

391 AMBITIOUS

At the current moment, there were at least eighty-thousand Practitioners and Metahumans gathered at the Pattaya coastline, as they lined up for ferries as if rushing for a temple fair.

It was only just now that the local tourist industry learned about the Spirit Qi dispersion from the much-anticipated remains. Thus, all available boats were immediately released to the site, but the number was still clearly not enough.

Meanwhile, Lu Shu attempted to carry people in the water for the first time in his life. After being transported underground to the seashore with Anthony's help, Lu Shu took over and tried to lead Lu Xiaoyu across the sea.

Actually, it was not an easy feat for a Class C. But as early as the train incident the other day, Lu Shu had managed to convert his celestial powers into elemental forces for use, making him much more powerful in water.

He created a giant bubble in the sea, lined with reinforced seawater barriers, which allowed Lu Xiaoyu to breathe freely inside.

The water was relatively cloudy closer to the coast, and gradually turned clear only after twenty minutes. Lu Shu shot a glance at Lu Xiaoyu, who appeared ecstatic as if she had just entered an aquarium.

Suddenly, a thought crossed Lu Shu's mind. Slowing down, he said, "Fish. Maybe they eat snacks."

Lu Xiaoyu's face lit up at the idea, and quickly took out a pack of chips from her ring. Holding a handful of ground chips in her palm, she reached out her hand beyond the

bubble, attracting schools of fish around her hands.

In fact, Pattaya's seashore was not a place for pretty fish and corrals. But Lu Xiaoyu was deeply intrigued by the novelty of the fresh experience.

Watching her silently, Lu Shu realized the world owed Lu Xiaoyu a colorful childhood.

After another twenty minutes, Lu Xiaoyu suddenly asked, "Are we lost, Lu Shu?"

"Impossible!" Lu Shu denied without hesitation.

"I'm sure we are. It's supposed to be a thirty minutes' distance and you are not slower than those ferries!"

"From Lu Xiaoyu's distress, +199!"

"It's because I wanted to show you the scenery here!" Lu Shu insisted.

"Good try."

Indeed, Lu Shu lost his way...

He had never been to Koh Chang. Thus, with only a rough glimpse over the map beforehand and an inaccurate sense of direction underwater, he did not even realize that they were sixty degrees off the correct direction...

When they finally arrived at Koh Chang, many tents had already been erected on the island. Currently, the local population of Practitioners was akin to a pyramid, in which

there was a drastic decrease in the number beyond Class D.

At the same time, due to the huge number of Practitioners in total, a more intimate connection was observed between Practitioners and commoners, resulting in an industry particularly working for the former.

It was only meant to be a laughing matter. But now, a slight number of elderly would really fall for such tricks...

No one could stop the world from changing.

"After you are in, don't rush to the core region because the materialization expert Johnson is still unable to show up. Our best choice is to split up and search for resources in the peripheral area. We know there's bound to be a large-scale contest in the core region, and we may not have any advantage there in our current form. Hence, don't waste your time away. Go and get whatever that is available," Lu Shu reminded Lu Xiaoyu before they were separated in the remains. After all, he was worried about Lu Xiaoyu's safety when he was not around.

Lu Xiaoyu gave a nod of assurance, looking like a cute doll, "Of course!"

Only then did Lu Shu glance around, but he was surprised by the sight on the island, some unaffiliated Practitioners were forming unions with one another.

The world was never short of ambitious speech makers and the cultivation realm was no different.

A Class D Practitioner was standing tall on a reef, delivering his passionate speech in English, "At present times, we, the individual Practitioners, must unite together in

order to survive. We are a team, supporting and caring for one another, to fight back our enemies in the remains, be it evil souls or hardships! And I have a dream, that one day, all Practitioners no longer have to worry about their cultivation resources. I have a dream..."

Lu Xiaoyu found a place to eat her snacks, while Lu Shu put on his cap and mask and leaned in for the speech under the reef. It was common at Koh Chang, where such Practitioners came together for their last chance. However, what they did not realize was that no matter how united they were, a bunch of Class D's, E's, and F's were still small fries...

Actually, though, many were motivated by the speech. As a matter of fact, sometimes you may not be able to see through things unless you are an outsider.

Lu Shu used to think that no one would believe the gimmicks of advertising. He believed people of sound mind would never get brainwashed by a few deceptive phrases.

But the truth was, some people were willing to be brainwashed, and they enjoyed it.

Lu Shu had difficulty understanding such a phenomenon, although it truly existed.

Meanwhile, the audience under the reef were almost convinced in forming an organization on site and pledged their loyalty to their leader on the reef. Lu Shu was amused by their widespread enthusiasm.

In fact, many Practitioners and Metahumans were not from the top tiers of society. Before the regeneration of Spirit Qi, some of them might have been an ordinary technician, or an underperforming student, whose fate was changed by their

cultivation aptitudes.

Seeing that many were yet to be persuaded by him, the speaker took out his props from his pocket, "Quiet, please. Some people still do not believe the strength of unity. But please take a look at this piece of steel cable, which is easily broken if there is only one strand!"

Following his words, he snapped the cable apart at once.

Lu Shu was shocked by the cliché example. It seemed like the person had changed chopsticks to steel cables just because a Practitioner could easily break a bundle of chopsticks...

Lu Shu carefully studied the material and thickness of the cables, he estimated that one strand could bear the weight of up to five hundred kilograms. If there were multiple strands and no one could break them, it would bring out a much better effect than snapping ten chopsticks effortlessly, which ran counter to his initial purpose...

392 ASSOCIATION OF UNAFFILIATED PRACTITIONERS

Unlike Lu Xiaoyu, Lu Shu could understand him without the need for translation software.

To the speaker, the demonstration was merely an addition to his already perfect speech as he never expected anyone would be able to rip eight strands of steel cable apart, which could bear weight of up to four-thousand kilograms.

Even if anyone could, he would not be wasting his time here listening to his speech.

Lu Shu pondered, it would not be very nice of him to ruin the speaker's laudable efforts thus far. Apparently, the man had taken his own interest into consideration in

uniting the individual Practitioners and those willing to join were likely to be short of manpower and resources themselves. In the merit-based large organizations, they might not be able to enjoy many benefits and that was where entrepreneurship came into play.

In general, each one of them had their own agendas. Thus, how could he spoil the mood...

Following this thought, Lu Shu did not hold out his hand for the cable, which was wrongly interpreted by the speak as a lack of confidence. The latter insisted and smiled, "Don't be shy, brother. Just give it a try and see whether we can break it. It is not just a steel cable, but to let you experience the strength of unity..."

As Lu Shu started applying his force, one strand ruptured with a crack...

"From Simon Baker's distress, +666..."

Before the rest could react, there was another round of incessant cracking sounds.

It was even easier to break the remaining strands after the first. Under the immense pulling strength, the entire bundle was fractured apart!

"From Simon Baker's distress, +999..."

Simon was petrified. Could you please return to your bloody seat, judge?!

All of the members of his audience were in shock by the display of strength as well.

"From David's distress, +333..."

"From..."

Lu Shu felt sorry for the lame reference. However, being a market spoiler was... awesome...

Honestly, he felt guilty for his actions. The fantasy that a union of low-level individual Practitioners could contend with established organizations for resources boiled down to their inability to excel in reality. As a result, they would rather fool themselves with such blatant lies than to accept their own weaknesses.

But Lu Shu had shattered their dreams with his sheer strength...

Even he himself thought it was too much...

Everyone stared at Lu Shu in a mixed feeling of disbelief and irritation, with the urge to beat him up but no courage to do so. They knew fully well that the young man had a clear advantage in physical strength over them...

But which expert would hide themselves in such an idle crowd? Did you not have better things to do?!

There was grief and indignation too...

Lu Shu wanted to apologize, but deemed it inappropriate to portray the Chinese in such an unfriendly light. At the very least, he was representing the image of China overseas!

It was then that his profound knowledge came into play. Why did he study so hard for

and for so long? Was it to realize his childhood dream to be a scientist? Of course not...

Then, Lu Shu bowed ninety degrees like a Japanese, "Gomen-nasai."

Normally, in Japanese, "sorry" could be translated as "sumimasen", but a more sincere version was "gomen-nasai"...

And Lu Shu was being very genuine...

Then, Lu Shu immediately left the place. After he returned to Lu Xiaoyu, not only did he take off his cap and mask, he also changed into a new set of clothes...

With more Practitioners arriving in Koh Chang, the beach was now crowded with people, with some in swimsuits. If you took a look around, you would see mostly Caucasians.

Lu Xiaoyu glanced over at Lu Shu, her head tilted, "What did you do over there?"

Lu Shu put on a dramatic face, "To preach my life philosophies. You see, there are so many people in the world awaiting enlightenment..."

"Just say you went over there to be an idiot. Don't be so pompous..."

Just a while ago, thousands of distress points were clocked in. Despite the thirst for more, Lu Shu was unable to evoke such a huge wave of animosity yet...

Lu Xiaoyu replied calmly, "It is preparation time now. Shouldn't we do our best to unite as many forces as we can? Or at the very least, to avoid any conflicts at all cost?"

Only then can we spare more time for the resources inside."

Lu Shu paused for a second, "You are a genius, Xiaoyu!"

"Of course!" Lu Xiaoyu's eyes were twinkling.

The next instant, Lu Shu ran to the beach in search of unions. Currently, the unaffiliated Practitioners were also copying one another and trying to form teams, so that they might have more helpers in the remains.

Meanwhile, being utterly shameless, Lu Shu was trying to join every team he saw using his clumsy English.

Moreover, as a self-proclaimed Class E strength-type Metahuman, in spite of his average capabilities, his skills type added much value to his identity. Thus, he managed to join most groups he applied to...

Speaking of which, almost half of the individual Practitioners on the beach had become his teammates now...

It was estimated that all would arrive at Koh Chang from Pattaya by night.

At this moment, Lu Shu suddenly ran into a Chinese group. To his surprise, he saw the ferry girl whom he met upon their arrival in Thailand. She had tied her hair up, looking neat and brisk. Moreover, she was the leader of the team.

The girl also froze for a second upon seeing Lu Shu, she was obviously able to recognize him, "Do you want to join us? What class are you?"

"I'm a strength-type Metahuman of Class E!" Lu Shu grinned.

There was not much reaction in her group. Although Class E's were considered rather remarkable among unaffiliated Practitioners, this team was formed by elites and accepted no one below Class D and non-Chinese practitioners. To them, underperforming members might drag down the productivity of the entire group.

However, the girl smiled after pondering for a few seconds, "Welcome, our new member. As Chinese people, we should help one another. My name is Meng Jingchan, taking reference from 'zen (Chinese character "chan") belongs to him who finds peace (opposite to Chinese "jing") in grief'. How about you?"

"Bravo, hello!" Lu Shu had never paid much attention to the meaning behind his name! Thus, he mused for a long moment before replying, "My name is Lu Mu, because the fortuneteller once said I lack wood (Chinese character "mu") in my five elements*..."

393 LI DAFANG

A Chinese elite team was thus formed under Meng Jingchan's lead...

Actually, those unable to join the group named Team Jingchan were rather envious of Lu Shu.

In their eyes, the team consisted purely of Class D Practitioners, which appeared to have a much more promising prospect than other groups of varying abilities...

Meng Jingchan suddenly raised a question, "Has anyone been to remains before?"

She looked around, only to see shakes of the head. It was a rare opportunity for the individual Practitioners to enter the remains. Before Li Xianyi's return to the Golden Foundation, all unaffiliated Practitioners were refused entry to remains by major

organizations, unable to even steal some leftovers.

Thus, their disposition towards the Foundation could be traced down to their offering of benefits.

Certainly, their hostility would target the Foundation just like how they did to the major organizations if the former became a hindrance to their interests.

Vested interest had long since been the goal of most activities.

Meng Jingchan's eyes swept through the over twenty team members one by one, and skipped Lu Shu subconsciously. After all, how could a mere Class E have experience within remains when other Class D's did not?

She smiled sweetly, "Since we are all Chinese people, we must have one another's back in the remains. When we get out, we can call one another comrades-in-arms. Here I vow, I am willing to offer anything I find that may be of any help to you."

Lu Shu nodded his head in appreciation of the girl's generosity. She was also aware that personal interest, not slogans, was the key to binding a team together.

In any case, the Golden Foundation was the only organization that acted on ideologies.

It was an effective ice breaking technique. Another person replied, smiling, "Count me in. If I find anything suitable, I am willing to offer it to you too. Of course, don't forget me if you find anything I can use. I'm water type..."

However, it was always easier said than done. Who knows what would happen in the

event of finding treasures?

At the moment, the team was directed towards a more friendly and all beneficial direction under Meng Jingchan's guidance. In Lu Shu's opinion, the significance of such small-scale organizations was help and support in the remains, or a sense of psychological security. The possibility of a long-lasting connection was slim.

Lu Shu volunteered too, "Same. If I find something..."

But a middle-aged man interrupted, "Little Lu, just keep yourself safe for now. Take the opportunity of the rich Spirit Qi in the periphery to increase your level."

Lu Shu raised his brows in defiance. Who's your Little Lu? Do you have the right to address me that way? It suddenly reminded Lu Shu of those office newbies in the TV dramas, being bossed around to serve others...

In the remains, camaraderie was pointless. Yours is yours and mine is mine, do they not have any bloody idea of that?

In this aspect, Lu Shu would never show his modesty. He was fighting for a better life for Xiaoyu and himself! Thus, his competitors were equivalent to his enemies...

Moreover, for the past two experiences, his rivals in the remains were either the Heavenly Network or Daoyuan Class students, rendering it impossible to forcefully take things from them. But this time, he could do whatever he wanted to!

When darkness fell upon the island, Lu Shu dragged Lu Xiaoyu into their conversation, mainly to give her some exposure on the outside world.

But Lu Xiaoyu's age startled many, "Lu Mu, as a Class E, how can you protect your younger sister? How absurd!"

Lu Xiaoyu was stunned for a long moment, Lu Mu? Class E? She rolled her eyes at once before going back to her snacks...

The middle-aged man named Mo Shengqi started recounting about the various major organizations like a story-teller. People like him existed everywhere, and they always seemed to know everything under the sun despite their incompetence at work.

There were also those who could not even afford a 100,000-yuan car but were dead familiar with all brands of vehicles.

"Nowadays, the Department of Faith Theory in Europe has the strongest average capabilities. They enjoy a complete set of inherited skills and even cultivation resources provided by disciples. Thus, DFT is the head of all major European organizations. Its predecessor was the Court of Religious Judges. Though strong, they lacked manpower."

"The most important heritage in Europe is kept by the DFT as well. Moreover, other associations are kind of special. While we can awaken to magical powers, they can bring the bloodline of ancient deities back to life. The Deities is a representative of such organizations."

"The North Americans have the Phoenix Society. They have no inherited skills and only Metahumans. But it's said that they are already able to stimulate awakening."

"The Kalorlo in India have inherited skills too. But they were greatly damaged in the Beimang remains early this year and are currently trying to restore their power."

"Egypt and other Middle East countries..." Mo Shengqi spluttered on before lowering his voice mysteriously, "Actually, as Chinese people, our main enemies are the Japanese Collection of Gods. Despite having a few doves in the past, they were soon wiped out by the internal chauvinists. Furthermore, their people are here too. If we run into them inside, fight if you can or run if you can't. They will never be friendly to us."

Lu Shu's eye brightened, as expected, Collection of Gods was indeed Japanese. Since they were here, he must treat them well!

Meanwhile, a group of ferries were arriving at the coast, fully loaded with Practitioners. Li Yixiao was easily recognizable in the crowd...

The distinguished Heavenly King actually took a packed ferry with the other Practitioners...

Besides, Li Yixiao was wearing a cap and a mask, as if unwilling to be recognized. He had put them in his backpack ever since he realized the mistake at the market earlier.

Having seen Lu Shu from afar, Li Yixiao immediately walked towards him, elated. But before he spoke, Lu Shu stood up when others had yet to notice, "Hello, I am Lu Mu, a strength-type Class E."

Li Yixiao was stunned, but understood at once. Then, he took a glance at the circle of people on the beach. Amused, he greeted them with a smile, "Hello, everyone. I am Li Dafang, Class F!"

The corner of Lu Shu's lips twitched in shock...

Meanwhile, Meng Jingchan gave him a polite smile, "My apologies. We do not accept Class F's here..."

394 CROSS-TALKERS

Li Yixiao froze still. He did not know that only Class D's were allowed entry, and even Lu Shu, the "Class E", was allowed in due to the special conditions of his strength type... But it was too late!

"Well..." Li Yixiao was thinking hard for a reasonable excuse, "I actually can be a Class D too."

Clever move. It would be too bloody obvious if he had copied Lu Shu and claimed to be a Class E strength type as well. Thus, he upped his abilities by one level.

Meng Jingchan still declined politely, "My sincere apologies, but you don't have to do this. We need to take care of ourselves in the remains anyway, so you can't fool us. Furthermore, we only accept Class D's, with Lu Mu the sole exception due to his strength type."

"Then," Lu Shu offered Li Yixiao an opportunity, "how about show us what you've got? Li Dafang, you said you were a Class D. So what type of capabilities do you have? Come on, show us..."

"Right," Li Yixiao seized the chance, "Let me show you. I'm a strength-type Class E too!"

Then, he immediately punched a fist in a reef, which collapsed with a loud bang.

"See? I'm really a Class D!" Li Yixiao raised his head up high in pride.

Meng Jingchan hesitated for two seconds before a smile appeared on her face, "Well then, welcome to Team Jingchan."

Not sure about the rest, Lu Shu had an intuition that Meng Jingchan had seen through Li Yixiao's pretense without making it clear. She was a smart girl.

Could it be she was planning to seek Li Yixiao's help in the remains? After all, they could be considered teammates.

But based on Li Yixiao's personality, it would be a wiser choice to deny one's connection with him inside...

Just when Mo Shengqi continued his stories about the various organizations, Li Yixiao whispered to Lu Shu, "Why did you abandon me, kid?"

"Oh, right. We forgot about you..." Lu Shu replied.

"From Li Yixiao's distress, +399..."

Back then, Li Yixiao was out and hid from Li Xianyi, who was inside the safe house. Thus, Lu Shu and Lu Xiaoyu had subconsciously thrown Li Yixiao to the back of their minds when they hurried on their way.

Li Yixiao scratched his head in embarrassment, could you please find a better excuse, boy?! He wanted to cross the sea directly with the aid of Lu Shu's water-type powers, but the latter had long disappeared before he realized!

Meanwhile, Mo Shengqi was narrating the founding stories of North America's Phoenix Society. According to him, its predecessor was a college fraternity

comprising top scorers, who happened to have extremely high chances of power awakening. Under the collaboration of their Metahuman members, the Phoenix Society finally clinched the position as the first Metahuman organization in North America. In addition, a student-led society backed by consortia, their history could be traced back to before the regeneration of Spirit Qi.

"From Mo Shengqi's distress, +199!"

Ouch, that hurts... Mo Shengqi almost choked and remained silent for a long while. Only a few moments ago, he was the one who looked down upon Lu Shu's capabilities. However, based on Lu Xiaoyu's understanding of Lu Shu, she knew the petty Lu Shu would definitely find a chance for revenge...

At the same time, Lu Shu sent his Corpsedog and Concealed Arrow to scrape against the snow mountains. It was fine that he could not sing Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, since the energy lost could be fully compensated by the distress points gained.

But it was a different issue about his sea of chi and snow mountain, as there were no shortcuts just sheer diligence.

Lu Shu felt as if he was back to the days when he just took up his sword, when his dream was to unlock his sea of chi and snow mountain one day, wielding Nature as his sword.

Back to reality, every member of Team Jingchan was sharing his or her knowledge about the cultivation realm, so as to complement one another's existing views in preparation for future crises. This was useful to Lu Shu, who had limited access to external information besides the Golden Foundation forum.

Meng Jingchan warned, "Actually, the Phoenix Society's working style is rather unreasonable. Those self-proclaimed elites love to poke their noses around, so it's best if we can stay away from them."

Another person laughed, "The Japanese are an even tougher target. I went for a trip to Japan early this year and realized that the Collection of Gods is their one and only organization. But they have a population of hundreds of millions! Moreover, every Practitioner, even commoner tourists, are under surveillance there."

Li Yixiao pursed his lips, "Sooner or later we are going to uproot their homes. I'm not done with them."

No one showed any form of disagreement at his comment, as if it was a general opinion.

Suddenly, Meng Jingchan turned to Lu Shu who had remained quiet ever since. Due to her upbringing, the girl was mature and empathetic during interpersonal interactions.

She interpreted it as Lu Shu's awkwardness at finding common topics. In an attempt to include all team members, she prompted, smiling, "Lu Mu, do you have anything to contribute?"

Lu Shu was surprised by the sudden change of focus. He took a careful consideration before replying, "Well... I know that your fish will taste sour if you steam it with vinegar..."

"From Meng Jingchan's distress, +199!"

"From Li Yixiao's distress, +110!"

"From..."

A tinge of awkwardness started permeating through the air as everyone else had difficulty continuing the conversation...

Meng Jingchan paused for a long moment, "Anything else?"

"Right, yes," Lu Shu nodded, "Drinking a bag of milk before sleep will cost you a few bucks more than sleeping without drinking milk..."

"From Meng Jingchan's distress, +299..."

"From..."

Li Yixiao drew a startled breath, his brother Lu Shu was really no ordinary person...

Lu Shu's joker personality was like a torch in the darkness, clear at one glance...

At the moment, Lu Shu had been secretly labeled the most unreliable member of the team. Whoever saw him in the remains must hide away or run as far as possible so as not to be tied down by this burden!

But Lu Shu had not had enough fun yet. Grinning from ear to ear, he asked Xiaoyu, "Do you have anything to add?"

Lu Xiaoyu gave the group a serious nod, "If you are accidentally burned but have no wound cream with you, toothpaste can be helpful. You will forget about your pain

after brushing your teeth for three hours. Also, you can't drink mandarins and milk together because mandarins are not potable!"

Then, she shot Lu Shu a smug look, I did not fail you, did I?

"From Meng Jingchan's distress, +666!"

"From..."

The entire team froze in shock. Clearly you two were siblings!

395 THE POSITION OF THE GOLDEN FOUNDATION

At the moment, the Koh Chang beach was bustling with crowds. Even when the darkness had thickened, there were still tour guides ferrying to and fro between the island and Pattaya to transport goods and materials, which were then sold at high prices to Practitioners.

Goods included beer, barbecue grills, BBQ ingredients and fuel for campfires. Now, the beach was well-lit with many campfires surrounded by people, all narrowly spaced together.

The periphery of the beach was occupied by less sociable individual Practitioners for rest. Some of them had ventured deeper into the island in search for quietness, but were soon deterred back to the seashore by the howling at night.

The sound did not seem that scary in populated areas. A group even started dancing to the howling... They had impressive guts.

Crowds brought along a sense of security. But when one entered the woods on their own, the wailing sounded so doleful as if it had come from the depths of the infinity inferno.

Despite parading their courage so as to save face, many could not help but begin to wonder just how terrifying it would be inside the remains.

Currently, the male to female ratio on the beach was around eight to two. The drastic difference did not lie in the males' higher chances at awakening, as there were no gender differences in terms of cultivation aptitudes and in some cases, the females even had greater advantages.

But the key point was, most females across the world were not fond of violence. Thus, there were generally more men than women in events such as a competition for resources in the remains.

Even so, girls like Meng Jingchan were certainly of the ambitious type.

She could not be described as pretty, but there was a tad masculine vibe within her. Lu Shu did not have the chance to take a closer look at her earlier on the ferry, but now he noticed that Meng Jingchan's skin was rough, as though she had been suffering from prolonged exposure under the sun. Moreover, her relatively large build and deep eye sockets made her look like a half-blood.

Just when Lu Shu and Lu Xiaoyu ended the conversation with their incredibly awkward remarks, a commotion broke out at the edge of the beach. Unexpectedly, Lu Shu turned to see Zhi Wei arguing with the bunch of dancing Practitioners.

Mo Shengqi whispered, "That bunch is from the Phoenix Society. Their leader is a Class B Metahuman, capable of controlling air pressure. The rest look unfamiliar to me."

The Phoenix Society members wore an arrogant look just as usual. When others kept it low-key within their own circles, the Phoenix Society was having an all-out party and did not take anyone else into their consideration.

Elitist pride.

The Class B Metahuman of the Phoenix Society was sitting on the beach half-naked, his muscles perfect like a sculpture. The man put on a sly smile, "They are happy to get money, and we are happy to spend money. This is how the world works. And I believe this is none of your business, the Golden Foundation... or not..."

Before he could spit out his last syllable, Li Xianyi had descended from the sky, hovering besides the Class B expert rather casually...

Then what else could he say? In fact, he was just testing the Foundation. There had been a few conflicts between the Phoenix Society and the Golden Foundation, but the former had the ability to overtake the latter by depending on their rich manpower and rapid development.

And now, he was simply teasing them out of boredom, but had unexpectedly attracted Li Xianyi to the site straightaway...

Three of diamonds!

A of trump suit!

What the... Why did you counter me with A of trump suit? What for...

Zhi Wei smiled and chased away all the ferries and warned them not to come back

again. Although unwilling to obey, the Phoenix Society could not do anything but keep quiet...

On the other hand, Meng Jingchan suddenly sighed in admiration, "How I wish we can join their world one day as a Class C, or even Class B."

It was a common trend for Practitioners to anticipate the lives of upper levels. Just like in video games, any player would hope to up his level and became a celebrity on the server.

It was a dazzling era. In foreign countries, Practitioners enjoyed the same lifestyle as celebrities. They had tens of thousands of followers on Facebook and also plenty of girls to flirt with at the bar.

But Lu Shu thought, had Li Xianyi not made his successful ascension to Class A, the position of the Golden Foundation would have been toppled in no time.

In times of depleted Spirit Qi, cultivation was an extremely difficult feat. Everyone was putting in twice the effort but receiving only half the gains. However, after the regeneration of Spirit Qi, the rate of practicing had been significantly improved.

It seemed unfair to people like Li Xianyi. Back in their times, they had to overcome too many obstacles in training, like nurturing a stick of flowers in drought. But now, it was spring.

Nonetheless, unfairness was the norm in this world.

One had to have the capabilities to enjoy a fairer treatment.

And there was no justice in the face of fate.

Closing his eyes for rest, Lu Shu's flying daggers started scraping against the snow mountain at a faster rate. Despite being one of the strongest currently on the beach, he was still not satisfied. Just like how he strived to be the top performer in his studies, he would endeavor to do his best in whatever he set his mind to.

Just when the ferries left the beach, another round of deafening howling suddenly swept outwards from the inner regions of Koh Chang, as if something had crawled out from the abyss!

The sound seemed to have been produced by ten thousand people being caned. Some girls' faces had paled in terror.

Sometimes, the young loved to be adventurous without having a clear idea of how much risk they were taking.

At the end of the day, they would realize in horror that they were not ready to face the path they had chosen.

Many had already planned on retreating upon hearing the baying!

Lu Shu turned to Lu Xiaoyu with a smile, "Scared?"

"No," Lu Xiaoyu shook her head calmly, "You must... come out alive. Be safe."

"Rest assured. Let's go, then."

"Okay."

The remains were finally open!

Just when terror seized everyone's mind, to Meng Jingchan and the others' astonishment, Lu Shu led Lu Xiaoyu straight to the core regions of Koh Chang. In their impression, Lu Shu used to be a Class E rookie, who was rash enough to bring his younger sister to such a peril.

But they had brains. The young man's composure was telling them that he was never as simple as they had thought!

He was probably an expert hidden among the individual Practitioners. A true expert!

Meng Jingchan could be positive about at least one thing, that this Lu Mu had certainly been to remains before! But the question was, could the little girl be a pro as well?!

396 LANGUAGE BARRIER

The white fog instantly engulfed the entire Koh Chang like a tornado and just like the other remains.

Those tour guides and boatmen who had just left Pattaya still had not recovered from the shock. Had the Golden Foundation not chased them away in advance, they could hardly survive in the remains.

Unlike the Heavenly Network, the Practitioners here would never put in much effort to save commoners for selfless reasons.

On the other hand, at the Beimang remains, the Heavenly Network spared no effort in rescuing all ordinary soldiers inside. After all, an inaccurate aim of the bullet would

be completely useless against the skeletons.

As the doleful wailing roared past Lu Shu's ears, a blanket of thick fog rolled over him. Before he could realize it, Lu Xiaoyu's hands had already disappeared from his. As expected, the randomization of one's position was certain upon entry into the remains.

Just in the blink of the eye, gray encompassed the entire world. Beaches and forests had been replaced with pitch-black rocks, and there were no signs of any vegetation.

Inky clouds rolled in the sky, pressing against the ground as though they were within reach of a single leap.

But Lu Shu did not take the risk. What if there were unknown dangers hidden inside? The motion of the clouds seemed to have conferred upon them a soul, staring down at all creatures underneath.

Glancing around, besides monstrous stones, there were only two people in Lu Shu's vision. They were Caucasian, but Lu Shu was uncertain of where specifically they were from.

He climbed on top of a huge rock for a better view of the landscape. To his surprise, there was no one else.

How big must the remains be for them to be so scattered? Lu Shu's brows knitted together as he tried to distinguish the slight difference in energy waves in the atmosphere. However, there was no clear indication of any variation in the Spirit Qi concentration.

Then, Lu Shu raised his hand in secret to summon Li Dian's compass, but even the compass failed to identify the core region.

This was unprecedented. Who would expect the abnormally uniform distribution of Spirit Qi in this remains?

Then, how could he confirm the location of the core region?

Meanwhile, the other two had already started a conversation. As far as Lu Shu could hear, they were actually acquaintances!

Lu Shu could roughly understand them due to their straightforward conversation and relatively slow pace. One of them, a Metahuman, suddenly turned to Lu Shu and asked in English with a friendly smile, "Are you a Practitioner or Metahuman? How's your power?"

Hesitantly, Lu Shu replied in heavily accented English, pretending as if he were unable to comprehend his meaning, "Can you speak Chinese?"

Then, he whispered to his partner, "He doesn't understand English. Although we are from different organizations, we can totally join forces now and test that Asian's capabilities. If he is weaker than us, we'd better wipe him out before looking for resources."

Despite their low volume, it was completely audible with Lu Shu's extraordinary hearing.

"I agree. If he is stronger, get rid of him," the other Caucasian said.

The two were communicating openly in English with the assumed language barrier as their defense. They had met each other in Europe as two low-level individual Practitioners. In fact, the environment was not so friendly overseas and violence was a common scene. Thus, it was their subconscious reaction to exterminate the weak.

As a matter of fact, they were considered rookies as well, both at the peak of Class E. But in their eyes, the bare-handed Lu Shu did not seem like an expert either. Which expert would not bring any magical weapons with him?

Among unaffiliated Practitioners, the two's capabilities were slightly above the average.

Besides the Metahuman was a Practitioner. He asked Lu Shu with a kind smile, "ABCDEF?"

They knew that the alphabet was comparatively, easy to understand. Lu Shu's face suddenly lit up as though in enlightenment, "C!"

The two men drew a startled breath. How unlucky must they be to bump into a Class C pro?!

Before they could recover from their surprise, Lu Shu added, "I like C-Cup!"

"From Tandy Carter's distress, +199!"

"From..."

Who the hell asked you what you like? We were referring to levels! Is it the right time for such discussions?!

Tandy explained again patiently, "You! ABCDEF?"

Lu Shu mused for two seconds, frowning, "ABCDEFGH, IJKLMNOP, OPQ, RST..."

Why did you start singing?! The Caucasians were utterly confused.

"From Tandy Carter's distress, +199!"

"From..."

Game over. No communication was possible. But it would be too rash to take action now. They decided to continue with the safe option, "Hold on. We can take action later when he finally reveals his abilities."

Meanwhile, Lu Shu was already mocking them secretly. Apparently, the conflicts abroad had intensified to a large extent for them to internalize such an aggressive mindset.

Tandy suddenly frowned, "Do you not speak English?"

Lu Shu gave an English reply, "Hello!"

The Caucasian Metahuman hesitated, "Hi."

"How are you?"

The Caucasian almost burst out laughing in annoyance. I am serious but do you see what you are doing? He did not give up, "Do you seriously not understand English?"

What Class are you? Metahuman or Practitioner?"

"I'm fine. Thank you. And you*?"

*A typical line in China's primary school English textbook.

"..."

"From Tandy Carter's distress, +199!"

Tandy took a deep breath before cursing, "Foolish!"

"F**k you."

"..."

"From Tandy Carter's distress, +666!"

"From..."

The sudden twist caught them off guard... Tandy had the urge to confront Lu Shu straightaway, so turns out that you actually CAN understand English?!

Awkward.

Just now, Tandy had purposely picked a word not found in daily conversation vocabulary books. At a moment of life and death, it was a wise choice to expect the worst.

Which was, Lu Shu could understand their conversation completely and he was indeed stronger...

They suddenly became cautious, ready to attack anytime. There was still a slim ray of hope though, that the young Chinese man in front of them was really just a newbie.

So what if he understood? He would not be able to talk when he was dead!

397 GARGOYLES

Lu Shu's fluent English was a clear message that there was no more room for negotiation, as their evil plan earlier was unforgivable to anyone.

But the question was, neither of them saw where the spear had come from. Could it be a piece of invisible storage equipment?

However, in individual Practitioners' knowledge, such items only existed in legends and belonged to superior figures such as the leader of a famous organization or a Class B pro...

It was too rare, and basically associated with one's abilities.

Judging from this, this Chinese teenager suddenly seemed very scary!

His warm smile only sent chills down Tandy's spine.

In a split second, Tandy made the first move. As twelve scalpels shot towards Lu Shu from Tandy's waist, the man immediately ran off in the opposite direction and hoped for a chance at surviving. Fully aware of his apparent disadvantage in terms of capabilities, for Tandy the best option now was to try his luck on bumping into a helper from the same country.

Lu Shu understood at once at the sight of the scalpels that the man could control metals. The scalpels were fired at incredible speeds and blocked Lu Shu's way.

But Class E was still a Class E after all. While simply standing still over there with a spear over his shoulders, Corpsedog and Concealed Arrow had swooshed out from Lu Shu's celestial map. In the next instant, every single scalpel was shattered at once by a few folded lines in the air following the black Corpsedog's path. They were nothing but ordinary scalpels.

Meanwhile, Concealed Arrow pierced through the air behind the two Caucasians like a white jade needle. Transparent waves rippled through the atmosphere as Concealed Arrow was already able to break through the speed barrier!

Between the two daggers, Corpsedog was more lethal and Concealed Arrow was faster!

The two Caucasian Metahumans were running for their lives. One of them had already lifted an earth wall from the ground in a futile attempt to slow down Lu Shu's attack. However, before he could run far, Concealed Arrow had effortlessly penetrated the collapsed wall and perforated the man's heart.

The man shot a look of disbelief at his wounded chest, where blood was oozing out like a flower in full bloom.

In the next second, a scarlet dot appeared between Tandy's brows, and blood started streaming down his face. Then, both of them collapsed on the floor!

Lu Shu called back his daggers. At the current moment, he was an expert at utilizing Corpsedog and Concealed Arrow. At the start, he had difficulty controlling two

daggers simultaneously but his skills had improved in the process of flattening the snow mountain.

Now, the daggers were like his arms and moved completely at his will. There was a major difference between instinct and the awkward control he had over them in the past.

He walked over to search the bodies' pockets, but soon cursed in disappointment, "Nothing?! Just how bloody poor were they!"

In fact, that was the current plight faced by unaffiliated Practitioners. No resources, no magical weapons.

At this moment, a loud howling echoed across the remains. Lu Shu glanced around but was unable to determine the source of the sound. It appeared to be from... the underground? Moreover, the wailing seemed be able to pierce through everything, even the soul.

Lu Shu frowned at the poor-looking barren land and black rocks... Aish, a wasteland...

Suddenly, a strange noise from afar attracted Lu Shu's attention. There were two giant black monsters that soared towards the sky and dived back down again, they were engaged in a fight! Each monster had a pair of odd wings flapping on its back and human-like arms and legs with a stalwart build.

They looked just like ferocious gargoyles that came back to life from the movies.

Excited, Lu Shu immediately took to his heels. It felt like he had finally found a

monster in this desolate video game landscape, and instantly associated it with fantasies about gold coins and precious equipment...

It was almost his instinct to conquer it!

Lu Shu's thin build leaped forward among the rocks with remarkable accuracy. Under the dim light, the entire world looked like a site taken straight from a creepy horror movie.

But what he did not notice was that cracks started to form on some of the rocks he had stepped on, as they released dozens of gargoyles. They rose in silence, their eyes were shut on their sinister faces, as though capturing the smell of living creatures. Then, they opened their eyes, their gaze following after Lu Shu. In the next instant, their eyes turned blood red!

Meanwhile, Lu Shu had reached the first battlefield he saw, where three Asians were giving it all they had in their defense against the two gargoyles. Lu Shu studied the gargoyles carefully and, pondered about the effectiveness of Corpsedog on such creatures. It would be wonderful if he could deal with them just like how he dealt with the terracotta soldiers in the Beimang remains. A good soldier never stained his blade with blood.

The Asians were ecstatic upon seeing Lu Shu. Unexpectedly, though, they shouted in Japanese, "Please help us!"

Lu Shu was stunned. The Collection of Gods was the only organization in the entirety of Japan. Thus, logically, all Japanese-speakers here were their members. Earlier Mo Shengqi had mentioned that the Collection of Gods dispatched hundreds of people to the remains, the biggest team across all famous associations!

Just like the Heavenly Network, this organization had similarly perfect conditions of a complete, time-honored system of inherited skills and a huge population.

However, their land-scarce nature resulted in limited cultivation resources, forcing their Practitioners to pillage materials overseas to accommodate for the needs of their own growth.

Generally speaking though, at present, the average capabilities of the Collection of Gods were nothing impressive. Despite their leading high-end forces, they were no match for the Heavenly Network, unless a few Class A's could be produced in the near future.

Nonetheless, it was a general phenomenon across all organizations that the number of low-level Class D's, E's and F's significantly outnumbered those at the top of the pyramid.

398 SEIZING THE SWORDS

"Please come and help us!"

"Please!"

Despite their use of polite expression, Lu Shu had no interest in helping them at all. Rather, he was more inclined towards the gargoyles...

Lu Shu's inaction prompted the three Collection of Gods members to repeat again in English, "Help! Please!"

His initial plan was to observe the gargoyles' attacking techniques and Collection of Gods Practitioners' cards. But an unintended glance over his back startled him, countless gargoyles were quickly approaching at the same time!

When did this happen? Lu Shu had been busy running without looking back at all.

He immediately rushed down from the black rock, shouting at the top of his lungs in Japanese, "Don't worry! I'm coming to save you!"

Finally, all the efforts spent on learning Japanese proved worthwhile, though his head-twisting gourd had become a pile of useless scraps.

In the past, he spent hours practicing the language and even trained his oral skills from locally-made videos and movies.

His native accent, coupled with the dim lighting that blurred his appearance in the distance, convinced the Collection of Gods members that he was one of them. However, when they turned to Lu Shu amidst the combat, the throngs of gargoyles behind him seized them in terror...

Heck!

Their faces turned ashen. What a bloody idiot, he will kill us all!

"From Tsuruta Kouhaku's distress, +999!"

"From Satou Toyosato's distress, +999!"

"From..."

Meanwhile, Lu Shu was still shouting as he ran, "Stay calm! I'm coming!"

But the three took on their heels without hesitation. How could they possibly win?!
Leave the moron to the gargoyles as he wished!

They exchanged a look with one another, and a strategy was formed at once. Lu Shu would be the bait, while they fled as fast as they could. The sheer number of gargoyles was indeed beyond their capabilities.

Moreover, they were unsure whether the new kid was a friend or foe, though his native pronunciation seemed to suggest no other possibilities. However, survival was always the top priority before internal unity. If there had been a chance, they would certainly have saved the newcomer's life. But now, only more lives would be lost had they all come forward recklessly.

This logic somehow relieved the guilt in their mind...

Rushing forward, Tsuruta Kouhaku commanded, "No words of this to the organization. Understood?"

"Yes, Sir!" a reply sounded from behind.

All three of them were startled as the voice did not come from any one of them. Following its source, they saw Lu Shu grinning widely, his teeth showing, "Gomen-nasai!"

"From Tsuruta Kouhaku's distress, +999!"

"From Satou Toyosato's distress, +999!"

"From..."

The sincerity therein stunned Tsuruta Kouhaku for a long moment...

Then, they could only stare as Lu Shu dashed off with the katana in his hand. In their gaze, the lone man was disappearing over the horizon, sending up a few gargoyles along the way. Cracks started to form on rocks in which gargoyles hibernated, ready to unleash the devils within anytime...

Game over...

"Why is he so fast..." Satou Toyosato said in desperation.

"I've never seen him. He's not one of us!" enmity flashed across Tsuruta Kouhaku's eyes. They would not survive the day!

What was unexpected was that this time it was way more dangerous than any previous remains. Even creatures at the peripheral region were of Class D!

Just when they were about to accept their fate, Lu Shu turned back. Satou Toyosato swung his katana towards Lu Shu, but his sword was taken away too...

It was a breeze with unmatched strength and speed. Satou Toyosato's attack action looked like he was offering his sword.

But they did not stop on their feet. Lu Shu cast his gaze to the third man, as if saying, your turn to hack me. Now! Quick! Just do it...

"From Tsuruta Kouhaku's distress, +999!"

"From Satou Toyosato's distress, +999!"

"From..."

Tsuruta Kouhaku almost choked on his anger. What a jerk!

He even returned specifically for the remaining swords!

The third person hesitated for a long while. It was his first time to not dare to attack despite his burning urge...

During that short period of time, they had made a significant contribution in distress points to Lu Shu...

Dissatisfied with the long wait, Lu Shu took action to seize the sword himself. With a pool of starving divine water to feed, Lu Shu was also a victim of life's pressures! Anyway, he would not want to stuff his upgradeable magical weapon with grass if the situation permitted.

Eying Lu Shu's receding figure, the three of them were now totally despondent.

Having reached a safe distance, Lu Shu turned to observe the battlefield carefully.

Like ravenous vultures, two dozen gargoyles were circling in the sky. In the next instant, the pack hurled themselves at their vulnerable prey.

It was only until then did Lu Shu have a good look at their razor-edged claws. Then, each of the gargoyles' heads split at the center, turning into a giant mouth lined with irregular sharp teeth like a saw.

However, it seemed that the three Japanese had no other trump cards besides some body tricks and the stolen katana.

In his last attempt, Satou Toyosato raised a hand against a gargoyle and emitted a thunderbolt from his palm. Surprisingly the man was both a Practitioner and a Metahuman. But his attack seemed totally ineffective on the gargoyle!

Lu Shu was shocked by their resistance against magical attack. If that was the case, how about those element-type Metahumans?

But a second thought revealed another possibility. It might still be effective to convert elements into physical attacks such as water blades.

The three fought till their last breath, they were eventually torn up and swallowed by the monsters. Then, the gargoyles soared into the sky again and aimed straight at Lu Shu.

Having gathered enough information, Lu Shu sent out both Corpseudog and Concealed Arrow without further hesitation. When Concealed Arrow sliced through a gargoyle's leg, there was no sign of pain nor fear like terracotta soldiers, and no record of any distress points.

They had neither souls nor consciousness, but an inborn bloodlust.

But another noteworthy point was that, in accordance to their strong magical resistance, their physical defense was weak. To their Class D speed and strength, the damage that Lu Shu's daggers dealt was equivalent to that on Class E's.

Corpsedog penetrated the skulls of the gargoyles, which all collapsed into a pile of crumbs.

It was a slaughter in cold blood. It was inferno, where no one was spared in the doleful wailing.

By that time, such Class D gargoyles were not Lu Shu's opponents regardless of their number. He summoned his divine water from the Seal of Lands and eroded the three katanas one by one.

399 REUNION WITH MENG JINGCHAN

It was a well known fact that the Koh Chang remains would be perilous. But no one anticipated that it turned out to be a catastrophe for low-level Practitioners due to the sheer number of gargoyles.

Crevice were forming on the black stones following Lu Shu's trail. But his Corpsedog would immediately stab the gargoyles within, to the death before they managed to break out of the eggs...

Lu Shu suddenly felt like he was inside Journey To The West, where things could jump out from rocks every now and then. Haha, Monkey King, what a fantastic being...

His pace was slow, so as to allow enough time for him to spot any resources in the region. He had indeed discovered an ancient broken magical weapon in the rock crack.

Despite losing its function, the rich Spirit Qi in the remains had gifted the weapon intense energy flows. It was the favorite food of the divine water.

If there were more of such weapons here, he would not need to spend a fortune on developing his golden water anymore, Lu Shu thought expectantly.

In the meantime, he heard footsteps approaching from behind. Quickly packing everything up before it was seen, Lu Shu turned around but was shocked at once and stunned the other person as well!

It was Meng Jingchan, together with around seventeen strangers. There were whites, blacks and a few Asians.

How did such a hodgepodge form in the first place? The reason was clear, though. Everyone was forced to join forces with one another so as to maximize their own chances of surviving in such a hellish place...

Lu Shu's appearance brought a sense of security to Meng Jingchan, the sole Chinese in the team thus far. Casting his "weak" capabilities aside, it was still great to see him around.

"Are you all by yourself, Lu Mu?" Meng Jingchan hastened her steps and showed no attempt to hide her surprise, "Did you see anyone else? It seems that there's an expert ahead who killed the gargoyles along the way."

Lu Shu mused and pondered for a safe reply. After a long moment, he said, "They were already dead when I came. But I didn't see anyone."

Meng Jingchan was puzzled by his response. Unmistakably, Lu Shu was leading Lu Xiaoyu to the inner areas of Koh Chang earlier, which gave her the impression that Lu Shu was possibly a pro.

Thus, she had a hunch upon meeting Lu Shu that those gargoyles were all killed by him!

However, anyone that had dealt with gargoyles were well aware of how tough they were. Thus, one had to be overwhelmingly powerful in order to nip them in the bud.

Since Lu Shu had no intentions to reveal anything else, Meng Jingchan cleverly asked no more questions. She had to get her attitude right if she was determined to work with Lu Shu.

In the past, she used to have high expectations of life abroad, including a high reputation in education, economy and technology. But now, it seemed that nowhere could be compared to one's home. At the very least, she did not have to fight for her survival.

Actually, she had plans to return to China, but her main concern was the welfare received by Chinese Practitioners locally. Moreover, she could not decide which organization Lu Shu belonged to. Could it be the Heavenly Network? Unlikely. In her impression, their members were serious and dependable. But Lu Shu was almost the antonym...

In fact, a meeting with Li Yixiao would probably have changed her mind straightaway...

A person walked up from behind and asked in English, "Is this your friend, Meng? What Class?"

Meng Jingchan smiled, "Yes, he is. He is a Class E, strength type."

They were expecting him to be the secret expert, but ended up being quite disappointed. However, it seemed totally understandable given his young age.

Lu Shu noticed that the team seemed to be following a white man's lead. Meng Jingchan whispered to him, "He's from the Phoenix Society, Class D, strength type. Quite an MVP in our battle with the gargoyles."

It was unsurprising. Strength-type Metahumans' speed and strength outperformed those of the gargoyles' and rendered them more useful than their elemental-type counterparts.

Suddenly, Lu Shu frowned at a short black girl who appeared to be fawning on the white leader.

Meng Jingchan shot a glance at Lu Shu, "A Metahuman from the south of North America. You may not know it but there are quite a few females like her, who are willing to exchange other things for cultivation resources instead of getting them on their own."

It was rather obvious what trade they were in. Although he disapproved of the situation, Lu Shu decided to hold his judgment, as everyone had the right to choose how he or she lived their own lives.

Many who shape their mentality with numerous socially accepted norms still led a miserable life. Let us just say, people have their own fates.

But then, a sudden thought struck Meng Jingchan, was she not trying to seek help from Lu Shu as well, although she was unwilling to lower herself like that girl. Thus, she hoped Lu Shu did not get the wrong meaning.

She studied Lu Shu's facial expressions carefully, only to see his pure, innocent eyes, without any misunderstanding.

Before the white leader introduced himself, he asked in English in a condescending manner, "Do you have any new discoveries here?"

Lu Shu gave him a wide grin, "Thank you."

"From Evan Walsh's distress, +299..."

Did you understand me before you said thank you?! What are you thanking me for? Idiot!

Evan Walsh's face darkened. He enjoyed being the center of attention and admiration. In fact, he was only a greenhorn in the Phoenix Society, not a pro. But inside the remains, not only were his peak-Class D abilities considered one of the top among unaffiliated Practitioners, there were also girls throwing themselves at him for protection.

He had heard about it from senior members in the Society. Due to their monopoly of all remains in the US, many individual Practitioner girls had to obey the secret rules in exchange for a ticket into the remains.

Actually, they were not forced. Many girls were practical, and they were willing to worship the strong. Faithful heroes only existed on the screen, and many Metahumans would never refuse willing girls.

Affairs between Metahumans and super models had long since become the most popular gossips in the West.

400 HOW ANNOYING!

Under the gray sky, Lu Xiaoyu was walking alone amidst strange rocks. In contrast to ordinary individual Practitioners' ever present fear, Lu Xiaoyu was totally at ease in Anthony's secret company as he was ready to attack anytime.

A slit cracked open in the rock beside her, as if something was about to be born. However, before it made its debut, a blanket of gray soils rolled up like a mat and sealed the crack up...

Maybe it was a completely unprecedented experience even for gargoyles. In the past, they either killed or were killed, but never had they been trapped in the stone...

In an attempt to escape from the jail, the gargoyles inside collided with the interior of the rocks like crazy but to no avail. Soil and rocks reinforced by Anthony's elemental force were unbreakable with their strength.

Now, their freedom of action belonged to Lu Xiaoyu...

"There are so many! And they have no money, watches or weapons! How annoying! Where is Lu Shu!" Lu Xiaoyu complained.

It was much less interesting than the salt lake remains that Lu Xiaoyu had visited last time.

Previously, she looted a bunch of minions, including Naughty Pig and Big Cat. How awesome was that! But this time, the gargoyles were completely not in her control, not to mention their ugly appearance.

Lu Xiaoyu could sense that these monsters were utterly empty inside their outer shells, without a trace of a controllable soul.

At this moment, a group of three, consisting of a white, a black and an Asian, walked towards her. What a rare coincidence. Nonetheless, their guard against one another was apparent from the large distance between them.

All of them froze for a second upon seeing Lu Xiaoyu, who had not been that visible at the beach. She had been busy eating snacks and teasing Lu Shu at the time.

None of them expected a little girl here. In spite of being at the peak of her puberty and her relatively tall build, Lu Xiaoyu's youthful face revealed her true age.

Truth be told, it was definitely not common to see such a young Practitioner. Actually, against the backdrop of the remains, she looked more like a creepy doll in a desolate, old mansion situated in the mountains.

Horror stories!

Lu Shu had prepared a backpack for Lu Xiaoyu and himself as a cover for their invisible storage equipment. But Lu Xiaoyu had packed it back into her ring to save herself the trouble of carrying it.

It might have helped with the misunderstanding had she carried a modern bag.

Subconsciously, they had deemed Lu Xiaoyu as another magical creature rather than a Practitioner like themselves...

Lu Xiaoyu shot them a brief glimpse and clearly showed she had no intention of

interacting with them. At that moment, a gargoyle imprisoned in a stone nearby started struggling violently. In addition to the trembling motion of the rock, though, nothing else happened.

In their opinion, such composure was not supposed to appear on a little girl's face. If she was a human Practitioner, should she not be flustered right now? She must certainly be a product of the remains!

No matter what reason it was, the three of them had instinctively associated the girl's frosty expression with the current environment. In fact, their misunderstanding was understandable in the light of the multitude of factors here.

Considering their commendable capabilities, Lu Xiaoyu's passiveness actually elicited the men's greed, "Do you think this monster carries magical weapons? Anyway, there shouldn't be any powerful creatures in the periphery, should there?"

"Let's kill her together!" the black man agreed.

Just when Lu Xiaoyu was about to leave, she raised her eyebrows at their phrasing, "Monster?!"

Who are you addressing?! Have you ever seen such a cute, pretty monster before?!

In the next instant, Anthony rose up from the surface with his typical foolish smile. His black foggy form and the creepy expression seemed to be an even better fit in the remains!

Then, the three were dead.

Under Lu Xiaoyu's control, Anthony searched the three bodies, which had been punctured into honeycombs by deep sea white sand. An angry Lu Xiaoyu was indeed a monster...

But Anthony found nothing. Disappointed, Lu Xiaoyu sighed, "Why are they so poor! I wanted to rob someone and find a reunion gift for Lu Shu. I hope he has prepared me gifts as well..."

Honestly speaking, Lu Xiaoyu liked the place. There was nothing she needed to be concerned about, be it gargoyles or Practitioners who tried to take her life.

As soon as she moved on, in another direction, a stone cracked open again. Almost simultaneously, Anthony sealed it back up...

"How annoying!"

...

Meanwhile, Lu Shu followed his team. A temporary stay in a group of international individual Practitioners with their own hidden agendas was a safe strategy, which offered him another layer of security when the conditions remained unclear.

As a matter of fact, their plans were all about the same. It was always a fight or flight situation and in times of real crises, Lu Shu was certain that no one could run faster than himself...

The strength-type Class D Evan Walsh loved to hog the limelight, as though he had been overshadowed by other geniuses in the Phoenix Society and could only shine in a group of unaffiliated Practitioners.

Why did so many teenagers awaken to their powers? Simply for more attention, right?

Although Walsh was only a junior, he had emerged a champion in the Canadian canoeing league and enjoyed excellent results at school. Thus, he had an air of pride around him, and most members of the Phoenix Society were people like him.

They had run into a number of gargoyles on their way forward. But Walsh had come up with a smart idea. Since gargoyles were only activated in close proximity, a slow advance would release them one by one, drastically reducing the pressure on themselves.

During the combat, Walsh had always been the main attacker, as if his strength was boundless. Meanwhile, the Mexican girl seemed determined to cozy up to him, and would offer Walsh care and support after every battle.

Lu Shu was more than happy to save some energy as the gargoyles had nothing worthy to pillage. All this while, he focused his attention on the surroundings, mainly on the flow of energy, but it was in vain. There was no way to ascertain the direction of the core region.

Thus, they had no way but to take it slowly. At worse, they might cross paths with the Class B pros, since no one's sense of direction worked here anyway.

After Evan Walsh chopped a gargoyle into pieces, he intentionally showed off his sword. In spite of the frequent battles, there was not a single scratch on the blade, "This was provided by our Phoenix Society. What do you think of it?"

In an attempt to please him so that he could continue dealing with the gargoyles while

Lu Shu could continue to slack off on the side, Lu Shu immediately commended, "Six six six*."

*Six six six, "666", a popular phrase in China used to show one's approval, compliment or admiration.

"???"

Although Lu Shu's admiration was clear in his tone, why was he not making any sense? For God's sake, was he really unable to speak English?!

"From Evan Walsh's distress, +299..."