all of his allies had fled the scene. None of them dared to fight Han Sen without the buffs and boons of each other's areas.

Wings suddenly spread from the mantis-man's back, taking him a kilometer away in an instant. He thought he had successfully dodged the bullet, but the bullet turned in the air and followed him. It even seemed to be accelerating.

The mantis-man's face paled. He began to loop and twist through the air. No matter what he did, though, Han Sen's attack followed him like a heat-seeking bullet. Its speed increased steadily as it pursued him. It was going to catch up and hit the mantis-man at any second.

The mantis-man gritted his teeth and took refuge behind a mountain. He turned to stare at the mountain behind him.

Pang!

The bullet punched straight through the mountain without exploding. In an instant, it was in front of the mantis-man. The mantis-man had braced himself for the bullet to blow up the mountain, but the bullet had gone through intact. He was shocked.

The mantis-man crossed his arms in front of himself. He poured more power into his defenses than he ever had before, then unleashed a scary power to counter the incoming bullet.

Pang!

The bullet pierced through the indestructible mantis arms, then carried on straight into the mantis-man's head. Then his head exploded.

As the mantis-man fell to the ground, the other silkworms and the audience felt their stomachs churn.

The mantis-man was one of the most powerful half-deifieds in existence. Han Sen had shot and killed him while he was trying his hardest to escape. That bullet was so strange and so powerful that it made those who saw it feel shocked.

"What geno armament does he have? Why is it so weird? How is it so strong? It went through the mountain and the mantis' arms, and still killed the mantis!" Li Xue Cheng frowned.

"It does not matter how strong he is. He still isn't as strong as a deified." Liyu Zhen's scowling face betrayed the desperation of his words.

Open Sky Elder laughed and said, "Such power puts him close to being deified! It might not have seemed possible for him to beat Shale before, but Shale has been reduced to King class. With Han Sen exhibiting a power like this, there is a good chance he can win."

Everyone was shocked by Han Sen's frightening bullet. The other three half-deifieds ran faster than ever. They were afraid of Han Sen shooting them, too.

What they didn't know was that Han Sen lacked the power to fire a second attack like that. He only wanted to try out the power of Heart Connection. Han Sen had exhausted all his strength in doing so, though. He lacked what was needed to repeat that performance.

"Mutant Xenogeneic King hunted: Break Space Mantis. Mutant xenogeneic gene found. Obtained mutant Break Space Mantis beast soul."

"I'm just a beginner with the skill, but Heart Connection is that powerful already? It is a shame that this geno art costs too much power. I will need to rest for a while after using it. It will be some time before I can use it again." Although Han Sen heard the beast soul announcement, he didn't dare to pay it much heed. He knew he was being watched by Exquisite and Li Keer.

Break Space Mantis' body was taken away by a Very High woman, so Han Sen had no chance to collect the xenogeneic gene from him.

"Considering the power I've just demonstrated with that bullet, there should be no other silkworms coming to bother me for a while," Han Sen thought to himself. Then, all of a sudden, someone else appeared.

"Shale?" Li Keer and Exquisite, upon seeing that body, jolted in their seats.

They knew Han Sen was exhausted. He needed time to recover. He couldn't continue fighting, but Shale was right there in front of him.

Upon seeing Shale, Han Sen laughed and said, "Are you that desperate to fight me?"

"How long must you rest to get your power back?" Shale asked Han Sen.

"Ten hours," Han Sen answered.

"Good. I will let you rest safely for the next ten hours. If anyone else draws near, I will get rid of them." Shale sat down nearby. He had blonde hair and a square face. It looked so strong and heroic.

Chapter 2676 Shale

"What a strong and proud man," Han Sen thought in admiration. Han Sen wasn't suspicious of the man, so he moved to sit down himself. He cast The Story of Genes to recover the power he had lost. Heart Connection was a skill that concentrated all of the power inside one's body into a single precise point. That power would all be spent in a single use, and it would take a long time to recover. Han Sen had used Heart Connection because he had a way to recover in a short period of time, if necessary. He wouldn't have to wait too long before he could fight again.

However, if Shale was willing to wait for him, then Han Sen wouldn't have to use his method of accelerated recovery.

Up until that moment, the three half-deifieds who escaped hadn't realized that Han Sen's power had been exhausted. They regretted how quickly they had been to flee. They should have immediately attacked Han Sen again.

The Very High masters of the three half-deified silkworms shook their heads in dismay.

The Very High selected a silkworm based on three things: talent, power, and personality. Their personality was difficult to fully judge, however. The truth of a person's character was only revealed during real life and death moments. If the silkworm's personality was shown to be poor or weak during the silkworm bouts, there was every chance that their Very High master might cast them away. That was the purpose of this battle royale.

Although Gru had lost, the Very High who had signed a contract with him was happy with his personality. Gru wasn't going to be cast out. But the mantis-man and the other three were probably going to be discarded.

Of course, that was just how things looked at the moment. If the silkworms worked hard and showed that they really were resilient and determined people, there was a slim chance of them earning their masters' love back. Only the dead mantis-man had no chance of that.

With Shale sitting nearby, no other silkworm would get close to Han Sen. He continued casting The Story of Genes to recover his power. He didn't do anything else.

The Fox woman approached Shale and glanced at Han Sen, who was focusing on his geno arts. "Shale, why aren't you doing anything?"

"I came to Outer Sky to practice, not to kill," Shale said expressionlessly.

"Have you forgotten that you're no longer deified? With the power he just demonstrated, if you allow him to recover, you might not win. Are you really willing to risk giving up the Apollo Set?" the woman said with a blink.

Shale didn't respond, which prompted the woman to continue. "If you don't want to do it, then I will."

After that, the woman walked up to Han Sen. A strange light began to glow around her fingers.

"I told him I would protect him for ten hours. If you get any closer, I will consider you an enemy," Shale said.

"You will regret this. This universe only progresses by the strong feeding on the weak. It is survival of the fittest. If you continue to act like this, you won't be strong enough to lift the rest of your race," the woman said.

"Maybe." Shale didn't bother arguing.

Seeing that Shale had no intention of arguing with her further, the woman rolled her eyes and laughed. "Shale, Shale, Shale. You ate the Demon Fruit and fell from your deified rank. You might not beat Han Sen, but you still sound so proud. I'm afraid that in this universe, not many people can be as proud as you."

Her words could have been either insult or praise, but one thing was clear; she had pitched her voice loud enough for those watching the contest to hear.

Many of the Very High hadn't known that Shale had eaten a Demon Fruit. They were shocked to hear this.

"Shale ate Demon Fruit?" Liyu Zhen and Li Xue Cheng looked ill.

The deified Shale was previously considered the strongest fighter taking part in the silkworm bouts, but if he had eaten a Demon Fruit and his rank had fallen, there was the very real chance of him not winning.

"No wonder Open Sky Elder was willing to wager his Open Sky jewelry. He must have known that Shale ate the Demon Fruit and received a downgrade," Li Xue Cheng gnashed his teeth. He pointed at Shale and screamed, "You idiot! You dropped down to half-deified, and yet you are still behaving this proudly? Kill him while he is weak."

Right now, Li Xue Cheng wanted to grab Shale's hand and use it to strike Han Sen down.

Liyu Zhen's face turned green, but then it turned white. Clearly, there were a lot of sour emotions running through his heart at that moment.

They almost coughed up blood because of how Shale was behaving. Exquisite and Li Keer, on the other hand, were delighted. Shale wasn't deified anymore, and that increased Han Sen's chances of winning. Therefore, things suddenly didn't seem as hopeless anymore.

The audience might have been surprised by the news of Shale's fallen rank, but for the silkworms in the valley, the revelation breathed new life into this contest.

In the foothills of the valley, a Very High man squinted. "Shale ate a Demon Fruit and became half-deified? I thought there was no hope of reaching first place. I guess now there is."

In a heartbeat, the Very High man had teleported away and appeared on the other side of the valley. He popped into existence next to the three half-deified silkworms that had just been fighting Han Sen earlier.

"Mo Fang..." When the three of them saw the Very High man, they were given a shock. Alarmed, they gathered up all their power.

Out of the twelve silkworms, aside from Shale and Han Sen, Mo Fang could be regarded as the most famous. In fact, some silkworms were more afraid of Mo Fang than they were of Han Sen and Shale.

Although Mo Fang was only half-deified, he was one of the Very High. That fact alone made him unlike any other silkworm.

"Don't worry, guys. I am here to cooperate with you three. I intend to bring you no harm," Mo Fang said with a smile.

"Cooperate? You mean against Shale?" one of the Extreme King asked Mo Fang.

Mo Fang hadn't joined them until after the woman mentioned that Shale's rank had fallen. They could easily guess what he was going to do.

"Not bad. If Shale was still deified, I would have stood no chance. But now that he is just half-deified, why don't we cooperate and kick him out of the match? Then, we can finish off the weakened Han Sen," Mo Fang said.

"Fighting Shale won't allow us to reach first place in the fight, though. You will be the one reaping the benefits. Where does that leave us? Why would we risk our necks for you?" the Aichi archer asked skeptically.

"Forgive me for speaking so bluntly, but with the power you guys have, you will likely be the weakest of everyone in this valley. Aside from the one who quit the match, you three will be fighting for last place. If you guys are willing to help me, once we are done, we can continue cooperating. We can knock the other silkworms out of the valley, so I can become first and you three can occupy the second, third, and fourth places," Mo Fang said.

"Are you serious?" Pleased grins spread across the faces of the three half-deifieds. They had been cooperating from the beginning because they already knew their powers were weak.

“Since when would one of the Very High not live up to their word?” Mo Fang said proudly.

Two of the Extreme King half-deifieds looked at each other, then one of them turned back to Mo Fang.

“Okay, we’re in.”

If another silkworm had come there asking that they work together, they would have hesitated. However, Mo Fang was well-known. Although he was a silkworm, he was one of the Very High. And being on Very High land, cooperating with him would be the safest thing to do.

Chapter 2677 Eight Hole Emperor

Han Sen had only been recovering for half an hour when Mo Fang came over to fight, the three others following behind him like ducklings. Shale glanced toward Mo Fang, and Mo Fang lifted his lips while looking back at Shale. Neither said a word, but they each knew what the other was thinking. “Butterfly, are you with us, or are you with Shale?” Mo Fang asked, looking at the Fox woman.

“I’m just a weak woman. I can’t help anyone,” Butterfly said while falling back. She didn’t want to help either side.

Mo Fang knew the woman was more than she seemed. She had deliberately leaked the news that Shale was no longer deified. She obviously wanted to sit back and receive whatever benefits stumbled into her lap.

But Mo Fang didn’t mind. No matter how tricky she might have been, she simply wasn’t strong enough to affect his chances of securing first place, he believed. For right now, only Shale was standing in his way.

“Shale, are you really going to protect Han Sen?” Shale nodded at the others who had come with him. The three of them spread out, surrounding Shale.

“Whether I agreed to protect him or not, I would have been forced to face you eventually,” Shale said while standing up. His body was three meters tall. He radiated power, and he was intimidating even when he wasn’t trying to be. He looked like a golden-maned lion.

Mo Fang smiled and said, “If you quit now, we don’t have to waste time fighting.”

“Just fight.” Shale looked so calm. He had all the peaceful solidity of a mountain.

“Then you will have to be careful,” Mo Fang said. He pointed a finger, and the Evilbreaker powers of the Dragon spread over his fist.

The Dragon were widely-considered the bravest race, and Evilbreaker powers were powers that could concentrate might. They could make the smallest attacks into the strongest attacks. It was similar to Han Sen’s Heart Connection.

But Heart Connection released all of someone's power at once. Evilbreaker powers only concentrated the power you wanted to use at the moment.

Han Sen once spent time investigating the Evilbreaker powers of the Dragon, and he came to the conclusion that it was a very scary geno art.

Right now, Mo Fang was using the ability to summon strength. The power he gathered was stronger than that of a Dragon deified. It was like his finger could form a black hole in space.

Shale didn't dodge or run. His giant body stepped forward as he swung his fist. He moved so quickly that his blonde hair waved in the wind, his body surging forward like that of an enraged lion.

Boom!

The finger and the fist collided with each other, and the ensuing explosion tore apart the nearby terrain. Shale didn't move at all, whereas Mo Fang fell back ten meters.

Mo Fang smiled. Then, he laughed and said, "You truly are a born-deified. Even if you are weaker now, your fitness is still incredibly rare."

"That was just physical power. It was nothing compared to the secret geno arts of the Very High," Shale said humbly.

"In regards to personal power, I'm not your equal. But I want to reach first place. Therefore, I must apologize," Mo Fang said. The Extreme King fighters and the Aichi then made their move.

Now, Shale was in the same type of trouble that Han Sen had previously been in. But Shale's situation was even direr.

The primary difference was the swapping of Mo Fang for the mantis-man. There was a big difference between the capabilities of those two. Mo Fang's strength was far greater than the mantis-man's had been.

It might have been an illusion, but with Mo Fang's participation, the cooperation of the others seemed to be far better than it had been the last time. It appeared unbreakable.

"Mo Fang is skilled with heart techniques. With his ability to command, he can control the other silkworms as if he was twiddling his fingers. He can allow four people to conduct group combat at their max potential. Shale doesn't have the power to suppress them, so it is clear that he is in danger," Exquisite said while looking at Shale down on the battlefield.

While Exquisite spoke, Shale endured a few hits.

Shale was born to a small race that didn't have any good geno arts. Aside from his talent and level, his heritage was worse than Han Sen's. The few good geno arts he had were the ones he had learned during his stay in Outer Sky.

It was impossible for Shale to defeat the four people surrounding him with his skillset.

Shale might not have been less skilled than Han Sen, but he lacked Han Sen's range and diversity.

He had been trapped by the areas unleashed by the Aichi warrior and the two Extreme King fighters, and his power couldn't reach Mo Fang. He was like a beast trapped inside a cage. No matter how much he struggled, he couldn't get out of the cage. And the people outside the cage were hurting him.

Mo Fang moved his fingers as if they were ten separate blades. Scary godlights were shining everywhere, and countless marks were being drawn across Shale's body.

Mo Fang had a title. He was known as the Eight Hole Emperor.

Someone who was known to be particularly empathic or sensitive was often called an "Eight Face Exquisite" or a "Seven Hole Exquisite Heart." Mo Fang's title was created as a combination of those two terms because he could use his empathy to affect others. He became known as the Eight Hole Emperor.

He could do far more than just control three half-deifieds; he could easily exert influence over armies comprised of tens of thousands of troops. Such a feat would be easy for Mo Fang.

"What a powerful body. You seem stronger than the average Very High. Ten armor talents are very rare. No wonder you are so famous." Mo Fang had used his initial attack against Shale several times, but he could only shred the man's skin to leave behind minor wounds. He felt compelled to compliment his foe.

Liyu Zhen and Li Xue Cheng's hearts almost hopped out of their chests. Right now, they weren't even worried about Han Sen beating Shale; it looked like Shale might not even last long enough to fight him.

"D*mn it!" Li Xue Cheng's face darkened in rage. He thought about what might happen if Shale lost the silkworm bout. He felt dizzy, and his body kept shivering. The Very High that were banking on Han Sen winning were very happy, by comparison.

"That kid Mo Fang isn't bad. Although his power is weak, I can't think of a single Very High of the young generation that is a better commander."

"Good job. Get rid of Shale quickly."

"Haha! Mo Fang will kill him. And then, he will kill Han Sen. I like this story."

...

Shale was incurring more and more wounds. If a half-deified was any weaker than Shale, they would have already lost this fight. But looking into his eyes, it was obvious that Shale wasn't scared. He wasn't going to retreat.

His eyes looked like the eyes of a lion. He was excited, as excited as a bloodthirsty beast. It was like some sort of stimulant was pumping through his veins instead of blood.

Mo Fang frowned. He realized how difficult it was to harm Shale. He could use an attack against Shale once, and after that, the same attack would no longer damage him. Mo Fang had to keep changing his fighting stance as he used one technique after another.

To an outsider, it might look like Shale was being suppressed. Someone would have needed to look very close to realize how much Mo Fang was struggling.

Even though the Very High had thousands of geno arts, with most coming from other races, Mo Fang hadn't practiced them all. If this continued for too long, he would have to start repeating his skills.

"Is that it?" Disappointment welled up within Shale's eyes.

Chapter 2678 Scary Battle Talen

The audience soon noticed that Shale was taking fewer and fewer injuries as time went on. In addition, his wounds were recovering at an abnormally fast rate. After a short while, almost all of his injuries had vanished. "He has such frightening strength... How many races with hidden power are there, scattered across the universe?" Li Keer murmured in surprise. Han Sen, Dollar, and now Shale—all of them were fierce. And yet, they weren't members of high races. In fact, their ancestry was barely even noteworthy. And yet, they all had crazy powers that even the Very High had never seen before.

Many of the Very High were having similar thoughts as they watched the fight. The ordinary Very High, the ones who hadn't practiced the Very High Sense, were quite average. None of them were any stronger than Han Sen or Shale.

The Very High that practiced the Very High Sense certainly had incredible abilities, but it wasn't as if the mere practice of the Very High Sense could give them the level of power that was now being displayed. When their silkworms became deified, however, they would gain experience that would lend them a lot of strength and willpower. Such a process would dramatically boost their development.

This was the case with Exquisite and Li Keer. Right now, they weren't as strong as Han Sen. They couldn't defeat him in battle; Exquisite had even failed to beat him when she was a level above him. But over time, they would learn everything they could as Han Sen became deified, and it would propel them forward. Although they would not yet have achieved deified status personally, their minds would be as strong as Han Sen at deified status.

When Mo Fang realized that he would be unable to suppress Shale, a strange gleam passed over his eyes. He focused his full concentration on his opponent, and his third eye tore itself open. It became a tai chi yin yang eye that shone with crystal clarity.

The moment the eye opened, Mo Fang's entire presence changed. He hadn't become the lifeless, machine-like being that Exquisite turned into, but he still wielded a power that would make all who fought against him cower.

The moment his third eye opened, the three half-deifieds that were following his mental commands suddenly lurched. Their eyes lost focus. They became puppets, operated entirely by Mo Fang's will. It was like they were merely extensions of Mo Fang's body, dancing to his whims.

The three half-deifieds felt sick. They had been selected as silkworms, yet they had ended up in this humiliating situation. It was very likely that their masters would end up picking new silkworms.

The moment Mo Fang opened his Very High Eye, the situation of the battle was flipped on its head. Shale had regained the upper hand, but now he seemed to lose it again.

The four silkworms were no longer a group composed of Mo Fang and the three other half-deified outsiders. It was now a group of four Mo Fangs. The other three Mo Fangs used their original powers, but their bodies were entirely controlled by Mo Fang's mind.

Under that giant tide of pressure, Shale's eyes looked bright again.

The fight became insane. The four Mo Fangs had different powers, and Mo Fang used them to make countless combination attacks. And now, Shale had no chance to fight back.

Although Shale wasn't yet losing the fight, he couldn't find any way to mount an effective counterattack against his opponents. The fight continued, and Shale began accumulating wounds again.

At this time, the Fox woman quietly walked over to Han Sen, who was still in the middle of recovering.

"Ah, Han Sen, Han Sen... You are finally in my paws." The woman lifted her hands and placed them on his back.

Han Sen was still practicing, but he could still tell what was going on around him. He knew every movement of the Fox woman. He was preparing to stand up and fight her when he heard a shout.

That noise came from Shale's mouth, and it was like thunder rolling across the sky.

Although Shale was still in combat with Mo Fang, he had been keeping an eye on Han Sen's situation. When he saw that the Fox woman was making a move behind his back, his eyes flashed. He let out that lion's roar.

Suddenly, Shale's body expanded to become twice as big. All of his muscles bulged, and a red ball of light manifested like a fire outside his body. The wavy blonde mane straightened in the fire. He looked like a lion-headed demon god.

Shale was having a nasty fight against Mo Fang already, but now Shale's transformation forced Mo Fang to fall back. His abrupt retreat threw off his rhythm of attacks. Shale ran toward Han Sen and threw a punch at the Fox woman.

The Fox woman was shocked. She teleported away, vanishing like a cloud and avoiding Shale's punch.

"Shale! Why are you going against me on behalf of our enemy?" The Fox woman frowned at Shale.

"I told you I would protect him for ten hours. Anyone who touches him will become my enemy." Shale stood next to Han Sen, looking as cold as a demon god.

Mo Fang stared at Shale in astonishment. Shale's power and presence were entirely different. He had already been in such a tough fight, but he clearly hadn't been using all of his power.

"Mo Fang, how about you and I fight him together?" the Fox suggested to Mo Fang. She knew she couldn't defeat Shale by herself.

“Sure.” Mo Fang didn’t want to lose or abandon this fight, so he had to take advantage of every opportunity that came his way.

The Fox woman didn’t say anything more. Her body shone with a red light that solidified into a full set of red, metal-plated armor. It encased her body, leaving only her tail waving gently on the outside.

That tail then split into nine. Nine fox tails were swinging in the air. The pink area then spread to enshroud the space all around them. Shale’s body was suddenly ensnared by a pink chain that was barely visible in the haze. It tied up his body, and it looked as if he couldn’t move.

Without any communication, Mo Fang immediately guided his four bodies to attack Shale. All of the areas landed on Shale.

When the five half-deifieds came against him, Shale reacted in utter rage. His eyes were on fire, and his body was like a volcanic eruption.

Shale roared furiously, and a scary power exploded the binding chain. His fists were like a pair of fiery warhammers. They annihilated space and struck one of the Extreme Kings.

Mo Fang guided the Extreme King to raise his arms and block the incoming strike, but beneath the cruelty of that punch, his attempt was futile. The man’s area-buffed arm bones were shattered by Shale’s strike. The fist proceeded to land against the man’s chest, and it sent him flying away like a meteor.

Pang! Pang! Pang! Pang!

Shale was like an unstoppable demon god. Every punch sent another enemy streaking away. Mo Fang and the other three silkworms he commanded hurtled through the air, and none of them had even been given a chance to fight back.

The punches looked very simple, but things were actually far more complicated beneath the surface. Only Mo Fang knew that Shale’s seemingly simple punches somehow subverted all of his plans to counterattack. It was like each punch was designed to stop whatever ability he tried to activate.

The four punches were a little different each time. Different powers were released against the different bodies.

There was only one explanation for how Shale could do this; he must have known the powers and attack methods of each individual fighter. That was the only way this was possible.

“Does this mean that while we were attacking earlier, he was studying our attack patterns? To this level?” Mo Fang thought as he flew back through the air. His back slammed into a nearby mountain, and the force of the impact drove the air from his lungs in a ragged cough. Blood spilled over his lips. He struggled a little, but he couldn’t get up. His heart was in so much shock, he could scarcely believe it.

Chapter 2679 Close Call

Everyone stared at the match in awe. No one had expected that Shale, who had fallen from his deified rank, could wield power as fierce as this. He had even managed to injure an elite like Mo Fang with a single punch. Possessing this sort of power would make him invincible once he became deified again.

“Haha! I knew Shale wouldn’t lose. Did Mo Fang and Han Sen seriously think that they could fight Shale?” Li Xue Cheng was so excited that he couldn’t help but cackle.

Relief washed over Liyu Zhen. If Shale were to lose, their lives would become very difficult in the near future.

Exquisite and Li Keer were worried now. Shale was very strong, and even though he wasn’t deified, it would be a very tall task for Han Sen to achieve victory.

“Shale, you are going to regret this,” the Fox lady spat spitefully at Shale. She was the only person who hadn’t been punched. She stared at Han Sen for another moment, then left.

Shale’s face was impassive. He returned to sit where he had been, and then, his body returned to its normal size.

Seeing that everyone nearby had been chased off by Shale, Han Sen felt safe once more. He took his time recovering, but after that fight, no one dared to disturb them again.

The ten hours went by fairly quickly. Once Han Sen had returned to peak condition, he stood up and looked at Shale. The leonine man was still calmly sitting in the same position. He looked very peaceful with his eyes closed.

It seemed as if he could feel Han Sen’s gaze land on him, because Shale opened his eyes and asked, “Did you rest well?”

“I am completely recovered,” Han Sen answered.

“Then let us begin.” As Shale turned his full attention on Han Sen, the red ball of light appeared around his body again. His body expanded quickly under the light’s influence, returning him to that shape of a lion-headed demon god.

“Mutant class born-deified xenogeneic? No wonder he has a ten armor talent.” Han Sen examined Shale’s power, and he went on to think, “Even though he has dropped to half-deified, he will still be difficult to deal with.”

His eyes had been closed, but Han Sen had still been paying close attention to Shale’s fight earlier. He knew Shale’s body was no weaker than his own. And the guy’s combat abilities were also good. Despite the brevity of the fight, Shale had been able to analyze the movement of his opponents in detail. That kind of fighting talent would be a challenge to Han Sen.

Han Sen didn't say anything, though. Instead, he lifted his hands as if they were a pair of knives. He cast Under the Sky and Teeth Knife.

Shale didn't fall back. He moved forward, swinging a fist in the same moment. Their fists and palms began to collide against each other in the air. The shockwaves of their strikes detonated across the valley like fireworks.

The fight between the two of them seemed like it would go on endlessly. The fitness of the two fighters seemed to be on par. It was hard to determine which of the two would reign supreme.

"The raw physical strength of their bodies is quite scary, but I think Han Sen has a frightening edge. After all, he is just a ninth-tier King. If he became half-deified, the power of his body would far exceed Shale's. I wonder how a crystallizer was able to develop a body this sturdy. Scary, isn't it? Are the geno arts he practiced that powerful?" Open Sky Elder murmured to himself.

"I think so. Not even our Very High bodies can satisfy the fitness requirements of his geno art. It would undoubtedly be much harder for other creatures of the universe. Han Sen's learning of it must have been some sort of fluke." Qiyu Elder had a wry smile.

"All I can say is that this kid is very lucky," Open Sky Elder said with a laugh.

Pang!

Fists and palms collided. Giant shockwaves of turbulent power sent Shale and Han Sen tumbling away from each other.

After Han Sen regained his balance, he used his hands to slash forward. Countless knife silks appeared in the air. The knife silks were so numerous that they seemed to fill the surrounding area.

Han Sen slashed forward, sending the knife silks across Shale's body. Because they came from every direction, Shale didn't even stand a chance of dodging them.

Shale's eyes flashed, and he suddenly punched the ground. The ground collapsed, and even nearby mountains started to crumble. Rocks fountained up around Shale's fist to intercept the knife silks.

Knife silks and rocks struck each other. Many layers of the knife silks destroyed themselves against the rocks, and only a few of them made it all the way to Shale. He waved his hand to break what remained.

"It has been so long since I met an enemy who anticipates my next move," Han Sen sighed.

"That's what I was going to say, as well. I have to say, you really haven't disappointed me." Shale's eyes were brimming with passion.

"But you've disappointed me. I was thinking I could get first place easily, but it currently feels impossible." Han Sen felt a bit thirsty, and he licked his lips. That was one of his habits. When he faced things he had no confidence in dealing with, he frequently did this.

"Life is disappointing sometimes," Shale said, a moment before swinging his fist again.

His punches were very simple. However, they didn't remind Han Sen of a complicated technique that had been developed into a simplified form. Instead, Shale used a raw, basic punching skill. A skill like that could be found amongst any of the smaller races.

But Shale had taken that basic punch up more than a few notches. He had practiced the skill to a level that was too much for Han Sen to deal with.

Han Sen cycled between a few knife skills and punching techniques. Each of them was a top-notch geno art. Some of them were from the Rebate, whereas others came from Sky Palace. Each style he used was unique.

Every time he used a new skill, Han Sen felt like he had gained the advantage. For a moment, at least. Then Shale always swooped in to take that advantage away.

Plus, Shale used the same punching skill the entire time. He didn't alter his own skills until he became familiar with Han Sen's geno arts. Then, he changed his punching skill just enough to counter each of Han Sen's techniques.

"F*ck this guy! He wasn't just born deified. He was born a battle master, as well. He is far too sensitive to the delicacies of combat. I only have to use the same skill on him twice before he learns how to deal with it. Who is this f*cking guy?" Han Sen had never seen such intimidating battle talent.

Shale and Lone Bamboo were different. Because Lone Bamboo had experienced far too much in his lifetime, he could adapt and control his style perfectly. He could easily learn the geno arts of other people, and every technique he used was top class. Shale didn't bother actually learning the geno arts of others. He simply made himself more powerful and brute-forced his way through all obstacles.

It was like his one skill could break down a thousand skills. It wasn't that the skill depended on power; power was only one part of it. Rather, Shale could apply his skill creatively enough to counter all sorts of different attacks. Shale had a powerful mind, and that was the source of his ability to counter his opponents.

"He has a powerful body with incredible endurance, not to mention a problem-solving mind. This guy is giving me a headache!" Han Sen experimented with many geno arts, but he couldn't defeat Shale.

But Han Sen was different from Mo Fang. When Mo Fang used the same geno art twice, Shale could pick up on the flaws. But even when Han Sen used the same geno art multiple times, Shale was unable to see the errors.

That surprised Shale a great deal. He could see the flaws in Han Sen's execution, but when Han Sen used the same skill again, something kept Shale from exploiting those mistakes.

Shale tried to target the weaknesses in Han Sen's geno arts several times, but his attempts always failed. He had never experienced a situation like this before.

Chapter 2680 Leveling Up While Fighting

The two of them continued fighting, but they were unable to deal damage to each other. Han Sen kept altering his knife skills. Shale's punching skill didn't change in the face of Han Sen's rapidly mutating attacks. The two of them fought as hard and fast as they could, but neither of them could gain the upper

hand. It had been a very long time since Han Sen had a fight like this. In his recent fights, he had either lost to his enemies or crushed them almost immediately. He hadn't put so much energy and effort into a fight since his contest with Lone Bamboo.

A fight like this drained a lot of energy from his body. It also forced him to use his mind constantly. If he made a mistake, his enemy would take advantage of the window and beat him. He couldn't afford to make a single misstep.

As the Very High watched the pair conduct their battle, conflicted looks appeared across their faces. Both of the fighters were King class, but their minds were deified. The fight was so nuanced that the onlookers didn't know what to make of it.

This was no ordinary battle. This fight took effort and brainpower. Many of the attacks and counters seemed simple, until the audience took a second to consider why the two fighters had chosen those moves. Every single action in this fight was done with an ulterior motive.

It looked like a simple fist and knife fight, but people would be thinking about it for a long time afterward.

Liyu Zhen and Li Xue Cheng's bodies were quivering. It was hard to tell who was going to win and who would lose. It looked as if winning or losing would only come from a hair-thin lead.

"Big Brother, having Shale as your silkworm is very fortuitous for you." Bixi looked at his big brother Li Chun Qiu with grand admiration.

"Yu Shanxin isn't bad, either," Li Chun Qiu said distantly. Since Shale was his silkworm, he wasn't really paying much attention to their conversation. He felt as if he was fighting Han Sen himself, right then and there. But there were many fighting minds and techniques he had to learn that he had never previously encountered. It felt so strange.

Experiencing the battle from Shale's perspective was unique. He felt like he was fighting himself, but at the same time, he could step back and examine Shale's choices with a critical eye. He could tell which decisions Shale made were better than his opponent and vice versa. He only absorbed the good battle experiences, while figuring out and filing away the bad ones.

Right now, Shale was only half-deified. In the future, Shale would travel through the deified ranks of primitive, transmutation, larva, butterfly, and maybe even true god. Li Chun Qiu could slowly absorb everything that Shale experienced.

At that point, Li Chun Qiu would only be half-deified. But he would have the experience of a true god. Li Chun Qiu could slowly study everything that Shale had learned through his evolution. Although he would only be half-deified himself, his mind would be on a different level.

Bixi looked bitter as he said, "This Yu Shanxin hides a great deal from me. He is so strong and tough. He is a difficult nut to crack. Even now, I have yet to learn a single thing from his mind."

"Those silkworms might be the most challenging, but they're also the most rewarding. Conquering them will yield better results in the long run," Li Chun Qiu said.

"You are right, but... Well, never mind. I bet Exquisite and Li Keer have the same problem..." Bixi said.

Exquisite and Li Keer did have trouble, but Han Sen let them in when he fought. Like Li Chun Qiu, they gained a lot of battle experience from Han Sen. Each decision he made taught them a lot.

But while Han Sen was a ninth-tier King, he had a scary power and a scarier mind. It made them so happy. Even if Han Sen lost this fight, just getting to experience this battle would be more than worth it to them.

One thing caught them off guard, though. Despite the intensity of the fight, they could sense that Han Sen was deliberately hiding the true range of his powers.

"Is Han Sen not using all of his strength?" The possibility stunned them. He was already fighting at an unbelievable level, and yet he didn't seem to have tapped into the full potential of his power. That was a scary thought.

Li Keer had always thought Dollar was stronger than Han Sen, but she now found herself looking at the man with a complicated expression.

Although he was fighting an elite like Shale, Han Sen could still hide some of his power. This was no longer just an intimidating display of ability; it was out-and-out frightening.

Although Han Sen tried his best to close off his mind and avoid thinking about the Dongxuan Sutra and his super god spirit body, Li Keer and Exquisite were still able to pick up that he was suppressing something. They would come to know that Han Sen was hiding his true power, but that couldn't be avoided.

In truth, Han Sen's ability to suppress his thoughts at all in this situation indicated that the power of his mind was terrifyingly profound. In a fight like that, most people would need to constantly think about which geno arts and powers they were good at.

"This guy is too scary..." Li Keer said while she watched Han Sen.

"He is rather frightening, isn't he? I don't think he will ever fail to surprise us. Every time we think we have seen it all, he goes the extra mile and does more," Exquisite said with a nervous smile.

When she fought Han Sen, she thought that she had forced him to cast many of his skills. But it now looked like Han Sen had only used a fraction of his talent when he was fighting her. He was now bringing out more tools, but even more were still being kept hidden.

"We must dig into this man and unearth all of his secrets," Li Keer said. Her eyes were brimming with excitement.

Li Keer had better potential than Exquisite, but she didn't focus on the Very High Sense. Her Very High Forget Love wasn't as developed as Exquisite's, so she was prone to becoming more emotional.

Exquisite only coldly said, "There is no rush. We have four years. He will reveal his secrets to us in time. It doesn't matter that he has managed to hide it all for now."

Open Sky Elder looked a bit gloomy, and he said, "The smallest move could determine how this plays out. Either one of them could win at this point. Han Sen is strong, but he is just a ninth-tier King. He is ranked lower than Shale. If they were in the same class, Han Sen would have a seventy percent chance of winning."

Qiyu Elder shook his head and said, "No, it doesn't work like that. Shale is half-deified, but his will is deified. Han Sen is just a ninth-tier King, and yet, he is holding his own against a powerful half-deified. That means his talent and potential are scarier than Shale's."

"Does that mean the eleven armor talent test was legit?" Open Sky Elder wondered with a frown.

"It is hard to say. If he isn't doing this well because of his talent, then it is hard to imagine what Han Sen has that is letting him fight Shale." Qiyu Elder looked at Han Sen, his face conflicted.

"A ten armor talent is very rare. A real eleven armor talent would make a man the greatest of his generation. Do you think Han Sen is this kind of great man?" Open Sky Elder asked, looking a little worried.

"I'm not sure about that, but it is plain to see that his talent is stunning. Li Keer and Exquisite got lucky when they signed a contract with him," Qiyu Elder said.

"What is going on... Something is wrong with Shale!" Open Sky Elder wanted to say something, but he was in too much shock. Then, his face went white. He looked at Shale in the video and screamed, "He... He's going to level up!"