

Crossing 271

Chapter 271: Become Friends?

With a flip of his body, Luo Lang was at the front seat. He pulled out the information the other had keyed in earlier, trying to change their destination, but found that it had already been locked in by the other, with no way of changing it.

Of course, this was just a measure which would work against regular cadets like Luo Lang who were not in the hacker specialization. A competent hacker would still be able to crack this relatively basic lock, but unfortunately, Luo Lang did not have the skills on this front. He could only watch helplessly as the hover car flew towards the destination the other had set, unbelievably frustrated.

Luo Lang understood that to stop the travel route was impossible, unless he used violent means to destroy the hover car ... but, extremely rationally, he rejected this idea, because the hover car was flying rapidly at an altitude of over 100 metres. The moment it was broken apart, he would plummet along with the car. At this height, no matter how confident Luo Lang was, he could not guarantee he would be able to land safely. If things did not work out, he might once again be gravely injured.

Luo Lang really did not want to end up in Li Shiyu's hands again. Although the other truly had superior skills in treatment, his methods of tormenting others were also extremely masterful. Most importantly, 'for your own good' was putting it nicely — you really had no way of resisting, and would even have to grudgingly thank him for the torment after the fact ...

Besides that, Luo Lang also really wanted to know who the opponent was. An unknown enemy was most often the most fearsome and troublesome type. If he could find out some information on the opponent, it would undoubtedly be a great help to the New Cadet Regiment. More importantly, Luo Lang was also afraid that if he escaped this time, the opponent might turn their sights on the other members of the New Cadet Regiment. Other than Ling Lan, Qi Long, and Wu Jiong, Luo Lang's strength was obviously a bracket higher compared to the other members, and so his chances of escaping were also much better than any other member. For these reasons, Luo Lang decided to brave the tiger's den to probe the opponent's identity.

Having made his decision, Luo Lang no longer concerned himself with the hover car. He tied up the unconscious blue-uniformed senior by his side using the other's belt — the binding method naturally being the one Ling Lan had taught them — and then dumped the other in the backseat. Then, he stared straight ahead with a grim expression, silently trying to memorize the path of the hover car.

The hover car moved very swiftly. In less than 20 minutes, the hover car began to slow down from its initial rapid speed. Luo Lang readied his guard, because he knew he was about to arrive at the destination the opponent had set — the enemy was upon him.

Although the journey had taken less than 20 minutes, with the hover car's speed, they were likely to have already travelled over several hundred kilometres, already very far away from the Military Medical Research Centre. The surroundings were extremely unfamiliar to Luo Lang — towering mountains and dense forest were all around them. Besides the wailing cry of some unknown beast, the surroundings were so silent that it was rather unnerving. Luo Lang used the optical supercomputer of the hover car to

zoom in on the environment, and found that other than mountains and trees, there were only more mountains and trees, no sign of human presence whatsoever.

Luo Lang's brow began to furrow tightly — he had originally thought that the hover car would bring them directly to the opponent's main camp, or perhaps a temporary outpost. Unexpectedly, he had been brought to such a bleak and remote area; this left Luo Lang at somewhat of a loss.

The hover car was slowing down more and more, even as its height was slowly descending. In the end, the hover car manoeuvred into a narrow gorge, and after passing through it, Luo Lang was greeted by the sight of an average-sized patch of grass. It was lush and verdant, with countless small blooms of myriad colours dotting this sheet of green, giving observers a sense of extraordinary beauty.

At the edge of the grassy patch was a sea of trees. Luo Lang could hear the sound of a babbling brook coming out from the trees, causing everything to seem that much more beautiful and harmonious. This made Luo Lang's initially high-strung vigilance ease a little, but only for a split second — Luo Lang very quickly had his guard up high once more, no longer lingering in his appreciation for that patch of lovely grass. Instead, he paid close attention to the movements of the hover car beneath him.

The hover car slowly moved onto the grass-patch and began to descend until it had landed fully. After that, the hover car emitted a mechanical voice, "You have reached your destination. Please disembark."

Following this announcement, the car doors swung open. Luo Lang did not choose to get off, instead turning on the A.I. again, trying to see if he could enter a new address. In this extremely foreign place, Luo Lang's first move was to try to implement a Plan B — he wanted to set it so the hover car would automatically return from this place back to the dormitories after waiting for 10 minutes.

But very quickly, Luo Lang found that he had failed. The other had already thought of this possibility, and had programmed the A.I. to shut off on its own the moment the hover car arrived at its destination, switching into parked mode. It would not accept any new instructions from Luo Lang, so Luo Lang really had no choice but to remain.

Seeing this, Luo Lang could not help but be chilled by the opponent's attention to detail. It should be known that the hover cars of the military academy would never turn off their engines. They were powered by photonic energy — whether it was sunlight or starlight, all of it would give the hover cars power. Therefore, the hover cars could theoretically continue driving on forever, unless some other mechanical issue occurred or their A.I. programming malfunctioned.

Luo Lang knew that this situation now meant that the opponent must have a high-level hacker on their side, one capable of modifying the operating system of the hover car's A.I., thus forcing the car to power down automatically when it arrived at its destination.

This arrangement of the enemy forced Luo Lang to stay, because there was nothing at all around here ¹ — no village-houses, no stores, no hover car stops ... in other words, once someone came here, other than taking the hover car which had originally brought them here back, they would not be able to summon a new hover car over to pick them up, unless they used their communicators to request assistance from the academy mainframe ...

Luo Lang was almost certain that his communicator would be unable to contact the outside world by now. The opponent had planned things so thoroughly, so it was unlikely they would have missed such a large hole in their plan.

Sure enough, when he peeked down at his communicator, his communicator was displaying an alert saying 'signal disrupted, device out of contact'. Who knew how long his device had been flashing that alert — Luo Lang's attention had just been elsewhere, which was why he had not noticed till now.

Luo Lang knew that a tough fight was sure to follow. The opponent had set such an elaborate trap to draw him here, they would not just want to meet him for a chat. He sighed silently, getting off the hover car with his sense on high alert, stepping foot on this lovely patch of grass.

With his back to the hover car, he swept his gaze over the perimeter on all three sides before him. Seeing no one, he was frowning in puzzlement when he suddenly heard the sound of a hover car coming from behind him. Luo Lang snapped his head around and saw three hover cars flying swiftly towards him. In the end, the three cars circled around to surround him before they slowly descended to land.

Soon, 7 or 8 people had disembarked from the three hover cars. The person in the lead was dressed in a pressed white uniform, and he was smiling as he looked at Luo Lang. His figure was tall and stately, his face extraordinarily handsome — he definitely possessed the figure and appearance that Luo Lang dreamed of having — but his sparkling, flirty eyes disturbed Luo Lang. Those eyes just did not seem to fit the other's overall appearance somehow, resulting in a huge deduction in the overall sense of perfection.

The other youths were all dressed in blue uniforms. They looked to be about twenty years old, definitely senior cadets of the military academy; it was just hard to tell which year exactly they were from. They stood around almost randomly, but still keeping Luo Lang completely within their circle.

Luo Lang stared warily at the group. This behaviour of the other side let him know that these people were most definitely the ones who had tricked him here. The two sides stared at each other silently for 2 to 3 minutes, neither side saying a word.

Luo Lang clenched his teeth. From the looks of it, the opponent was not planning to speak up first. Thus, he decided to take the initiative. Looking towards the obvious leader of this group, the white-uniformed youth, who must be a dux of who knows what specialization, he asked coldly, "Was it you who set up this trap to bring me here?"

The white-clothed youth laughed and clapped his hands, "Bingo! How clever!"

"Bringing me here, what business do you have with me? I think, I have never seen you before, so I should not have offended you somehow," Luo Lang said.

The white-clothed youth laughed again and said, "Haha, of course not! Actually, I just wanted to become friends with you."

Luo Lang scoffed at these words, "Become friends? Using this kind of despicable method?"

The white-clothed youth frowned, and said sullenly, "Could it be that Yong-guang² didn't tell you that I wanted to discuss something with you?"

“Using a text message to trick me into going to the Military Medical Research Centre, then using the excuse of an examination at the examination centre to trick me onto a hover car and bringing me here by force. What do you think?”

Hearing all this, the white-clothed youth said exasperatedly, “Yong-guang misunderstood my intentions! I just said that I especially admired your performance during the arena fight, actually being able to achieve an upset, defeating a stronger opponent. This deserves my respect. I most admire your type of resilient and tenacious spirit. So, I told him that if I had a chance, I’d like to get to know you, maybe become friends or something ...”

At this point, the white-clothed youth began muttering to himself, “Yong-guang clearly said that he could help me do that ... how did things turn out this way?” So saying, he abruptly raised his head and asked Luo Lang, “Where’s Yong-guang? Let me ask him what exactly is going on? I had clearly asked him to invite you here. This place is my favourite spot. I thought you might like it too, which is why I arranged to meet you here.”

The white-clothed youth’s expression was earnest, as if the truth was just as he said. With that explanation, Luo Lang began to doubt whether things were really like that — was it this Yong-guang who had made a mistake?

However, Boss Lan’s cautionary words very quickly rang out in his mind. *‘When you are still uncertain whether an other is a friend or foe, you need to guard against the other as if they were an enemy ...’*

Luo Lang’s heart clenched, cold sweat breaking out along his back. Without knowing it, he had slowly been letting down his guard. He abruptly stared penetratingly at the seemingly earnest face of that white-clothed youth, and said coldly, “No need. He is my hostage now. Why don’t you tell me what you intend?”

Luo Lang’s wary gaze made the lips of the white-clothed youth twitch, his gaze quickly becoming bleak as he said, “I really had no bad intentions.” That said, he bowed his head somewhat mournfully.

“If you have no bad intentions, then help me unlock the settings of the hover car. It’s getting late, I should go back now,” responded Luo Lang coldly. No matter what the other said, he was determined not to believe it. Who would do such a bizarre thing as this just to make friends? It was suspicious however he looked at it.

Resigned, the white-clothed youth said, “Okay. I really don’t know how things turned out this way. All of this was done by Yong-guang. You need to wake Yong-guang up, he should be able to resolve this.”

Luo Lang peered intently at the white-clothed youth for a long moment. Then, without shifting his line of sight, his hand reached into the backseat of the hover car behind him, and smacked that person called Yong-guang awake.

Chapter 272: The Mission of the New Cadet Regiment!

Yong-guang moaned and opened his eyes. Waking to find himself all tied up, his face paled, but just as he was about to shout, he noticed his companions standing right outside the car. Joy bloomed on his face as he cried out, “Elder Brother Xi, save me!”

The white-clothed youth saw this and his face turned stony as he barked, “Yong-guang, I ask you. Didn’t I say I wanted to become friends with Luo Lang? Asking you to help me invite him out for a meeting, why did you make such a mess of it?”

Yong-guang’s gaze flickered. He looked towards Luo Lang, then looked back at the white-clothed youth, and after some thought, he said, “Honestly, I had wanted to invite Luo Lang out properly, but the companion by his side was very wary and cautious. Every time I tried to approach, that person would stop me. Even though I said I had no bad intentions, only wanting to get to know him, the other just would not believe me. In the end, I had no choice but to do things this way. I was originally thinking to explain the situation after we arrived at the destination, but I unexpectedly angered Luo Lang, who knocked me unconscious along the way.”

At this point, Yong-guang bowed his head dejectedly and apologised, saying, “I’m sorry, Luo Lang, for misleading you.”

“All of this was really just your idea?” Despite the other’s explanation, he did not manage to make Luo Lang relax his guard. Luo Lang’s right hand was still gripping the other’s neck securely — at any strange movement, he would be able to finish off the other instantly. This action of his was also a silent warning to the other people there to not move recklessly, for he had a hostage in hand.

In response to Luo Lang’s question, Yong-guang said, “Yes, I’m from the hacker specialization, so I could only use a hacker’s method to invite you out.” Yong-guang was rather proud of his own methods, but very quickly deflated again, “I was originally just thinking of using the Military Medical Research Centre’s system to send you a message, but that system is just too hard to crack. In the end, I could only use the treatment centre’s system. Luckily you did not suspect anything.”

Yong-guang’s words explained why he had received the message from the treatment centre; this rather convinced Luo Lang of the veracity of his words. However, he also began chiding himself internally — it was just as Boss Lan had said — he was all a fighter’s brawn and courage, without a strategist’s mind ¹. He had not noticed such a simple and obvious flaw ... if not for the fact that the subsequent events had been too out of the ordinary, he might not have noticed right up till the very end.

Luo Lang made a decision then and there that he would definitely go find Han Jijyun when he had a chance for some remedial lessons. Even if he could not become someone as astute as Han Jijyun, he just could not let an opponent use such a simple scheme to lure him out. This was too disgraceful! He could already foresee the teasing he would receive from his companions when he returned.

“That hover car was also your doing?” Luo Lang continued to ask.

Yong-guang’s downtrodden demeanour was swept away in an instant. Beaming with pride, he said, “Of course! All this is just a piece of cake ²!” With regards to his own specialization, he was still very confident in his abilities.

The other’s reactions chipped away a little more of Luo Lang’s scepticism. As if aware that the ice on Luo Lang’s face was thawing, the white-clothed youth immediately spoke up to say, “You see, Luo Lang, I really had no bad intentions. I just felt that we would click, so I wanted to get to know you.” Saying this, there was actually a trace of hurt on the youth’s face.

Seeing this, Luo Lang's heart could not help but soften, but Ling Lan's stern expression once more floated to the surface of his mind. That cold gaze of his pierced Luo Lang's inner heart, causing his heart to clench once more, causing him to once again harden his somewhat softening heart.

When the white-uniformed youth saw mental clarity reassert itself in Luo Lang's eyes once more, he could not help but jerk back, his initially wounded expression stiffening for just a moment ...

Ling Lan, who was currently in the mecha world performing a mission, suddenly stopped moving, causing Little Four to ask in confusion, "Boss, what's wrong?"

"My spiritual power has been stirred!" Ling Lan answered with a frown.

"What happened?" Little Four was very shocked. He had not sensed any people with spectre abilities near them in the virtual world; it was impossible for anyone to have attacked Boss.

"Could it be something from the virtual world?" Ling Lan asked Little Four. When it came to the virtual world, Little Four knew better than she did.

"No, there are no spectres within a hundred square li of us. Unless this world has another entity like me around, but even so, it should not be able to escape my sensors," replied Little Four with confidence.

Ling Lan's brow scrunched up even tighter. If it did not come from the virtual world, then where had this attack come from?

Right then, Ling Lan had already forgotten that, back during the grand armed melee, in order to protect Qi Long and the others, she had unleashed several strands of her spiritual power, lodging them within the minds of her team members. Back then, Ling Lan had been afraid they would get too caught up in fighting that they might make a wrong decision during a critical moment. Thus, she had left these spiritual power strands in their minds to jolt them into awareness again at those critical moments ...

Originally, she was supposed to take those strands back once the grand armed melee ended. However, by virtue of the chain of events that had followed — her being targeted for an assassination, being seriously injured and unconscious and leaving for home, and then when she woke up, she was immediately taken in by Mu Shui-qing as a disciple to train in Divine Command — she had forgotten to seek out her companions to reclaim those spiritual power reserves of hers.

With the passage of time, these spiritual power strands had been absorbed by her companions' spiritual power, becoming part of them. However, there was an unintended benefit — whenever her companions were attacked by a spiritual power user, Ling Lan would sense it. At present though, Ling Lan did not know about this, which was why she was extremely puzzled over the source of this attack.

"I need to log off. Something just doesn't feel right." Ling Lan decided to listen to her gut, immediately logging off from the virtual world.

Inside the villa of Ling Lan's team, one room on the third floor was specially used for the login pods to the virtual world. The moment Xie Yi returned to the team home, he immediately ran to the third floor. As long as it was not during meal time, Boss Lan, Luo Lang, and the others would be in the virtual world,

and Xie Yi needed to find Boss Lan before Luo Lang heard of this matter to discuss how they could advise Luo Lang to accept the mission set by the military academy this time.

It turned out that ten days later would be the first assessment for the 5th year seniors who applied to the various army divisions for enlistment. It could be said that this would certainly affect the futures of those students, as well as affect the reputation of the First Men's Military Academy.

This was because those students who passed this first assessment would obtain the best resources the divisions had to offer and gain the best cultivation, and be deployed to the best troop for their development. In comparison, the assessments after that would not provide such great treatment anymore. This was why all the military academies would put their all into doing their best for this first assessment.

The assessment teams sent by the various army divisions would not only come to the First Men's Military Academy, but would also set up station at several other military academies. Those locations would gather all the enlistment hopefuls from the other military academies for assessment — the competition could be said to be extremely fierce. Thus, every year, the military academies placed the greatest importance on this very first assessment. It should be known that, in the past, the students of the First Men's Military Academy would dominate half the passing group. This was why the First Men's Military Academy had always reigned supreme over the other military academies.

The First Men's Military Academy naturally hoped to continue extending their reign of good repute, hence placing a high standard on all aspects of the assessment teams' visit. The school hoped to have everything as perfect as possible, so it could leave a good impression on all the assessment officers of the various army divisions, in hopes that the officers would be merciful during the assessment of their students. Meanwhile, the most essential piece was the welcoming reception ...

As the First Men's Military Academy consisted entirely of manly men, the school could not do as other co-ed military academies did, sending out beautiful ladies to receive the officers. This time, they received news that their sworn rivals, the Federal Co-ed Military Academy had sent out the so-called loveliest female squad to welcome the officers. This made the top ranks of the First Men's Military Academy extremely agitated.

If they still sent out some rough and hairy boys to welcome the officers this time, with this stark contrast, would the examiners be irritated? Thinking that this could affect their cadets' results, their hearts were burning with desperation, as they racked their brains to think of a counterplan³. Heaven knows who suggested it, but someone mentioned that there were some among the boys who were graceful and beautiful too, such as the 1st year Luo Lang. (Due to his participation in the wagered fight, quite a few people knew of Luo Lang now. Even the top ranks of the school administration had caught wind of him.) The administrators latched onto this suggestion like their lives depended on it, swiftly settling on seeking out some of the more refined and gentle-looking youths to handle this matter.

In the end, after some study, everyone decided that the 1st year freshmen were still the most suited for this job. The freshmen were innocent, not as slick as the older cadets — so if they really ended up making any faux pas, on account of their young ages, those officers would likely be able to overlook it.

Finally, this matter was handed over to the New Cadet Regiment to execute. Who asked Luo Lang to be a member of the New Cadet Regiment? Moreover, the New Cadet Regiment was the only organisation

the freshmen of this year would acknowledge — who else would the administrators seek out if not them?

Xie Yi had been called out by a student for precisely this reason. Their first year homeroom teacher had asked that student to pass on the word, calling Xie Yi to the homeroom teacher's office. (Ever since Qi Long and Li Yingjie had been injured, Xie Yi had temporarily taken their place to become Wu Jiong's assistant, helping Wu Jiong to handle the matters of the New Cadet Regiment, which was why the teacher would seek out Xie Yi.)

The moment Xie Yi arrived at the homeroom teacher's office, he saw Wu Jiong there as well, giving him a hint that this was likely regarding the New Cadet Regiment. Reality proved that Xie Yi was right. The homeroom teacher plainly told them the intentions of the top ranks of the military academy, tasking the New Cadet Regiment with the job of receiving the examiners. Additionally, he kept subtly and pointedly bringing up how excellent Luo Lang was, strongly suggesting that it would be most appropriate for him to lead the welcoming committee.

Wu Jiong and Xie Yi could only smile wryly — the homeroom teacher's words had let them understand clearly what the top file of the military academy was after. They had set their hopes on the lovely androgynous face of Luo Lang ... However, Luo Lang had always hated others judging him by that feminine face of his. The two of them really had no idea what Luo Lang would do when he found out about the administrators' plan. Would he go berserk and flip the principal's desk in anger?

After that meeting, the two of them discussed things over, and felt that Boss Lan was likely the only person who could handle Luo Lang for this. Thus, Xie Yi had rushed back to the villa and straight up to the third floor to find Ling Lan.

Xie Yi had just stepped into the login pod room when he saw Boss Lan's exclusive login pod swing open. Ling Lan sat up primly, prepared to climb out of the login pod.

Seeing this, Xie Yi said happily, "Boss Lan, I was just looking for you to discuss something." That said, Xie Yi shuffled over to lift up Ling Lan's towel from the counter and passed it to Ling Lan.

"What's up?" Ling Lan smoothly accepted Xie Yi's offering of her towel, and began walking as she asked. She was moving towards the restroom to one side, prepared to wash up.

Chapter 273: Where Is Luo Lang?

Xie Yi quickly hurried over and said, "It's like this ..." He explained the task the military academy had set for the New Cadet Regiment to Ling Lan, "The top rank of the academy has set their sights on Luo Lang, wanting Luo Lang to be in charge of the reception team. The intention being that those going to welcome the examiners should be those who are more on the graceful and slender side."

The hand Ling Lan was using to wipe her face with her towel paused for a beat, then swiped roughly once more as she said with a cold chuckle, "That bunch of top ranks must have something wrong with their brains. The assessment officers of the divisions are here to see brave and skilful warriors, not this superficial nonsense."

Xie Yi nodded emphatically, "Right? Wu Jiong and I felt right then that something was off, but before we could refuse, the instructor had implied that this was a mission the New Cadet Regiment must carry out."

"Unable to refuse?" asked Ling Lan, her eyebrows locking up. She really disliked this mission — Luo Lang would likely be extremely resistant to this mission as well.

"If we could refuse, we would have pushed it off a long time ago. The instructor said that, as long as we complete this mission, the school will guarantee that within one year, no other faction will bother us." Xie Yi shared the benefit the school was promising as well, though this was of course still a type of threat.

"Hmph, faking generosity by piggybacking others. They know very well that Leiting will help us settle everything in these two years. Actually just promising this, what great planning," commented Ling Lan with a cold huff. She threw her towel into the washbasin and strode out of the washroom.

Xie Yi hurriedly rushed forward to clean the towel in the washbasin a little, wringing it dry and hanging it back in its place, as he replied, "Right? But with the school's promise, some factions might make less underhanded moves behind the scenes." Leiting would only help them resolve the conflicts on the surface, so the New Cadet Regiment would still have to handle any manoeuvres behind the scenes themselves.

In this half a month after the waged fight, there had indeed been no disturbances on the surface, but behind the scenes, the regiment members had still received taunting and bullying to a certain extent. It was just that the perpetrators seemed to have no clear connection to any of the factions, seeming to be acting purely on personal grudges. But Wu Jiong and Xie Yi knew very well that things were not that simple. Simply staying on top of all these miscellaneous trivial matters had given them a lot of stress. Thus, this vow of the military academy was still rather attractive for the New Cadet Regiment.

"If our New Cadet Regiment is given a stable year's time, allowing the regiment members to successfully complete their final exams, in the second year, we will no longer have to be afraid," added Wu Jiong.

This kind of backstage harassment might not bother the top ranks of the New Cadet Regiment much, but they were still extremely detrimental to the lower ranking members. Mind you, the first year was the most critical physical conditioning phase, which was of the utmost importance to every freshman. If they did not have a secure environment to complete these physical training courses, it might affect their final assessment results. This was why Wu Jiong and Xie Yi had agreed to the mission in the end — for the sakes of their regiment members, it was necessary for them to suffer some things.

Ling Lan walked over to sit on a sofa at one side. As she listened to Xie Yi, she could not help but knock on the arms of the sofa, thinking for a long while before saying, "Looks like, Luo Lang will have to take one for the team." This statement sealed Luo Lang's tragic fate for the near future.

At these words, Xie Yi's expression eased. He took a seat on the sofa beside Ling Lan's and sighed, "He'll just have to. For the sake of our New Cadet Regiment's future!" That said, he added obsequiously, "Of course, this matter still requires you, Boss Lan, to act. Luo Lang listens to you best."

Ling Lan threw a cold glance at him in response, frightening Xie Yi so much that he quickly ducked his head, afraid to make eye contact.

Frankly, they had only called on Boss Lan to act because they had no other choice. That punk Luo Lang may look as soft and gentle as water, but he was actually a firecracker, liable to explode with a tiny spark. If they tried passing on the news themselves, they might only manage to touch on the subject — before they managed to elaborate and clarify the whole mission, Luo Lang might already have flipped the table in anger.

However, Boss Lan was different. Luo Lang adored Boss Lan, and listened well to Boss Lan's words. If it came from Boss Lan, regardless of how unhappy Luo Lang was with the news, he would still obey docilely and complete the mission perfectly. This was why Wu Jiong and Xie Yi would seek out Ling Lan for help.

At the heart of it, whether it was those of Ling Lan's team or those of the New Cadet Regiment, they all had a kind of unquestionable trust in Ling Lan. In their minds, as long as a task was taken on by Boss Lan, any challenge would no longer be challenging ... what blind confidence they had in Ling Lan!

Seeing Xie Yi's cowed expression, Ling Lan turned her gaze aside and said dispassionately, "Only this once." Ling Lan did not wish for them to develop the habit of relying on her. There would come a day when they would go their separate ways and fight on their own.

At these words, Xie Yi finally smiled. With Boss Lan's promise, this matter was sure to go off without a hitch. He decided that he would inform Wu Jiong right after this, and ask him to select some of the more genteel looking freshmen with refined manners, to cooperate with Luo Lang in completing this mission.

At this moment, Ling Lan was also mentally considering what to do. She did not want to be a tyrant boss, assigning missions to her followers by force without caring what they thought. She wanted to ask Luo Lang's opinion — if Luo Lang was at all reluctant, she decided that she would go forth together with Luo Lang to complete this welcoming mission.

Ling Lan knew very well that if she too was in the welcoming committee, Luo Lang would definitely have no more mental resistance to the mission, and would instead follow her enthusiastically. Besides, as a girl, Ling Lan did not feel there was anything disgraceful about accepting this mission ¹.

Ling Lan would make this decision because she felt that she herself matched the conditions the top ranks of the academy had set for the welcoming committee. With the union of her parents' strengths, when she looked into a mirror, even she could not help but be enchanted by her own lovely face ...

Indeed, Ling Lan was pretty good-looking, and her slender frame had none of the bulky muscularity of the typical male. By all accounts, she indeed fit the criteria very well, but she had forgotten her own millennium-long unmelting ice block of a face, as well as her piercing gaze which chilled others to the bone. Just standing there, she exuded a boundless air of domination ... how then could she possess the gentle and accommodating air the upper ranks of the military academy requested?

It had to be said that Ling Lan was actually quite tragic — having such a lovely face, but no one dared to even look straight at her ... The domineering air coming from her body completely overshadowed her unbelievably beautiful face. At first glance, all everyone could think was that this person was really cool, really strong, really dominant! Forever unrelated to the phrases beautiful, pretty, or adorable ...

After thinking about it, Ling Lan decided to first discuss things over with Luo Lang to see what the other thought. So, she asked Xie Yi, "Where's Luo Lang? Why didn't he come back together with you?"

Xie Yi was taken aback. “Luo Lang told me he would leave first. Did he not come back here?” He quickly stood up and ran to Luo Lang’s login pod to take a look. There really was no one inside. Xie Yi instantly frowned and said, “This fellow, where has he gone?”

Ling Lan also frowned. Luo Lang typically would not run around needlessly — could it be that something had popped up? Ling Lan rapped on the arm of the sofa once more and said, “Tell me the situation when you last saw Luo Lang.”

Xie Yi carefully recalled the scene for a moment, then replied, “I had originally asked Luo Lang to wait for me, because the homeroom teacher passed a message for me to meet him at his office. Luo Lang had said yes at first, but then, soon after, he said he had something to do and asked to leave first. Since I did not know what the homeroom teacher wanted, or how long it would take, I agreed. After saying goodbye to him, I went to the homeroom teacher, while Luo Lang left the training field.”

“Initially agreeing to wait for you, but then saying that he had something to do and leaving ... this means that within that brief window of time, there was a change in Luo Lang’s state of mind,” Ling Lan analysed.

“Yes, I wonder if Luo Lang suddenly recalled something, or did something happen within that period of time to change his mind?” Xie Yi mused. Suddenly thinking of something, his face paled and he said, “Could he have been tricked away by that person?”

Ling Lan’s face darkened. “What’s this?”

Xie Yi quickly told Ling Lan all about the senior who had been constantly trying to find a way to approach Luo Lang over the past few days. Back then, he had already found the other rather fishy, which was why he had actively stopped him. However, the other’s intentions were extremely concealed, so all he had were speculations, hence he had not spoken to Luo Lang of it. At this point, Xie Yi was filled with regret. He should have warned Luo Lang earlier to be careful.

“Luo Lang is not that foolish. A stranger would not be able to trick him away so easily. There must be some reason which he could not refuse ...” Ling Lan did not think Luo Lang was that gullible. Even if Luo Lang was indeed all dumb innards behind an intelligent face², he still did not lack basic judgment.

“Wait here for a moment. I’ll log onto the virtual network to see if I can find any useful information.” Ling Lan decided to depend on Little Four for this, lying back down into the virtual login pod. She was prepared to let Little Four use the virtual network to look up the various surveillance stations in the military academy, to see where Luo Lang had gone.

Xie Yi nodded, settling down quietly onto the sofa. No matter how anxious he was, he did not make any sound. He knew what Ling Lan was heading into the virtual world to do — their entire team knew that Boss Lan was most likely also a very high-level hacker — perhaps Boss would be able to find some clue within the virtual world.

Meanwhile, Luo Lang, who was facing off against a crowd, had not let down his guard due to the warning jolt he had received from Ling Lan’s spiritual power. After listening to what the white-clothed youth had to say, he contemplated silently for a moment before replying, “I really want to believe what

you're saying, but I cannot under these circumstances. If what you say is true, then unseal the hover car and let me go home."

The white-clothed youth responded sadly, "Luo Lang, is it really impossible for us to become friends?"

At these words, Luo Lang laughed. This laugh was unbelievably lovely and charming, causing the white-clothed youth's gaze to darken briefly, becoming deep and unfathomable, but his loss of composure only lasted for a split second. Not thinking too much about this, Luo Lang missed this swift change.

Luo Lang said amidst his laughter, "If you really want to be friends with me, come find me openly. I will not reject someone who sincerely wants to become friends."

The white-clothed youth instantly broke out into a smile, making his face incomparably sunny and bright. This caused Luo Lang's impression of him to rise by several notches once more. Still, even so, his vigilance was not reduced — that cold and piercing gaze of Ling Lan's made him fear to relax.

"Yup, I'll let Yong-guang unseal the hover car then. I'll come find you tomorrow, is that okay?" said the white-clothed youth with his sunny smile, his tone extremely earnest and sincere. Perhaps he was too earnest, for no matter how one looked, he exuded an air of silliness.

Luo Lang only continued to smile politely without saying a word, waiting for the other to fulfil his promise.

Chapter 274: Tianji Mecha Clan!

Yong-guang heard what the white-clothed youth said, and could not help but smile bitterly and say, "Being all tied up like this, how can I unseal anything? At least untie my hands." He turned his head to look at Luo Lang and said, "Since Elder Brother Xi has already said this, why don't you untie my hands so I can help you unseal the hover car?"

The white-clothed youth's gaze settled on Luo Lang's body once more, filled with anticipation.

Luo Lang hesitated briefly — he saw the three other hover cars not too far off and an idea sparked. "No need to unseal this one. Aren't there three perfectly fine cars over there? If you don't mind, let one of them take me back!"

The white-clothed youth nodded at this and said "Don't mind, of course I don't mind! You can choose whichever of the three hover cars you like."

Luo Lang smiled, but did not point out which car he wanted. He carefully lifted Yong-guang, using him as a hostage to block his body, carefully retreating. When he was not too far away from the three hover cars, he jumped backwards abruptly, leaping to the side of one of the hover cars. Pulling the door open, he continued to keep Yong-guang as a shield before him as he slowly retreated into the car.

Luo Lang sat down, and seeing the other side still standing where they were without moving a single step, he could not help but relax. It looked like they truly had no ill intent — his tightly clenched hand loosened.

Right then, Yong-guang, who had been docilely cooperative all this while, sensed the weakening of the grip around his neck. With a forceful twist of his body, he wrested free of Luo Lang's grasp, throwing himself bodily towards the ground ...

Luo Lang was greatly startled, but just as he was about to lean out of the car to reach out for the other, he suddenly heard an extremely soft mechanical click. At the same time, a beam of silver light flashed right in front of his eyes.

Luo Lang felt an unprecedented sense of danger coming right at him, and the muscles of his entire body tensed up. Many years of battle experience ensured he did not panic — with a sweep of his right leg, he kicked out at Yong-guang who was about to hit the floor, sending him flying into the air. Meanwhile, he used the rebound force of this kick to glide swiftly deeper into the hover car, trying to dodge that threatening silver light.

Quicker than words could say, despite Luo Lang's nimble reflexes, he still did not manage to overcome the speed of the silver light. Luo Lang did not manage to dodge cleanly. The silver beam grazed Luo Lang's right shoulder, drawing a streak of blood, which swiftly dyed Luo Lang's green uniform red.

Luo Lang ignored the wound on his arm — as he had glided into the hover car, he had hooked the car door with his right leg, shutting it, and Luo Lang then quickly pressed down the lock button from the inside, sealing the car. Other than the person inside, anyone outside who wanted to open the car would need to use brute force now.

After doing all this, Luo Lang calmly activated the A.I. of the hover car. Right now, he prayed that he would be able to successfully activate the hover car and escape from this place before the opponent managed to destroy the hover car. By now, no matter how dumb Luo Lang was, he still knew he had fallen into the opponent's trap. That white-clothed youth had been lying through his teeth, and was certainly not as pure and earnest as he had portrayed himself to be. Luo Lang secretly hated himself for being taken in so easily by the opponent, actually beginning to like the other. That was why he had become distracted at the end, wasting all his efforts thus far, getting injured by the other's underhanded methods.

Luo Lang decided to remember this bloody lesson — next time, he definitely would not make such an idiotic mistake ever again ...

Outside the hover car, a youth dressed in a blue uniform, mostly shielded from view by the white-clothed youth, lowered his hands in frustration. In his hands was an extremely exquisite, well-crafted, pocket-sized crossbow, and that streak of silver light had been a pocket-sized bolt fired from the crossbow.

He pulled back the crossbow, frowning as he said, "Elder Brother Xi, what do we do now?" Who could have expected that Luo Lang would be able to react so quickly even when he had attacked so abruptly, actually managing to dodge ...

The white-uniformed youth glared broodily at the tightly locked hover car, and sniffed coldly. "What else can we do? Smash it! I don't believe he can escape my grasp."

He was standing at the fore, so he had seen very clearly. When the bolt had brushed by Luo Lang, some blood had been drawn, so the bolt must have injured Luo Lang. He believed that, based on the compound on the bolt, as long as the other was wounded, it would be enough to force the other to stay.

“Yes, Brother Xi!” Receiving their instructions, the others began to move swiftly. They all ran towards the other two hover cars, taking out the metal bats they had prepared from within the cars. The military academy kept a close watch on firearms, forbidding students from using those highly volatile and damaging weapons outside of their classes. Thus, students would always use this type of metal bats in their personal scuffles.

Seated inside the hover car, Luo Lang watched nervously as the A.I. booted up. He could already sense those people outside surrounding this hover car. Very soon, the clanging sounds of impact rang out from all sides of the hover car. Luo Lang knew the opponent was trying to break the hover car by force, trying to keep him behind.

Time was tight — Luo Lang was so nervous his forehead was sweating. His eyes were locked onto the screen of the optical supercomputer; with all his attention focused on the screen, he neglected the trace of numbness that had appeared in his own right arm.

When the supercomputer finally displayed the notification to enter his intended destination, Luo Lang was overjoyed. As long as he managed to enter the address, he would be able to get the hover car to bring him away from this place ... he was just about to lift his hand to key in the information when he found that he could not move his right arm. His heart clenched in fear, but before he could investigate why, he felt his vision blur, his head becoming groggy and heavy.

Not good! Ultra-effective anaesthetics! Luo Lang naturally knew what was behind this. It went without question that that silver bolt which had injured him must have had ultra-effective anaesthetic smeared on it, otherwise he would not have presented with its effects so quickly.

Luo Lang unhesitatingly bit down on the tip of his tongue. Riding this violent jolt of pain, he collected his quickly dissipating consciousness. He had to key in the address he needed to get to in these final moments of awareness.

His right arm was already completely numb, so Luo Lang gritted his teeth, using momentous effort to raise his limp and weak left hand. He began to key in the address of his dorm, and then pressed the button to confirm. When he saw the A.I. display the following message — Destination: XXXXX; please press ‘YES’ to confirm, press ‘NO’ to cancel — Luo Lang used almost all his strength to press down firmly on the ‘YES’ button, and then he fainted dead away.

In the virtual world, Little Four was displaying every digital footprint Luo Lang had left after leaving the training hall one by one before Ling Lan.

16:09, Luo Lang received a message from the treatment centre. Contents as below: Cadet Luo Lang, please present yourself at the Medical Treatment Research Centre this afternoon at 17:00 hours for a final follow-up examination. — Main Service Counter of the Treatment Centre.

16:15, Luo Lang rode a hover car to the Medical Research Centre.

16:52, Luo Lang appeared at the entrance of the Medical Research Centre and met up with someone in a blue uniform.

16:58, Luo Lang went off with the blue-clothed person in a hover car; search for destination in progress ...

At this point, Ling Lan's eyebrows were tightly knitted. "Which goes to say that we still can't find where Luo Lang is now?"

"The hover car has been modified by a hacker. The destination keyed into it has not been recorded into the mainframe databank. For me to find out now, I need to find that hover car which Luo Lang took from all the surveillance footage. This is a little harder and will take more time." With regards to professional questions, Little Four's answers were meticulous.

"Alright, Little Four, take your time." Although Ling Lan was rather anxious, she did not want to show it and give Little Four too much pressure.

Not too long after, Little Four chimed in again. "Lu Yong-guang, 3rd year elite student from the hacker specialization ..." Little Four had discovered the identity of that blue-uniformed person with Luo Lang.

"Is he involved with any faction or group?" asked Ling Lan spiritedly.

"According to the data in the mainframe, he had joined the Tianji Mecha Clan." Little Four very quickly gave her an answer. The military academy mainframe which all hackers found so difficult to penetrate was just like his personal backyard in Little Four's eyes. He could come and go as he pleased, and the information inside it was as if part of his home, free for him to take as he willed.

"Tianji?" Ling Lan's brow furrowed at these words. Ever since Leiting Mecha Clan had lost in the waged fight, the various factions had toned down significantly. They were afraid they would accidentally offend Leiting, giving Leiting some excuse to vent their anger on them instead. If this matter was really initiated by Tianji, why had they chosen to act during this sensitive period? Could they be trying to take advantage of the instability to knock down Leiting and become the number one faction themselves? Or was this perhaps a setup by some other faction, trying to pit the New Cadet Regiment against Tianji? So that faction could then benefit as the external third party as the two clashed and weakened each other?

There were countless suppositions in Ling Lan's mind. Although she could not be sure whether Tianji was the real culprit, she would not let the other go, so she asked, "Little Four, without affecting the search for Luo Lang, can you take control of all the surveillance equipment inside the Tianji headquarters?"

Little Four replied without skipping a beat, "Piece of cake. Leave it to me!" He had barely finished speaking when an additional window had appeared before Ling Lan's eyes. There was a garden, a living room, other rooms, and also various passages and corridors. Ling Lan knew that this was most likely the inside of the Tianji Mecha Clan headquarters. As expected, when it came to any surveillance equipment being used in this era, Little Four really had no difficulty at all infiltrating it.

Not every faction had a headquarters — only the organisations which ranked within the top four of the school ranking had this honour. The military academy would allocate official venues of different sizes to the groups according to their ranking to become their headquarters. Therefore, every year, the various

factions would be embroiled in a brutal competition in order to win one of these four spots on the ranking.

The Tianji Mecha Clan was the second major faction within the military academy, so the headquarters given to them was considerably huge. All the safety and security measures were done up extremely well, and from the video feed, Ling Lan could even see some patrols passing by every so often.

However, Ling Lan was only perusing it cursorily — her main priority was still in waiting for Little Four to come up with his final tracking results.

Time passed bit by bit. Not too long after, Han Jijyun and Lin Zhong-qin too had ended their physical training classes and returned. When they heard the news, Han Jijyun asked Xie Yi to contact Wu Jiong. They waited patiently in the living room, waiting for Ling Lan to exit from the virtual world.

As the skies grew darker and darker, they began to become a little restless. Boss Lan had not logged off after so long — did this mean that he had not found anything useful in the virtual world?

Xie Yi was the first to lose his patience — after all, Luo Lang had last been with him. If he had only been more alert back then and cautioned Luo Lang, perhaps this kind of thing would not have happened. Filled with remorse, he suggested whether they should mobilise the New Cadet Regiment, sending everyone out to look for Luo Lang together.

Wu Jiong was rather stirred by the suggestion — after all, he felt unsettled just sitting here doing nothing.

Chapter 275: Act Independently!

Han Jijyun was unexpectedly cool-headed, immediately shooting down the two's plan.

Han Jijyun believed that taking reckless action while the circumstances were still unclear would just scare off the villains before they could go after them, and may even make the situation worse. If the opponent became wary and transferred Luo Lang to an even more concealed area, it would make it even harder for them to find him. If this allowed the opponent to successfully hide Luo Lang away for a month's time, even if they managed to find Luo Lang eventually, Luo Lang's future would already be ruined by the opponent. Rather than that, they might as well wait patiently for Boss Lan to emerge before making a decision.

The final exams of the military academy every year were extremely stringent — skipping classes without reason for an entire month would cause a cadet to lose their study right. Many factions would use some underhanded means to steal talent for themselves — kidnapping was one of those methods, but it was used very, very rarely. After all, monitoring them all from above was the surveillance team of the military academy, which kept watch on all the factions and organisations on record within the school. Other than those who were confident they could carry it off flawlessly, the typical faction would not choose to use this method.

The New Cadet Regiment group seated here already had an inkling that Luo Lang had most likely been kidnapped — they just did not know whether it was a personal act, or if some faction or group was behind it ...

This matter caused the mood of the New Cadet Regiment group here to be a little low. Originally, they had all been the elite princes of the Central Scout Academy, growing up smoothly without much hardship along the way. Under Ling Lan's lead, they had not met many obstacles, and though they had been forced into a waged fight the moment they had entered the military academy, even when everyone had not thought well of their chances, they had prevailed. They had managed to turn the tables around and defeat the Leiting Mecha Clan ...

It could not be denied that they had begun to become proud, their confidence going off the charts, thinking that there were no factions which could prevent the New Cadet Regiment from rising to prominence. However, it was right at this time that Luo Lang had mysteriously gone missing from right beneath their noses. This was like a basin of cold water pouring down on them, causing them to understand that the waters of the military academy were still deeper than they realised. It was still much too early for them to strut around with their tails cocked up high.

"Thump! Thump! Thump! ..." From upstairs, there came the rhythmic, hard sounds of boots striding across the ground, steady and powerful, causing the initially somewhat flustered hearts of those people seated below to settle down. Almost simultaneously, they all stood up and turned their heads to look. A familiar figure was walking down the stairs. Their gazes lit up instantly, the embers of hope flickering in their eyes.

Ling Lan walked down the stairs with an ice cold expression. Seeing the lot of them, she instructed, "Wu Jiong, you all wait here. Pretend nothing has happened ..." Even though Ling Lan's tone was as dispassionate as usual, everyone there could sense the indistinct killing intent radiating from Ling Lan's body, a surge of chilly air penetrating straight into their hearts.

Boss Lan was pissed! Everyone understood tacitly what this meant.

Wu Jiong blinked blankly, but quickly figured things out and said, "Understood, Boss Lan!"

Han Jijyun frowned, a trace of worry flashing through his eyes, and asked, "Boss Lan, you plan to act independently?"

"Yes, I have already found Luo Lang's trail, but that location is unsuitable for group activity. Going alone, it'll be easier for me to rescue Luo Lang," explained Ling Lan.

"Who's the opponent?" Xie Yi suddenly spoke up to ask, his eyes brimming with fiery anger.

"The Tianji Mecha Clan!" Ling Lan bit out each word by word. Her suppressed rage exploded as she uttered these four words, and her right hand reflexively slammed down onto the handrail of the staircase. There was a snap, and the solid wooden railing was actually broken into two pieces by Ling Lan's angry palm.

Han Jijyun's expression could not help but pale drastically at the sight. "Boss Lan, has Luo Lang been harmed?"

Following this question, all the expressions of the others changed greatly as well. Several pairs of furious eyes stared at Ling Lan, hoping he would tell them the answer.

Ling Lan gritted her teeth and said, "Not yet for now. But this does not guarantee that it won't happen later. Thus, I have to hurry over as soon as possible ..."

Ling Lan glanced at Wu Jiong, Han Jijyun and the others, and ordered, “Wu Jiong, Jijyun, I leave this place to you two. No matter what happens, you two must hold the fort. Remember, our New Cadet Regiment knows nothing, and no one has gone out ... as for Luo Lang, he has only gone to the Medical Research Centre for an examination.”

After leaving her instructions, Ling Lan rapidly departed the villa without a backwards glance, very quickly disappearing into the night.

Wu Jiong retracted his gaze, turning his head to ask Han Jijyun, “Han Jijyun, say, what do you think Boss Lan is planning to do?”

Han Jijyun indicated for the rest to return to the main hall to sit on the sofa, asking Lin Zhong-qing to bring over a pack of cards for them to while away the time, then replied, “Tragedy is about to befall the Tianji Mecha Clan ...”

“Huh?” Wu Jiong had only guessed that Ling Lan was planning to execute a solo rescue, so he could not understand why Ling Lan did not want to let others know that it was the Tianji Mecha Clan who had abducted Luo Lang.

Han Jijyun merely shook his head, not planning to enlighten Wu Jiong. This made Wu Jiong restless, impatience and annoyance stirring in his heart, causing him to play his cards in a distracted manner.

Xie Yi was in fact similarly uncertain, but he knew his place and so did not think too hard on the matter. Thus, he was not as unsettled as Wu Jiong. In the end, it was still Lin Zhong-qing who could not bear to see Wu Jiong’s sorry state, and could not help but hint, “If no one knows that Luo Lang was abducted by the Tianji Mecha Clan, then there will also be no way to prove that the one who wiped out the Tianji headquarters today is our Boss Lan ...”

Wu Jiong’s eyes lit up. “So that’s how it is.” However, he very quickly became despondent, pointing out the flaw in the logic, “But there are surveillance equipment in every area of the military academy ...”

Han Jijyun smirked coldly, “And how much of Boss Lan’s methods do you know? If Boss Lan wants you to do this, then you do this. This won’t be a mistake.”

Wu Jiong suddenly recalled their time on the spaceship — Boss Lan had successfully taken control of the surveillance equipment before then. His gaze brightened once more and he shouted, “I’ve got it!”

This cry drew the cold glares of the other three there with him. Han Jijyun, in particular, looked at him disdainfully as he mocked, “If you understand, then be quiet about it. Do you want to draw everyone here and negate Boss Lan’s alibi?”

Wu Jiong did not become angry even though he had been mocked by Han Jijyun. Since his doubts had been answered, he could now play his cards with an easy mind ...

Meanwhile, the moment Ling Lan exited the doorway, she asked Little Four within the mindscape, “*Tianji headquarters, which way is it?*”

Little Four showed a map to her instantly, with an arrow marking Ling Lan’s current location and a red flag marking the position of their target. The information was clear with just one glance. He also spoke

up to say, *"I suggest you first take a hover car ride, and then choose a stop near them to get off. This way, you can save some strength and internal energy ..."* Little Four knew what Ling Lan was going to do on this trip, so he wanted to help Ling Lan reduce the drain on her energy. After all, destroying a headquarters was a laborious task — they should save whatever energy they could while they could.

Ling Lan decided to listen to Little Four's advice. With just one step, she had travelled over 100 metres away, arriving at the closest hover car stop to her living quarters in two steps. Then, she waited for a hover car to arrive. Even if she would use her Qi-Jin sparingly for now, time was still of the essence. She did not hope to see Luo Lang being tormented at this final juncture.

The hover car arrived quickly, and Ling Lan darted into it like a spirit. Before Ling Lan could key in anything, Little Four had taken the initiative to choose a stop about 1 kilometre away for Ling Lan, concealing his command from the system at the same time.

In the mainframe of the military academy, this hover car Ling Lan was riding was still an empty car floating around the school. Furthermore, the moment when Ling Lan had gotten into the car and the period later when she got out would also be altered on the surveillance records. Of course, Little Four's tampering was perfect — no one would ever notice any trace of modification ...

Just like that, with no witnesses or material proof, Ling Lan left her own villa.

In one of the rooms within Tianji headquarters, the white-uniformed youth suppressed the intense pain coming from his body, and swallowed the ultra-effective medication his subordinate had brought for him.

"Brother Xi, are you alright?" A blue-uniformed person asked worriedly.

"I bloody didn't expect that Luo Lang to have such powerful spiritual power, able to resist my ability," hissed the white-clothed youth sullenly, "Not only that, he lashed back, wounding me."

The other had clearly lowered his guard and believed his words ... why had he regained mental clarity at the final moment? It was then that he had been injured — if he had not held back from showing any signs of pain, the other might have seen through his act immediately. And also perhaps because he had forced himself to tolerate that rebound force in silence, the injury he had received was 30% worse than it would have been originally.

"Wait till I've healed completely. I'll definitely torment that fellow properly." A savage expression emerged on the white-clothed youth's face, utterly ruining his originally rather charming face, leaving behind only ugliness beyond measure.

"Congratulations, Brother Xi. Not only have you obtained a beauty, you have also obtained a physical skills prodigy, adding yet another great helper for our Tianji Mecha Clan," Lu Yong-guang congratulated at one side fawningly. This improved the white-clothed youth's mood greatly, the viciousness in his face fading considerably, morphing him back into a handsome, lively and sunny youth.

"You performed well this time. Later, go to the contribution department and collect a 2nd-tier resource. I'll give you my warrant in a bit." His mood greatly improved, the white-clothed youth began to reward his underling who had performed well.

“Thank you, Brother Xi. Thank you, Brother Xi!” said Lu Yong-guang with pleasant surprise. He had initially thought he would be lucky to get a 3rd-tier resource, but Brother Xi was unexpectedly so generous this time.

A blue-clothed youth by Lu Yong-guang’s side felt that this was not very appropriate, and was just about to speak up about it when a companion standing beside him tugged on his arm, signalling him to stay silent. The lord before them now was an obstinate and conceited person; he was not that just and righteous Lord Regiment Commander of theirs who was currently in Closed Door Meditation ¹.

After basking in a round of flattery by Lu Yong-guang, the white-clothed youth abruptly thought of something and asked nervously, “You’ve eliminated all signs, right? You’re sure no one will be able to trace us back here?”

Lu Yong-guang replied proudly, “Don’t worry, Brother Xi, I’ve handled everything. Even if the number one hacker, Lin Zhidong, gets involved, he won’t be able to trace us anytime soon.” That said, he laughed and said, “That New Cadet Regiment has also shot themselves in the foot. After offending Leiting, you think Lin Zhidong will help them? Definitely not, and as for the others ... I believe no one will be able to crack my methods.”

Hearing these words of Lu Yong-guang, the white-uniformed youth relaxed instantly and began to laugh. His doubts were gone — now, as long as he was given enough time, he would definitely be able to train that beauty well, so that the other would submit to him, body and soul, in the end.

The white-clothed youth was so confident because his spiritual mutation was a type of magical hypnotism. He could easily obtain the favour of others with it. If he wanted the other to love him wholeheartedly, as long as he had enough time, he would succeed. Just like with his previous lovers ... this was exactly how he had reeled them in, and even until now, they still thought they had been willing

Chapter 276: Infiltration!

At the Tianji Mecha Clan headquarters, a shadowy figure dropped stealthily into the flower garden. At this particular time, this landing spot was precisely the blind spot of all the patrols and sentries ...

With just one step, Ling Lan slipped into the corridor of the garden. By this time, Little Four had long cooperatively manipulated the surveillance feed of the corridor. In the monitoring room, the monitoring staff could only see images from several seconds ago ...

Ling Lan’s speed was ghost-like, leaving only a streak of shadowed light as she passed through the dim lighting of the corridor. Crossing the corridor, she arrived at the foot of the main building. She did not choose to enter the hall, instead dashing over to a blind spot by a wall.

Then, Ling Lan’s hands could be seen to fly swiftly, aiming for the irregular spots on the wall, using them as makeshift handholds to pull her entire body up, crawling up the wall like a lizard in the blink of an eye to reach the fourth floor. At this moment, Luo Lang was stowed within one of the bedrooms on the fourth floor. She needed to rescue Luo Lang first before she considered anything else.

Moreover, Little Four had already given her a view of the entire headquarters beforehand. Therefore, she knew that the 4th floor, which was where she was climbing to now, had a room with an unlocked

window. She would be able to open it and enter from there, and there was coincidentally no one inside at the moment. This was undoubtedly a good opportunity which could shorten the time Ling Lan needed to infiltrate the base.

Ling Lan came to that window, and lightly pushed it open. In the silent depths of the night, even the lightest creak would be striking. Ling Lan was extremely calm — without any hesitation in her movements, she opened the window just wide enough for her body and slipped into the room.

Right outside the room was the main corridor — Little Four was already displaying the image of the corridor outside for Ling Lan, notifying her of the closest patrol. They were still a distance away, so Ling Lan did not hesitate to open the door, just as if she were still in her own villa. She walked out blatantly into the corridor, without any bit of the sort of wariness and care one should have when breaking and entering into someone else's home.

Ling Lan had faith in Little Four's judgment, and Ling Lan did not have the time to spare anyway, because Little Four had told Ling Lan that someone with nefarious intentions against Luo Lang was already heading towards the bedroom Luo Lang was in. She needed to hurry.

After travelling for a distance, Little Four suddenly warned her that there were two patrollers approaching from around the corner.

With a fleeting step, Ling Lan was at the corner. Several nimble steps up the wall later, she had climbed up to the crossbeam, and laid herself flat over it. If someone came up from behind Ling Lan, Ling Lan's figure would be clearly exposed to the eye, but from the opposing direction, Ling Lan's body was entirely obscured by the crossbeam. It would be impossible for the incoming patrollers to discover her presence behind the beam ...

Perhaps the patrollers too did not expect that the impregnable headquarters ¹in their eyes would actually be infiltrated by an enemy, who had already gotten to the 4th floor. Mind you, security was strict on all floors below this one, so any intruder would typically not be able to get past the 2nd floor. Thus, they were somewhat slack, casually breezing past the crossbeam, never once considering to even lift their heads to look up ² ...

Ling Lan waited for the two men to pass below her, then quietly dropped back down to the ground. In order to eliminate any latent problems, her palms whipped down like knives, chopping onto the napes of the two men.

The two men toppled as the chops landed, and Ling Lan grabbed hold of a man with each hand. She then dragged them to the next equally empty room and tossed them into it.

These were all just small fry, so Ling Lan did not intend to be too harsh on them. In the internal energy she had used during the hand chops, she had only included a little bit of her innate talent's special power. If the other did not manage to clear out that bit of special power, their progress would be greatly impeded — this was Ling Lan's punishment for their role as accomplices to the villain ³ .

After tossing them into the room, the remaining matters would be Little Four's responsibility. Little Four would lock the doors, and just as when they had been on the spaceship, before the morn of the next day, the men's communicators would be non-functional. Before Ling Lan had completely vented her rage, Little Four would ensure the men had no chance of contacting the outside world.

After settling the two men, Ling Lan swiftly hastened towards her destination. Along the way, with Little Four's advanced warnings, in order to avoid detection by the enemy, Ling Lan employed sneak attacks to bring down all enemies in her path before they could notice her.

Meanwhile, in the monitoring room, as Little Four had used a constant loop of false images to replace the video feed, those patrollers taken down by Ling Lan still appeared to be patrolling along their designated routes, again and again ...

The white-uniformed youth finally felt the pain in his head leave him, his spiritual power recovering to his normal levels. He walked out excitedly from the infirmary in the base, prepared to properly enjoy the spoils of victory he had gained today. Thinking of that beauty finally capitulating to pleasure under his body, his heart felt hot; it was as if he had not felt this excited in a long time.

The white-uniformed youth was the dux of the starship command specialization, named Shi Mingyi⁴. He was one of the vice regiment commanders of the Tianji Mecha Clan. Technically, he was unqualified to take on a vice regiment commander role based on his abilities, but he just so happened to have a batch of faithfully loyal subordinates, one of whom was even the best mecha expert in the clan beneath the regiment commander. Due to that subordinate's emphatic support, Shi Mingyi had become a vice regiment commander of Tianji last year.

Since shouldering the role of vice regiment commander, Shi Mingyi had used the resources of the Tianji Mecha Clan quite often to seek out information on all the fair-faced youths in the various specializations. Of course, he was cunning about it — those with substantial family backgrounds, he would not dare to touch; he typically went after those from common stock, or those students without very significant backgrounds. One after another over the past year, there had already been five or six youths who had fallen into his wicked hands. And now, these victims had all become team members in his fold, holding him in extraordinary love and admiration, loyal to a fault.

It was also precisely for this reason that Shi Mingyi's fondness for men had not yet been exposed. Adept at deception, he used his trump card to gather a great deal of good favour among the regular cadets, setting himself up as a sunny, righteous, and honest person. He was the consummate good student in the instructors' eyes, the dux who the students respected, the just vice regiment commander of the Tianji Mecha Clan ...

Moreover, Shi Mingyi knew very well where the secret of his success laid — apart from himself, no one else knew that his spiritual mutation was Hypnotism. No one other than his closest confidantes knew he liked men. On the outside, he buried this proclivity of his deeply. Even though all types of gorgeous young men were gathered by his side, due to his own handsome appearance, he fit in well enough that no one had ever thought anything of it ...

As a vice regiment commander, Shi Mingyi had a personal lounge within headquarters, at the end of the 4th floor. Even though it was just a small bedroom of about 20 square metres, it was furnished lavishly, with the entire floor covered in shag carpeting.

When one opened the door and entered the room, the first thing one would see would be a grand old-fashioned wooden armchair directly facing the doorway. However, this armchair was very strange, taller

than regular chairs by 30 to 40 centimetres, almost at the height of a standard table. Who knows whether it was truly meant for sitting on or was just a decoration. Behind the armchair was a thick cloth curtain, hiding the scene deeper into the room from view.

Shi Mingyi cast a careful glance out the doorway, confirming that there was indeed no one there before softly shutting the door behind him. After that, he deadbolted the door and set a protective passcode, assuring that other than himself, no one else would be able to enter his room.

That done, he stepped past the armchair and parted the curtain. Inside, there was only a single circular waterbed, with chains as thick as one's thumb draping down from it on all sides, culminating in a strange aesthetic. Additionally, on the ceiling, a flat and sparkling mirror was embedded, clearly reflecting everything on the bed.

A youth in a green uniform was lying on the bed. On his delicate face, his eyebrows were knitted, his eyes closed tightly. It looked like he was deeply unconscious, but perhaps because there was some discomfort affecting his body, his complexion was pale, causing him to look even more pitiful and fragile. The sight of him almost caused Shi Mingyi to be consumed by the flames of lust — he wished desperately that he could morph into a ravenous wolf and gobble up this delectable youth instantly.

This lovely youth on the bed was precisely the one Ling Lan had spent so much time and effort to find, Luo Lang.

Besides the large bed, there was nothing else that could be seen within the room. The walls on all four sides were covered by thick, floor-length curtains.

Shi Mingyi gulped, slowly walking over to sit on the edge of the bed. He gently stroked that exquisite face of Luo Lang, so enchanted that he almost did not want to stop.

His fingers slid down slowly from Luo Lang's face to his neck, and then slowly unfastened the buttons on Luo Lang's uniform. He tugged open the top of the uniform forcefully, revealing the white shirt inside it, along with a faint trace of soft white skin.

Right then, Shi Mingyi could hold back no longer — he ripped apart the white shirt impatiently, and with a tearing sound, the rest of the buttons were sent flying, and Luo Lang's lovely body was exposed just like that before Shi Mingyi. The two pretty pink nubs on Luo Lang's chest almost made Shi Mingyi salivate ...

"Exquisite, truly exquisite ... who would have expected such an exquisite beauty to appear in the First Men's Military Academy? All those I have sampled before were just trash!" exclaimed Shi Mingyi, his fingers trailing down Luo Lang's chest. He revelled in the sensation he was receiving from his hand, feeling how smooth and warm the other's skin was, how supple ...

Perhaps these touches made Luo Lang uncomfortable, for his brow creased even more noticeably. However, the effects of the anaesthetic were too strong; he still laid there unmoving.

Shi Mingyi had initially planned to properly savour the other, but seeing the other unresponsive like a dead fish, he felt somewhat dissatisfied. After some thought, he tugged over a chain hanging by the head of the bed, and looped it around Luo Lang's left hand, securing it. Next, he pulled yet another chain from the other side and secured Luo Lang's right hand as well.

Then, he pressed a button at the head of the bed, and the curtain on his left-hand side was pulled aside to reveal a cabinet. Inside the cabinet were countless sex toys, and even some SM equipment ⁵, and there was of course several high-tech safes installed within it as well.

Shi Mingyi pressed a finger onto the screen on one of the safes, and the initially dark screen lit up to display a numbered keypad. Shi Mingyi deftly keyed in a string of numbers, and with a dull click, the door of the safe sprang open. There was a considerable number of medical agents inside it, as well as several one-use syringes.

Shi Mingyi removed two tubes of agent from the safe, and then took out a one-use syringe set. He filled the syringe with one of the agents, walked over to Luo Lang, and injected its contents into Luo Lang's arm. This was closely followed by the next tube of agent, which he also injected into Luo Lang's arm.

After doing all this, Shi Mingyi discarded the one-use syringe set into the rubbish bin. He then shut the safe, returned to the bed, and pressed another button. The curtains drew close once more, restoring the room to its original state.

Chapter 277: How Dare You!

Very quickly, Luo Lang moaned and opened his eyes, and saw the white-uniformed youth beaming at him. Luo Lang's expression changed drastically, for he knew now that he had not managed to escape in the end and had been abducted by the other.

He struggled, then heard the clinking noises coming from above his head. Looking up, Luo Lang saw his hands bound in metal chains, and as the anaesthetic had not completely worn off yet, he still felt weak and powerless.

"Who are you? Which organisation are you from? Why did you capture me?" Luo Lang quickly calmed himself down and spoke up to ask. His voice was rather hoarse and weak — in Shi Mingyi's ears, it naturally had a particular flavour of enticement.

"Shi Mingyi, 4th year dux of the starship command specialization and vice regiment commander of the Tianji Mecha Clan. And as for why I captured you?" Shi Mingyi smiled and reached out to stroke a hand over Luo Lang's face, expression besotted as he said, "That's because I like you ..."

Luo Lang tried to evade Shi Mingyi's fingers in revulsion, but was unsuccessful. And then Shi Mingyi's words registered, causing him to freeze for a moment, but he quickly understood and yelled in rage, "Let go of me, you pervert!"

"A pervert, is it? If I must become a pervert to like you, I will willingly succumb to this depravity!" Shi Mingyi's face shifted to reveal a bitter smile. This expression startled Luo Lang, but logic quickly reasserted itself as he scolded, "Of course you're a pervert, or else how could you do something like abduction?"

Shi Mingyi's body jerked back as he pressed a hand to his forehead. He closed his eyes to rest his mind for a beat before opening them again. Right then, his initial seemingly earnest smile was nowhere to be seen ... there was only darkness and a trace of ruthlessness left on his face. "Still not working? Who could have expected that your spiritual power is this strong, actually repelling me once more, reflecting

damage back at me. Looks like, I need to first let you taste the all-consuming pleasure of the body before you'll be willing to submit to me."

That said, he began to take off his clothes. Luo Lang's irises contracted, and his pearl-white teeth bit down harshly on his own lips. He was trying to use pain to chase away the effects of the anaesthetic, desperately circulating the Qi-Jin in his body, hoping that he would be able to recover enough Qi-Jin for a final suicide attack.

Yes. Luo Lang was prepared to die with his enemy in his attempt; he would not suffer this humiliation ...

Within the yawning emptiness in his body, Luo Lang suddenly sensed the presence of internal energy again. Pleasant surprise flashed through Luo Lang's eyes, but very quickly, his expression changed once more, the initial paleness of his face being replaced by a rosy flush.

"Haha, you're feeling it now, right? This is some ultra-potent aphrodisiac. It will make you beg me to give it to you again and again, turning you into a complete slut ..." Shi Mingyi began laughing gleefully at the sight.

He was just about to rip off the clothes on the lower half of Luo Lang's body when a frigid aura enveloped the entire room ...

"How dare you!" A glacial voice rang out by Shi Mingyi's ear, instantly dousing Shi Mingyi's blazing fires of lust with a deluge of ice-cold water, cooling him down rapidly.

Meanwhile, on the bed ... Luo Lang, who had been planning to kill himself along with his captor, had relieved joy shining from his eyes. His line of sight had coincidentally shifted to look up at the mirror on the ceiling, and from its reflection, he could see a stony and stately figure standing at the curtain by the door — it was Ling Lan!

"Boss ..." Luo Lang cried out emotionally. His eyes turned red uncontrollably, as his heart full of rage, sorrow and despair instantly melted into a pool of tender emotions. So this was Boss, his boss that deserved his loyalty and trust ... he had come at this most critical moment to save him.

Shi Mingyi whipped his head around in shock, and seeing that familiar figure before his eyes, his expression shifted as he called out, "Ling Lan! It's you ..." He reflexively looked towards the area behind Ling Lan. He had clearly set a passcode — didn't Lu Yong-guang say before that no one would be able to crack the lock, and would only be able to break down the door by force to enter? How then had the other snuck in without a sound? Without him sensing anything at all?

"You've made me angry ... you, have to pay the price for your transgressions!" Ling Lan's face was a sheet of ice, for she had seen Luo Lang's current state. The killing intent in her heart waxed thicker. The blood-soaked killing intent concealed deep within her body all this while abruptly exploded out into the room, instantly dominating the entire space.

Qi Long, Luo Lang and the other little companions who had grown up alongside Ling Lan held special places in Ling Lan's heart. Ling Lan took care of them like her own younger brothers — in fact, in Ling Lan's heart, they were even like sons to her — the emotions she invested in them were beyond the norm.

Ling Lan's killing intent was extremely dense now, but she controlled it skilfully, not allowing any bit to leak out of the room. As the main target of the killing intent, Shi Mingyi instantly felt himself plunged into a crimson world. Countless knives of light and swords of shadow hurtled towards him — he felt himself being pierced by these countless phantom blades, but also felt his limbs being sliced off bit by bit, his gut dissected, and his heart torn out, but he could not die. He watched helplessly as his body, his innards, were finally reduced to a puddle of bloody water, which then vanished without leaving a trace.

This was not only physical agony — it was also a spiritual torment. There was a moment where he even wanted to end his life by biting his tongue off, unwilling to bear this endless suffering any longer ¹ ...

In reality, he had really bitten his tongue. However, perhaps because he did not have enough strength, or perhaps he did not really want to die in his subconscious mind, for although he had bitten his tongue, he had only wounded it and not severed it completely. Still, this allowed him to stumble onto an escape by chance — the intense pain shook him out of the illusion of hellish torment, to return to reality.

However, even so, the power which had crashed onto him from the start had still caused internal injury to Shi Mingyi. The moment he regained awareness, a lance of blood spurted from his mouth, and his entire body wavered on his feet.

At this time, Shi Mingyi could already tell that he was no match at all for Ling Lan. He had some understanding with regards to force of presence. He knew that it was one of the abilities one gained in the late stages of Qi-Jin. He had studied it and formed it himself — it would push a crushing pressure onto the intended target, effectively subduing them. He had never before encountered such a formidable embodiment of presence however. Its power was not only presented on a physical plane, but also on a spiritual one. If he had not stumbled onto a way out of its effect by chance, he might have been trapped in its endless torments until he died.

Shi Mingyi knew that he had misstepped this time. Who knew that the seemingly easily bulliable Luo Lang actually had such a powerful boss behind him? Shi Mingyi did not want to die, so he decided to use his last resort ...

“Boss Ling, I think this is a misunderstanding.” Shi Mingyi tolerated the pain in his mouth, forcing a stiff smile onto his lips.

Ling Lan quirked a brow at these words. “Oh?” She had sensed a strange tendril of spiritual power trying to invade her spiritual domain.

This should be a type of spiritual attack, but it was not one Ling Lan was familiar with. It did not cause any discomfort, and seemed exceedingly harmless. Of course, Ling Lan would not permit any strange spiritual power to just invade into her spiritual domain. With a swift spiritual shake, she crushed this cord of spiritual power.

Sure enough, the moment Ling Lan destroyed this cord of spiritual power, Shi Mingyi's body jerked, his already pale face becoming even paler, losing all trace of blood. She even saw the other's eyebrows lock tightly together, the muscles on his face spasming. It looked like the rebound force had been extremely powerful — the other had not been able to bear it without reacting.

“Little Four, what spiritual power is this?” Ling Lan was curious, so she asked Little Four within the mindscape.

Little Four immediately answered, “This is a type of mid-level awakened innate talent, Mesmerise!”

Sensing Ling Lan’s confusion, he explained, “It’s actually what you call ‘hypnotism’ in your world. With this ability, a person can beguile another to change how they view them ...” Little Four silently wiped off the cold sweat from his forehead — luckily, he still had nine instructors to be his solid backup, otherwise he would not have been able to elaborate anything on this kind of mysterious awakened innate talent ...

Ling Lan’s initially tepid face became frigid once more — this type of ability in the hands of such a scumbag ... how many innocent people had suffered at his hands? In an instant, Ling Lan decided to rid the other of this innate talent.

Shi Mingyi found that his Hypnotism had backfired on him, and felt a surge of despair. He knew now that the other was most likely someone with a mental spiritual mutation, able to defend against this ability of his, just like Luo Lang. He was not content to just give up and be captured, so when he saw Ling Lan appear to be thinking about something, he leapt forwards with a spring of his right foot, pouncing towards Luo Lang on the bed, planning to grab Luo Lang to use as a hostage ...

As long as Luo Lang was in his hands and the opponent became afraid to act, it would give him the chance to sound the alarm in Tianji’s headquarters and he would be able to live! Yes, he did not want to die ... because he had seen the boundless killing intent within the opponent’s eyes!

“You’re asking for it!”

Seeing Shi Mingyi try to grab Luo Lang in a final desperate bid for survival, Ling Lan growled furiously.

Following this sound, Shi Mingyi’s darting body crashed onto the ground. A powerful spiritual charge had been sent straight at his brain — he only felt his brain being struck harshly, and then there was a soft ‘splat’ as if his brain had split open, and he fell unconscious.

Ling Lan’s figure shifted and she was instantly by Luo Lang’s side. She asked, “Luo Lang, how do you feel?”

“I’m okay, Boss! I just feel weak.” Despite the red flush suffusing Luo Lang’s face — the aphrodisiac in his body already beginning to show effect — because it was still in the early stages, he could still bear it. He was extremely ashamed about how he had been captured so easily, finally even needing to trouble Boss Lan to come save him.

“Anaesthetic?” Ling Lan scanned Luo Lang’s body, and found that the anaesthetic had already mostly run its course. As long as they waited patiently, Luo Lang would return to normal, but there was still another extremely strange agent within Luo Lang’s body.

“What is this?” Ling Lan was rather puzzled.

“Boss, Luo Lang has been dosed with an aphrodisiac.” Little Four had described Luo Lang’s condition to the instructors of the learning space. When he had told Instructor Number Nine, she had kicked him right out of her space, while Instructor Number Five had only reacted with a sleazy and lecherous smile. Fortunately, Instructor Number Four had taken pity on him and secretly told him the answer ... but, what was this thing called an aphrodisiac? Little Four decided to rifle through his databases to find out.

“What?! Aphrodisiac?!” The veins on Ling Lan’s head popped out in anger. She swept a freezing gaze at the unconscious Shi Mingyi lying on the ground, and unhesitatingly lifted a foot to stomp heavily on the other’s unprotected back. She ground her heel mercilessly into his back for a moment, and the cracking sounds of bones breaking could be heard. Shi Mingyi’s backbone had been pulverized by Ling Lan ² .

“Is there an antidote? Little Four, search the scene.” Ling Lan ordered as she broke the chains holding down the wounded Luo Lang.

Chapter 278: Little Four Takes Action!

Little Four saw many buttons at the head of the bed and so infiltrated into the system. Very soon, he had found that safe of Shi Mingyi’s which contained so many agents. Opening it, he discovered that aside from the antidote for the anaesthetic, the other agents were all myriad types of arousal-enhancing agents, which were collectively known as aphrodisiacs.

Little Four had already found the description of aphrodisiacs in his database. With a troubled expression, he said in the mindspace, *“Boss, it seems like there are no antidotes for aphrodisiacs. The only antidote is to find him a woman ... but this whole academy is all boys, you are the only girl.”*

Seeing Ling Lan sweep a fierce glare in his direction, Little Four quickly ducked his head and muttered at his fingers, *“Of course, if that’s really out of the question, it’s also fine to find a man for him ...”* According to the database, there were cases where men helped men to clear out the aphrodisiac, although, Little Four really did not understand why the antidote had to involve males and females ... the innocent Little Four still did not really understand what was meant by the carnal pleasures of love.

“You can just stop giving those rotten ideas of yours,” huffed Ling Lan in exasperation.

Right then, Luo Lang struggled to sit up, and tolerating the discomfort of his body, he said to Ling Lan, “Boss, I’m fine.” Luo Lang did not want to hold his boss back at this dangerous moment.

Ling Lan threw a glance at Luo Lang’s trembling legs — in this state, could he really follow her to charge out of Tianji headquarters? Ling Lan did not think Luo Lang could really do it.

Perhaps sensing Ling Lan’s distrust, Luo Lang bit gently at his lower lip, face determined as he said, “Boss, believe me, I can do it!” He, Luo Lang, would not lose to anaesthetic, and he also would not lose to this ridiculous aphrodisiac ...

Luo Lang’s determination made Ling Lan sigh internally. Although Luo Lang looked like the most delicate one among all her companions, the stubbornness and aggression in his bones were no less than Qi Long’s — it could be said that the other members of the team were a bracket weaker than him in this respect. Ling Lan believed that if she really permitted Luo Lang to follow behind her, even if he pushed himself till he was littered with injuries, Luo Lang would still stubbornly keep pace behind her as long as he remained conscious. What a little fellow who tugged at one’s heartstrings ...

Ling Lan could only nod and say, “Understood!”

Ling Lan’s reply made a smile bloom on Luo Lang’s face — Boss was still willing to believe in him ...

Right at that moment, Ling Lan darted forwards, and before Luo Lang could react, she had already pinched the back of Luo Lang's neck forcefully. With a trace of incomprehension in his eyes, Luo Lang fell unconscious.

Ling Lan's left arm reached out and tugged, pulling Luo Lang easily into her embrace, her lips parted to say softly, "Silly little fellow, isn't it much more convenient if I carry you?" ¹

"Ah~ah~ah~ah~ah~! Boss, you actually gave away your first virgin hug to this brat Luo Lang!" Little Four went utterly berserk at this sight. I mean, this was Boss Lan's first hug! He had originally set it so that he, Little Four, would be the one to receive it ... why had this brat taken it away now? At this moment, filled with envy-jealousy-hate, Little Four was unbelievably resentful at how backward the technology of this world was, actually lacking any physical constructs which an intelligent bio-entity could inhabit and use. Otherwise, he would long have taken Boss's first hug for himself.

"Shut your mouth. My first hug has long ago been given to Mum ..." Little Four's words rendered Ling Lan somewhat speechless. Wasn't her mum the first to hug her right after she was born? It should be ... right? Ling Lan was a little uncertain.

"It doesn't count for the same gender. It must be for the opposite sex. The opposite sex, you hear me? And also, it must be you, Boss, who initiates the hug." Little Four objected stubbornly, insisting that Mummy Lan's hugs did not count.

"Then, it still would not be Luo Lang. My first hug has already been taken by Dad," Ling Lan calmly revealed the truth to Little Four. The thing he was obsessing over had long been given out long ago.

Little Four was stunned. *"How come I didn't know about this?"*

"At that time, you were already completely bowled over by Dad ... you could see nothing else but him," said Ling Lan disdainfully. Every time Little Four saw Ling Xiao, he would become a crazy fan, with not one whit of the level-headedness so-called intelligent bio-entities should have. Ling Lan once again confirmed that this Little Four was definitely a factory reject.

Ling Lan even suspected that Little Four had only been able to appear in the primitive Earth of her previous life because the person who had created Little Four had not been able to accept this flawed product. Based on the 'out of sight, out of mind' mantra, had that person thrown Little Four into a primitive dimension for him to live and die as fate decreed?

Ling Lan felt that this hypothesis was very reasonable — when Little Four sensed Ling Lan's thoughts, he was sent spiralling into a tantrum. He vehemently objected to this preposterous theory, insisting that he, Little Four, was a special intelligence entity that was truly one of a kind among the celestial and mortal realm. He hoped that Ling Lan would properly cherish him, this omnipotent follower ...

Of course, Ling Lan had already gotten used to this behaviour of Little Four's — when she was younger, she would still end up resorting to 'domestic violence' out of sheer aggravation, but now, she had become extremely indifferent to it, calm and unruffled in the face of it. Ling Lan felt that Little Four deserved a lot of credit for her slackface-fu ² being so strong; without his antics day after day, year after year, helping her to train up her heart and tolerance, she would not have been able to maintain it so well.

Just like this, under Little Four's raging frenzy, Ling Lan hefted Luo Lang over her shoulder. As she left, she did not forget to stomp mightily several times over Shi Mingyi's body. Ling Lan was not purely venting her rage — these few stomps carried her unique Qi-Jin. It could be said that without some peerless expert's help in driving out this energy from the other's body, even if Shi Mingyi's shattered bones were treated and healed, he would not be able to stand up again.

When Ling Lan left Shi Mingyi's room, Little Four subsided from his initial frenzied state into extreme calmness. Eyes bright, he asked, *"Boss, can I act now?"*

They had planned things this way from the start — after they had rescued Luo Lang, all the surveillance equipment within Tianji's headquarters, along with the exclusive mainframe belonging to Tianji headquarters, would be open game for Little Four. He could play with them however he liked — though of course, the condition being that whatever he did would not be traced back to the New Cadet Regiment ...

"Yup, and don't forget to find out who were those involved in Luo Lang's kidnapping." Ling Lan's lips quirked up slightly, her eyes endlessly cold, *"Luo Lang's abduction never happened. You know what to do."*

"Kill them all?" Little Four was thrilled by these words — Ling Lan had always forbidden him from acting overtly in the virtual world; he had actually felt very constrained. Mind you, his greatest talents laid in the virtual world, where he could determine whether everyone lived or died ...

"No, there's no need for that. Those scum are not worthy for my Little Four to commit this crime. You only need to crush their spiritual selves and that'll do ..." Ling Lan said to Little Four within the mindspace as she stroked his head tenderly, though the words she spouted were exceedingly vicious. Little Four might not understand yet, but at times, living was a fate worse than death!

"Got it, Boss, leave it to me ..." Little Four cast down these words and then went off to complete his task and 'kill' some people.

Ling Lan stared at the spot in the mindspace where Little Four had disappeared. Her emotions were a complicated jumble ... she did not know whether this decision of hers was too cruel. After all, destroying another's spiritual self was equal to turning the other into an idiot. Shi Mingyi's brain-space had been crushed by her, so it was confirmed that he would be a handicapped idiot when he woke up again. She did not regret this, even thinking that leaving him with his life was already a mercy. However, those other people she had set Little Four after were only accomplices. Other than participating in Luo Lang's abduction, they had not done too many bad things ...

At this time, Ling Lan could feel Luo Lang's body on her shoulder becoming hotter and hotter, and that trace of compassion and hesitance in her heart vanished. Indeed, those people might have only been accomplices, but if not for them, would Shi Mingyi alone have been able to capture Luo Lang? If Luo Lang was destroyed by this ...

At this thought, Ling Lan could not stop herself from slamming a fist into a wall. Her hidden energy flowed from her hand into the wall, spreading out into the surrounding area, creating countless cracks inside the wall. As Ling Lan's strength was released in an extremely skilful manner, there was not a trace of the internal damage on the surface of the wall.

The coldness in Ling Lan's eyes grew thicker; she decided she would be true to her heart. She could not bear the outcome of losing Luo Lang, and so could not find it within herself to forgive those people. Therefore, they needed to pay the price for this current situation.

Those who harmed her brothers, she would make them pay the price in blood. If not, how could she face those comrades of hers who trusted her and loved her? For this reason, even if her hands became stained with blood and sin, she was willing to sully them.

Right then, in the initially quiet monitoring room of Tianji headquarters, a shocked cry rang out suddenly, "What happened? Why is my screen here black?"

The staff on-duty within headquarters discovered the strange state of his monitoring channel, and instantly leapt up in shock.

"Me too over here. The screen's black too!" Another monitor shouted as well.

"I can't see anything here now either!" The monitoring room was instantly in a state of panic.

"Don't panic, check the mainframe system immediately," ordered the on-duty leader calmly.

Following this order, everyone in the room began to move. They all attempted their own methods to try and connect with the mainframe system, but found to their dismay that nothing worked. They just could not contact the mainframe system — it was as if the mainframe had been sealed off.

"Leader, I have no response here!" One team member shouted out, his face drenched with sweat.

"Me too, over here, there's no way in!" Another team member lowered his hands in frustration. No matter how many times he tried to connect to the mainframe, the signals he sent were like rocks sinking into the ocean.

"Not good, it's a hacker attack. Cut all connections with the mainframe. Activate the secondary A.I. system." The leader seemed to come to some conclusion, his face paling drastically. He hurriedly instructed his team members to cut off all headquarters' terminal connections with the mainframe which had been invaded. After that, he would be able to activate the secondary A.I. to take over all the surveillance systems and safety measures within headquarters.

"Yes, Leader!" The leader's orders rallied the team members' spirits. It was true that they had not run out of options yet — they still had the backup secondary A.I. system. As long as they could hold out for the duration of time needed for it to activate, they would be able to guarantee that Tianji headquarters remained properly safeguarded.

However, after they had manually cut off the mainframe's electrical supply and activated the secondary A.I., they found that the situation remained unchanged. All of the equipment were still in a frozen state, unable to be used ...

"Leader, what now?" One of the team members looked to be younger than the rest, and he actually began to sob uncontrollably. If any great incident occurred while their systems were incapacitated, the consequences of failure would be too much for all of them to bear.

“Relying on us alone will not be enough. Quickly, go gather all the hacker members in the clan and get them to come here to the monitoring room ...” At this time, the team leader could no longer remain calm. Sweat poured from his forehead, dripping off it like rain.

Chapter 279: Domain Master?

“Yes, Leader!” The team members quickly turned on their respective communicators, thinking to contact the hackers in their Tianji Mecha Clan. However, they soon found that their communicators were all dead.

“The communicators cannot make external contact ...” This realisation made the faces of all the team members change drastically. They, who had initially already calmed down after receiving their leader’s orders, began to panic and lose control of themselves again, completely at a loss on what they should do.

This was not something any ordinary hacker could do — mind you, taking control of a student’s personal communicator was not that simple. The hacker would need to break through the defences of the S-tier mainframe of the military academy and obtain all its administrative rights; only then would they be able to control the communicators of the cadets. Could it be that the one attacking Tianji headquarters was a god-class hacker?

“How could this be?” The team leader jumped up in fright at his team members’ words. He began examining his communicator in disbelief, and found that it was truly as his team members had said — his communicator was completely unresponsive.

“No. This type of ability, even if it were the number one hacker of our school, Leiting’s Lin Zhidong, he would not be able to do this ... could it be that this attack is from the outside?” The team leader’s face went dark at this thought. No matter how powerful an attack was from inside the school, it was still just inside the school — there would be no real harm to the military academy’s mainframe. However, if the attack was an external one, their school would be in danger!

He said anxiously, “You all continue trying to login to the mainframe, I’ll go find the instructors ...” Such a formidable hacker attack — only the instructors would have the power to save them.

That said, the team leader rushed out of the monitoring room, prepared to go find the instructors of the hacker specialization and report what was happening here. If his guess was right, this attack was very likely a sinister plot of an outside faction targeted at the military academy — their Tianji was just unluckily the spot they chose to infiltrate from.

Meanwhile, at this time, with Luo Lang over her shoulder, Ling Lan was swiftly making her way across the 4th floor corridors. Every 20 to 30 metres, Ling Lan would smack a palm at the wall. This action seemed extremely casual, and did not appear from the outside to cause any damage to the wall.

However, Ling Lan herself knew that the spots where she had chosen to hit were all the main structural points of support of this building. When she had come, she and Little Four had already discussed beforehand that Little Four would be in charge of destroying all the surveillance facilities here, while she would demolish the entire building. She wanted the Tianji Mecha Clan to fall from their perch in the

clouds into a pit of dust and ashes. Once they were no longer the lofty 2nd faction of the school, they would no longer have the wherewithal to commit any more dirty criminal acts.

Besides, Little Four had already given Ling Lan the blueprints of this building before she had even entered it. On the map, he had even thoughtfully provided several spots which were most appropriate for Ling Lan to attack.

After finishing with the 4th floor, Ling Lan immediately chose to go downstairs. After ambushing several patrolmen in the stairwell who were slacking off with a cigarette break, she successfully came to the second floor, and then continued with her demolition work.

Right then, Little Four suddenly began to shout excitedly, *“Boss, I’ve found Lu Yong-guang!”*

After Little Four had destroyed the mainframe of the Tianji headquarters and all the surveillance equipment, he had begun searching for those people who had helped Shi Mingyi abduct Luo Lang, and very quickly, he had found that the biggest culprit was Lu Yong-guang. If he had not used the treatment centre to send a fake message to Luo Lang, Luo Lang would not have gone there, and what happened next would never have happened.

“Destroy him!” Ling Lan replied clinically. Having decided on her personal code of honour, Ling Lan’s way of acting became even more cold and resolute.

“Roger that, Boss!” answered Little Four excitedly. He could finally show off his amazing skills to his boss.

The initially cute steamed bun-face of Little Four stretched as he opened his mouth wide. Two sharp fangs began to grow out from within it, and the area around his marble-round eyes began to turn bruised and mottled as his face became paler and paler, in stark contrast to his lips which were as vibrantly crimson as fresh blood.

‘Thwack!’ A strong finger-flick sent Little Four’s gruesome head bending back. Face dark, Ling Lan said, *“What the hell are you doing? Who are you trying to scare with this demonic appearance?”* Little Four appearing with such a demonic aura without any warning ... no matter how composed Ling Lan was, she could not help a shudder from coursing through her heart. D*mnit, since she was a kid, she had never liked watching horror films.

Little Four was flicked back to his original form by Ling Lan — seeing Ling Lan’s angry expression, Little Four quickly covered his head with his arms and scurried away, er, no, went off to carry out his task of ‘killing people’ ...

Right then, Li Lanfeng, who was in the military academy’s virtual world revising his training courses, suddenly felt an extremely familiar yet horrifying energy explode within the virtual world. His spectre energy was blaring violent warnings at him, and had automatically activated itself to form a powerful defensive shield.

“This is spectre energy. How is this possible?” Li Lanfeng stared in the direction of where the explosion originated from, his face filled with disbelief. He knew very well that this energy had come from within

the military academy, otherwise he would not have sensed it so acutely. This energy was something only spectres could sense — could it be that there was another spectre hidden within the military academy?

An extremely cold and unfeeling face emerged in Li Lanfeng's mind ... could it be him? Only he had given Li Lanfeng the vibe that he could be kin, but Li Lanfeng just could not be sure. This explosion of energy — did it prove Ling Lan was also a spectre like him?

Could that person be his companion? At this thought, Li Lanfeng's heart pounded, so hard that it almost seemed as if it would leap out of his throat. His heart, which had been so lonely all this time, could not help but yearn for this, just like when he had encountered that rabbit seven years ago.

Lu Yong-guang, who was in the virtual world searching for information, was currently ecstatic. He had obtained the 2nd-tier warrant of vice regiment commander Shi ¹ as he had wanted. To get this, he had done quite a number of questionable things, but the rewards were bountiful. Lu Yong-guang felt that it was very worth it — heaven destroys those who do not look out for themselves, after all.

This 2nd-tier warrant entitled him to withdraw a 2nd-tier resource from the Tianji Contribution Department. The types of 2nd-tier resource were abundant — in order to avoid wastage, he had decided to first do some research in the virtual world, so that he would be able to make the best choice and select a resource most appropriate for himself.

Just as he was reading all the materials he had gathered with relish, he suddenly felt an unprecedented sense of danger rise within his heart. Before he could react, he felt a tremendous force steamrolling over his body ...

Lu Yong-guang felt his consciousness fading, his vision becoming blurry and unfocused, and then everything turned completely black as he finally became fully unconscious.

If there had been anyone by Lu Yong-guang's side, they would have found that Lu Yong-guang's body in the virtual world was slowly disappearing. This was distinctly different from the typical log-off process, where a person would turn into a flash of white light and disappear swiftly from the virtual world. Instead, this was a slow process — his body was disintegrating slowly, becoming countless small particles which drifted into the air, finally becoming a slight breeze within the virtual world to disappear without a trace.

Meanwhile, Lu Yong-guang's real body, lying in a virtual world login device, never ever opened his eyes again. He had become a vegetable. Little Four hated how the other had abetted evil for his own greed, and thus had not shown any mercy. He had crushed the other's awareness completely, not even giving him the chance to live as a simpleton.

As for the other people involved, Little Four still obeyed Ling Lan's directive. He only destroyed part of their brain region, leaving that last thread of awareness. In other words, they would still wake up, but they could only live the rest of their lives as dullards.

When Ling Lan was about to finish her sabotage of the 2nd floor, Little Four returned to Ling Lan's mindspace after completing his tasks.

“Boss, all done!” said Little Four smugly, his hand raised in a victory sign. However, he was still rather regretful that his boss had not been there to witness his great prowess in the virtual world. Little Four secretly decided that if there was a chance in future, he would definitely make sure Boss got to see how he killed and tormented those scumbags in the virtual world with her own eyes. He would let Boss truly understand the meaning behind his status of god of the virtual world.

“Alright, now it’s my turn.” In the blink of an eye, Ling Lan returned to the central area of the 2nd floor. She raised one hand and shouted, “Domain, activate!” ²

A half step to Domain was enough to allow her to activate her Domain for a few seconds. Although it might be ineffective in neutralizing opponents due to how briefly it could be used, it was more than enough to demolish this building which had already been structurally weakened by her ...

Right then, the entire space about 10 metres around Ling Lan had become her Domain, and then Ling Lan could be heard to roar, “Explode!”

Violent explosions answered her cry, beginning from the Domain area furthest from Ling Lan. Since the person controlling the Domain was Ling Lan, in order to guarantee Luo Lang’s safety, Ling Lan had chosen the safest sequence of explosion.

Following the activation of the first explosion, Ling Lan’s figure was like a streak of light, passing by the corridors of the 2nd floor in a flash.

At the end of the corridor was a window — right before she would crash into it, Ling Lan’s readied palm pushed out forcefully, sending a surge of invisible energy at it, shattering the glass panes of the window into smithereens. And at the moment Ling Lan broke the glass, she leapt down from the second floor with Luo Lang. With a soft touch of her feet on a branch outside, she flew off in a sprint, leaving the Tianji headquarters without a sound, vanishing without a trace in an instant.

Meanwhile, violent explosions began to rock Tianji headquarters. Several minutes later, the entire Tianji building could no longer withstand the destructive power of the explosions, collapsing in on itself, and the people on duty inside could be seen rushing out amidst horrified wails and howls.

Of course, this did not account for those who did not manage to escape in time. Those people were trapped within the ruins, but with the abilities of any student of the First Academy, even if they were trapped under rubble, they would not die.

Ling Lan’s use of the immense power of half step into Domain to blow up the entire building startled several old beasts ³ who had been laying dormant within the school all this time. They charged over to the scene as soon as they could, hiding in the shadows, trying to sense the remaining energy signature to try and see which tough customer had done this ...

“Actually a Domain stage? This energy signature is very unfamiliar. I have never seen it before ... Hells, how did a foreign Domain stage master make their way randomly into the military academy?”

When they confirmed the energy signature was unfamiliar, they could not help but look at one another, all of them equally shocked. They, who had always taken pride in the fact that the military academy’s defences were no weaker than that of the Federation’s military headquarters, felt deeply burned by this scene before their eyes.

“Looks like, the other has already left.” After closely investigating the scene, they did not sense any presence of the Domain master remaining in the area.

Chapter 280: The Aftermath!

These few old beasts were filled with worry, unsure whether this Domain master was still within the school planning his next act of destruction. What bothered them even more was — for what reason had the other come to the military academy to do such a thing? Also, were the defensive capabilities of the military academy really as foolproof as they had imagined? If it were, then how in the world had this Domain master gotten in?

They just could not figure it out, and so one of them said, “Let us return and discuss this with the principal!”

This suggestion was agreed upon by all those present. They might not be overly clear on what was going on in the academy, but the principal of the school should know better. Perhaps he would be able to give them an answer. They left as quietly as they had come — no one else at the scene even knew that some supreme strong masters had been there to investigate the scene.

The emergency assistance system of the military academy was extremely efficient. It had not even been 5 minutes since the building had collapsed when the first batch of relief workers had rushed to the scene, beginning to rescue the students trapped within the rubble ...

Right then, Ling Lan, who was already far from the scene, was sitting with Luo Lang in a hover car, swiftly flying towards the destination that Little Four had set. At the very moment those old beasts had appeared, that was when Ling Lan had gotten into the hover car and left. If she had been later by just one second, she might have been caught by those old beasts. No matter how composed she was normally, Ling Lan could not help but feel cold sweat running down her back at this time.

It was unexpected that this seemingly laid-back academy actually had so many powerful masters holding the fort ¹. Luckily, she had escaped swiftly enough with Little Four’s spot-on assistance — any bit of error, and she would have become a turtle in a jar ².

Of course, Ling Lan had already taken precautions against this right from the start. She was well aware that there would definitely be some super strong masters holding the fort inside the military academy — even the Central Scout Academy already had a few Domain masters in-house, not to mention the First Men’s Military Academy ³. Thus, Ling Lan had made arrangements beforehand, choosing to begin running the moment the first explosion was set off. Reality proved that her decision was correct.

Escaping by the skin of their teeth, Little Four breathed out a great gust of relief. With some remnant fear, he patted his little chest and said, “Gosh, Boss, that was too close! I can’t believe we really managed to escape right under the noses of those Domain masters.”

“It’s all thanks to you, Little Four, for finding the best escape path, as well as getting a hover car here in time.” Ling Lan could not help but pat the hover car they were riding, filled with admiration at Little Four’s accurate calculation ability.

Even if she had run at full strength, without Little Four's flawless coordination in getting this hover car here to cover them, she would not have been able to escape from the other side's powerful sensory range. She would certainly have left some energy vibrations of her own on the roads she travelled, and they would have been the evidence which would expose her.

Praised by Ling Lan, Little Four joyfully clapped his hands to his face and wriggled his bum, taking a good long while to calm down again. Then, he thought of those patrolmen who had been knocked unconscious by his boss, and could not help but ask worriedly, "Boss, will there be any problems with those people you knocked unconscious?" It was not that Little Four cared whether they lived or died — as an intelligent bio-entity, he had no feelings⁴— Little Four was just worried that his boss would be burdened by guilt if anything really happened to them.

"They're fine. The supports of those areas where I stashed them, I did not sabotage. Even though the building collapsed, those few rooms will be alright," replied Ling Lan evenly. Although she had destroyed the entire Tianji building in revenge, she would not let these uninvolved people die in the process. She was someone who clearly discriminated between justice and mercy.

"Boss, you're really awesome! Actually planning so thoroughly." Little Four resolutely began sucking up, fully slipping into the role of a brown-nosing lackey, fanning Ling Lan's mood even higher. It should be mentioned that, the moment Ling Lan succeeded in destroying Tianji's headquarters, her mood had already become all kinds of amazing.

In the meantime, those supreme masters of the school had already had a round of discussion with the principal, but still had not received a satisfactory answer. Very soon, another piece of news arrived — according to the info they had gleaned from those members of the monitoring team of the Tianji Mecha Clan, before the building collapsed, it was suspected that their Tianji headquarters had been hacked by an imperial level hacker.

As more and more people were rescued out, a number of clan members were found trapped in the wreckage who had had parts of their brains ravaged, leaving them as mentally-handicapped people. Among them, one member who was from the hacker specialization was gravely injured; he was reduced to a vegetable instantly. The Military Medical Research Centre determined that there was no possibility of him ever waking up again.

The discovery of these people made the masters speculate — in this incident, had there been a fearsome spectre involved as well? Three people with exceptional skills in their respective realms appearing at the same time at the military academy ... this possibility caused chills to run through those masters.

Where in the world had these people come from? Which faction were they affiliated with? With their capabilities, they could have taken down the mainframe of the military academy if they wanted — why had they chosen to strike out at a group of a small faction within the school?

For a time, all sorts of conspiracy theories ran rampant among the upper ranks of the military academy. There were even some who cast suspicion on the other military academies — they speculated that the other schools were trying to affect their First Academy's results in the great assessment this time, and so had purposefully created this disruption. Those schools must have been trying to make the students

panic and lose all mind to prepare for the exams, thus affecting the final test results and causing the First Academy to lose their secure spot at the top ...

These speculations received quite a significant degree of agreement from those of the upper ranks, leading them to spread their investigation out far and wide, indirectly helping Ling Lan out.

Of course, there were still other possibilities being considered by the upper ranks of the administration, but no one even thought to consider the involvement of any cadets.

In truth, there was indeed no one who would even suggest the possibility, for anyone who voiced this possibility would most probably be laughed out of the room. Oh please, what do you take a Domain master for? And what of an imperial level hacker? How could a mere academy cadet become such a horrific existence? If they really were at that level, would they still need to come study at the military academy? They would have long been snatched away by the various army divisions ...

As for the spectre? That was even more unimaginable. Mind you, anyone who possessed this kind of horrifying ability would have already been taken in as the secret weapon of the federal military since birth — how could they be hiding within the ranks of cadets in the academy?

It had to be said that the upper ranks of the military academy were taking things a little for granted; sometimes, the truth just really happened to be those things that seemed completely preposterous and impossible ...

In order to settle the collapse of the building this time and allow the students to prepare for the upcoming exams without any worries, the administration suppressed the entire incident. They also gave a plausible explanation to those members of the Tianji Mecha Clan who had reported the attack by the imperial level hacker. They said that their investigations showed that this series of errors had occurred because the military academy mainframe had malfunctioned.

As for why the Tianji building collapsed, they used the excuse of the building being too old, paired with a lack of proper maintenance. Although this building had been built about 100 years or so ago, it should be known that the current passing standard of a building was at least 500 years. Using this kind of excuse, did it mean this building was constructed with tofu pulp?

Regardless of whether the cadets believed it or not, or had any complaints, the military academy stuck with their answer. The incident of the Tianji building collapse was quelled just like that.

Subsequently, the Tianji Mecha Clan suffered a great decline due to this incident. For a very long period of time, they did not recover. Meanwhile, the 3rd rank Wuji Mecha Clan and the 4th rank Doha Central Mecha Clan took advantage of the situation to challenge the Tianji Mecha Clan to a mecha clan wagered fight, in order to fight for their ranking ... Lacking capable fighters, and with their morale low, the Tianji Mecha Clan lost both battles, aggrieved. They slid down from their position as 2nd faction straight to the 4th faction, becoming the laughingstock of the military academy for a stint.

Under these circumstances, the Tianji Mecha Clan's Regiment Commander could only swallow this humiliation with silent resentment ... it was a shame that he did not know that the main culprit of Tianji's downfall was Ling Lan of the New Cadet Regiment — if he knew, he would most certainly have used all his strength for revenge.

It should be said that Ling Lan's operation this time was very perfect. She had finished off every single person who had participated in Luo Lang's abduction, but the Tianji Mecha Clan had no clue that the source of all their woes was Luo Lang. She had kept Luo Lang out of this incident perfectly.

All of Ling Lan's detailed planning was to protect Luo Lang. Even though Luo Lang had not suffered any significant damage, she did not wish for her beloved younger brother to be the sideshow of the military academy and be gossiped about. This would place an unneeded burden on Luo Lang's spirit.

Reality proved that Ling Lan's worries were not unfounded. After Shi Mingyi's innate talent had been destroyed by Ling Lan, those 'lovers' of his who had been enthralled began to regain their clarity of mind. When they recalled everything they had done, they were exceedingly appalled and regretful, as well as filled with a burning hatred for Shi Mingyi. If they had all been level-headed people with high tolerance and resilience, perhaps this matter would have blown over in silence. However, as luck would have it, there was a student with an extremely fragile soul among the group of victims. He could not take the humiliation, thinking that his life had been utterly ruined.

That night, carrying an army knife he had created himself, he slipped into the treatment centre when the staff members were unguarded. He then dragged out Shi Mingyi from his healing pod and rapidly slashed and hacked at him till he died before committing suicide. By the time a staff member found them, it was already too late.

This incident raised a great uproar within the military academy, until the investigation team of the school found that student's suicide note and will in his dorm, thus revealing the truth of the matter. Subsequently, spiritual mutation research instructors in the military academy specially investigated Shi Mingyi's spiritual mutation ability and discovered that Shi Mingyi had the ability of hypnosis.

Only now did everyone see the true colours of Shi Mingyi. Because of this incident, the reputation of the Tianji Mecha Clan dropped once again — many members stated that they could not accept that one of their clan's vice regiment commanders was a person like that, and chose to quit the mecha clan. This was yet another nail in the coffin of the Tianji Mecha Clan.

Of course, there were also some residual effects from these events. Among those ex-subordinates of Shi Mingyi, those of them who were good-looking were all labelled as 'brokeback ⁵', causing them to receive all kinds of strange looks within the academy. Other than one extremely tough and resilient cadet who managed to bear it all to graduate successfully, the others all found various reasons to drop out and leave the school. It could be said that these excellent youths with their bright futures had all had their futures ruined by Shi Mingyi ...

On the other hand, due to Ling Lan's conscientious planning, Luo Lang was not caught up in any of this. When Luo Lang regained his awareness, he was extremely grateful, and vowed silently to himself that he would repay Ling Lan's many instances of great kindness by dedicating his future to Boss Lan!

Of course, all of this would occur only after Luo Lang was aware again. Right now, Ling Lan's great mood from demolishing Tianji's building was abruptly dampened, because she found that in the backseat of the hover car, Luo Lang's condition was deteriorating.