

L Hero

Chapter 951 Mechanical Deity!

The spaceships in the distance parted to make way for the Black Star fleet to pass through.

Under the excitement and expectation of the countless people present, the Black Star fleet slowly approached Planet Black Tyrant, and its hatch opened, releasing the countless mechanical soldiers within. The mechanical soldiers streamed out like a long dragon, quickly arranging themselves into a dense and neat formation, occupying the entire sky, and their armors reflected the light from the stars.

Pairs of indifferent mechanical eyes overlooked the earthy brown planet below, focusing on the solitary Tyrant standing there.

Heber stood unmoving, coldly staring at the dense mechanical army in the sky. All of a sudden, he snorted, his powerful lungs propelling a loud roaring sound.

Hum!

The echo was like thunder, and Heber's every cell began to pump energy frantically, such that the radar of the spaceships nearby all detected a high-energy response. Pugilist flames roared on his body and condensed on his legs. Even though he was standing still, the ground beneath him was cracking apart.

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Both sides took a fighting stance, and the tense atmosphere was akin to an invisible net that instantly covered the whole audience.

The countless people on scene held their breath at the suspense.

At this time, the mechanical host stepped out of the crowd and came to the forefront of the mechanical army. The blue-gold Mechanical Force glimmered and sparkled as its eyes shone with light, carrying the will of Han Xiao.

"I'm here," Han Xiao said through the wide area communications channel.

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"Humph." Heber coldly snorted in response.

This time, the dynasty did not interfere, and both knew that the battle would only end if one of them fell.

Suddenly, Heber bent his knees and kicked out his legs, and a shock wave burst out around him.

Boom!

A rift formed with just a stomp of his foot, and Heber rushed upward to the sky like an arrow in flight, with fierce battle intent in his eyes. He was wrapped in a red and gold pugilist flame, dazzling like the sun, and at this moment, he resembled a golden meteor!

From the sky, violent Mechanical Force burst forth from the body of the mechanical host, instantly linking together the mechanical army. Han Xiao activated all his skills and casually flung a [Luck Curse] on Heber.

The next moment, the vanguard mechanical soldiers swooped down as well, rushing toward Heber.

There was no foreplay to speak of; both sides immediately tucked into the main course, lunging at each other's throats!

The golden meteor collided with the machines, the heat melted the armor, and the cracked parts flew out like shrapnel from a bomb, flying everywhere!

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Boom boom boom!

One after another, the mechanical soldiers fell, and the golden meteor rushed deep into the formation before being slowed down and entangled by the countless machines.

The long-range troops in the rear spread out like a metal tornado revolving around Heber, shooting out psionic rays and dark energy repeatedly. Countless beams of light from all directions were shot toward Heber.

The mechanical army surrounded Heber tightly like a dark cloud, and this scene resembled a flock of crows dancing around the sun. From time to time, red and gold pugilist shockwaves fluctuated from the center.

Because Han Xiao's mechanical army had undergone many rounds of strengthening, they were not too vulnerable even in the face of a Beyond Grade A. While this batch of old machinery was not the most updated, with the addition of his Mechanical Force, they were no longer simple mechanical soldiers that Heber could casually crush.

In this battle, Heber faced a different situation.

In the last battle, Heber's goal was to demonstrate his prestige, and he intended to quickly get rid of Han Xiao.

But now that Black Star had achieved his current fame, Heber did not have any thought of quickly ending the fight. He was clear that Han Xiao was not there, so the only way to win this fight was to kill all of the soldiers present.

As long as he smashed apart all the troops that Black Star had brought over, it would be his win!

Thus, Heber's mentality was more stable, and he was not in a rush at all. He had long made preparations for a sustained battle and focused on getting rid of the mechanical soldiers without any intention of ambushing Han Xiao.

However, the amount of injuries he obtained made Heber feel a lot more pressure than last time. The psionic cannon rays that hit his body gave him tremendous pain each time.

Heber was secretly startled at Han Xiao's growth rate and gritted his teeth as he calculated in his mind.

While I can fight a prolonged battle, the longer I take, the more unfavorable it is to me. I need to improve my killing efficiency.

As he thought so, he increased the frequency and intensity of attacks.

On the other side, Han Xiao controlled the mechanical host to observe the combat, reading the combat information on the interface.

What a tough HP cow.

In his last battle, Heber's combat information was filled with question marks. Now, with his level higher than Heber's, it revealed his information completely.

Heber's was at level 296, with some of them made up by his subclasses. Han Xiao was an anomaly, as comparing levels, there was not much difference between the two of them.

That being said, Heber's Grade was still at S, without even the '+' on it. This was the gap brought about by various bonuses.

Heber's total HP was around 800,000, and his Endurance was more than 12,000, along with tons of explosive abilities adding a huge chunk of Strength, Dexterity, and Endurance. As for his pugilist skills, it went without saying that he had plenty of those.

The number of resistance talents on him was frightening, such as True Damage Immunity, Weak Injury Immunity, Fixed Injury Reduction, and Super Toughness. They were all talents that Han Xiao had seen during the last battle, making his defense extremely troublesome to overcome.

The last battle had ended in a draw due to the intervention of the dynasty. There was no winner among the two, so Han Xiao got the record of a tie. However, the fact was that he did not cause any serious damage to Heber at that time.

To deal with Heber, he could only slowly grind him down. It was fortunate that his Mechanical Force bonus and mechanical army had been strengthened many times, significantly raising his damage.

Thus, Han Xiao did not activate his [Perfect Mechanical Sense] Character Summon Card, nor did he need to.

Under such circumstances, the Tyrant was long not his opponent!

The moment the battle began, an S ranked mission popped up on his interface, named ['Tyrant' Heber], which was the same mission as the previous time. Based on the scenario of challenging a Beyond Grade A, this sort of Boss Mission would appear.

"I only have this mechanical host, which carries some of my attributes and abilities, but it's enough to fight with Heber directly, preventing him from killing the soldiers too quickly."

With a single thought of Han Xiao, the Lord's Avatar shot out, passing through the heavily sieged front line and directly smashing into Heber. Its heavy metal fist was shrouded in Mechanical Force and sent out.

With a cold snort, Heber's muscles swelled, as though pythons were wriggling under his muscles. The fresh muscle fibers twisted into a strand, displaying its strong elastic force. Heber's terrifying strength from his whole body converged on his arm, and he drew back his arm before thrusting it forward to meet Han Xiao.

A red-gold fist and blue-gold metal fist collided violently, bursting out as a fierce energy shockwave and quickly spreading out!

Boom!

The violent aftermath pushed the surrounding mechanical soldiers quite a way away, tumbling around, and the atmospheric layer above them was also swept out, leaving a blank space.

With the addition of growth talents such as [Heroic Wrists] and [Divine Void Power], Han Xiao's current Strength had reached more than 6,000, and the melee attack power was quite impressive.

The supporters of the two revolved around them, and the eyes of the galactic residents watching from a distance also followed the battle group firmly.

On one of the Federation of Light spaceships, one of the officials was recording the entire fighting process.

The federation and church both attached great importance to this battle, and both had sent spies to gather intelligence.

Black Star's current strength would greatly affect their plans for the Evolution Cube, so they had to pay attention.

At this moment, a virtual projection of Manison stood at the corner of the cabin, watching the entire battle through the viewing window. He lightly said, "The chance of Heber winning is very slim."

"Is that so? Although the Tyrant seems to be surrounded, his body is extremely tough, and he should be able to hold on until the mechanical army is destroyed." The captain who was next to him carefully gave his opinion.

Manison shook his head. "I can feel that Black Star has become far stronger than he was before. Heber will probably not be able to last for long. His condition is getting worse... Furthermore, Black Star still has many of his trump cards that he has yet to pull out, such as the Void ability he used in the battle of Planet Lighthouse."

Hearing this, the captain nodded to express understanding.

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"I just do not know..." Manison paused and thoughtfully spoke. "With Black Star's growth, has he already touched my current level? It should not be that quick..."

At this moment, part of the space above them fluctuated, and the magnificent Palace of Hidden Spells jumped out.

"Oh, they're already fighting. It seems like I'm late."

Seated at the top of his Palace of Hidden Spells, Austin overlooked the battle of the two with an expression of interest.

Most of the spectators were focused on the fight, and while a few of them noticed that Austin had arrived, they only spared him a glance before impatiently turning back to the scene.

Han Xiao also noticed Austin and could not resist curling up his mouth.

Why do you come as a referee every time we fight?

However, he had no time to dispose of his old man. Han Xiao withdrew his attention and continued to control his avatar.

Boom!

As the battle progressed, the ground of Planet Black Tyrant shattered, pitted with holes, and seemed to have turned into an onion, being peeled off layer by layer. The entire planet began to deform, as though Han Xiao and the Tyrant's battle was a knife, slicing into the planet-sized onion with their skills.

Alone within the Human Wave Tactic, with the damage of the Mechanical army exceeding his expectations, Heber quickly fell into a disadvantage, becoming very passive. The heart of everyone in the Bloodshed Land started to tremble.

Faced with an army, the Tyrant was clearly disadvantaged against Black Star, and the battle had not even gone on for long. Could it be that the strength gap between the two was greater than they thought?

In the past battle, the Tyrant was clearly suppressing Black Star from start to end. In just a few years, their positions had swapped...

Looking at the disheveled Tyrant on the planet, Fosters clenched his fists, his expression indeterminate.

...

Boom!

Suffering from such a storm-like weapon barrage for so long, it was lucky that Heber had thick skin, or else he would not have lasted. He felt as though he was a sandbag being beaten up, and his entire body hurt like hell. His chances to retaliate were getting fewer; he could only focus on defending himself.

Bang!

After being beaten up several times in a row, Heber fell straight to the ground, creating a human shaped pit!

"Cough cough, Star Shaking Fist!"

Enduring the pain, Heber rallied his strength, blasting out a brilliantly thick golden pugilist strike toward the mechanical army swooping down from the sky, and it exploded to form a huge chain reaction, devouring a large number of mechanical soldiers.

However, after the energy dissipated, it was found that most of the mechanical soldiers had endured it with their psionic shields. While the damage was serious, they could still fight, and even the [Waste Modification] skill could not be forced out.

The gap... was so wide?

Heber was not only envious; he was also furious. He was quite confident before the battle, thinking that it would be an easy victory when dealing with only one of Black Star's platoons.

But after fighting for so long, he had done his best, but he had found out that he likely could not even defeat this platoon of Black Star's!

How could this be?

At the beginning, Heber was able to resist the siege of the mechanical army, but as his injuries and energy consumption increased, his state got worse.

Han Xiao was different; he grew fiercer the more he fought. Just the talent of converting his energy to HP would ensure that he had sufficient strength to go on. Furthermore, with talents such as [Advanced Strengthened Life], [Battlefield Wisdom], and [One Against The World], the longer he fought, the higher his strength became. With this, the current Heber was being embarrassed more and more, much like a beaten king.

If this continues, I'll lose for sure!

With this in mind, Heber's eyes turned red. He did not like to fail at anything, especially losing to Black Star in such a manner.

Boom!

The next instant, the high-energy response from Heber started to soar in an abnormal manner, and the waves of pugilist flames ripped all the nearby mechanical soldiers into scrap metal.

"Oh, what ability did he use?"

Han Xiao gazed at the interface and found a new state appearing in the status bar of Heber: [Polar Channel Flow—Cellular Overdrive].

He was no stranger to this move. This was a pugilist skill, and some players had learned it in their previous lives. It would force the activation of one's cellular potential, to maximize the overclocking of all attributes such as HP and strength and temporarily obtain an advanced combat power for a period of several hours to several days.

However, the sequelae were serious. The moment one used this ability, every upgrade in the future would be permanently seven percent more expensive, and this would stack continuously with each usage without limit!

This was equivalent to squeezing out one's future potential in exchange for temporary explosive power!

Generally speaking, no one would use this trick unless it was a last resort.

Han Xiao was a little stunned. Is it so difficult to accept losing to me? To even pull out this sort of self-destructive trick...

But upon seeing Heber's expression, Han Xiao understood.

There was only stubbornness and self-esteem of the strong.

While the Tyrant's usual style was pretentious and made many criticize him, at this moment, Han Xiao admitted that he was a qualified fighter.

Indeed, those who can become Beyond Grade As are not easy to deal with. Han Xiao pursed his lips.

The high energy response of Heber was also discovered by the radars, and everyone began excitedly discussing.

"What's this? Did Heber pull out a killing move?"

"I thought that he could take it no longer. Seems like there's still a counterattack!"

Heber burst into flames, directly crossing the 52,000 energy rank limit, and his grade rose to S+. The wounds on his body also rapidly healed.

As he stared at Han Xiao in anger, his hands clasped together, and a dazzling golden light began to shine in his palm, getting brighter and brighter.

Seeing this, Han Xiao's avatar paused in midair.

"Since you're so serious, I should stop playing as well."

The moment he spoke, the Mechanical Force arced out like a spider's web, connecting every individual mechanical soldier.

The next moment, the mechanical soldiers returned like birds to their nests, shooting toward the avatar and reassembling themselves. A huge mechanical structure gradually unfolded.

The Mechanical Force was akin to the nerves, blood vessels, and veins of this huge body!

Buzz!

"This... this is..."

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Under the shocked eyes of the spectators, a huge machine assembled itself above Planet Black Tyrant.

A heavy pressure emanated from this machine, giving everyone the feeling that this was not individual soldiers gathered together but rather... a new, independent individual!

Heber's eyes were wide, and under his shock, the pugilist waves undulated like a flickering lightbulb.

At the same time, Manison, who was viewing on the Federation of Light's spaceship, looked as though he had been hammered. His eyes wide open, he exclaimed, "This is... a Mechanical Deity?"

Chapter 952 Crazy Beating

Manison was too familiar with the Mechanical Deity skill. This was also his ultimate skill, and for many years, there was no opponent who could force him to utilize it. Seeing that Han Xiao now also possessed this power, his emotions were set aflame.

If Manison was still in doubt before, he was now finally certain... Black Star had reached his current realm!

Incredible... this sort of growth rate...

Manison's eyes were full of surprise.

In terms of age for a Beyond Grade A, Black Star was just too young, to the point of being immature, but how could he break through all common sense, raising his strength in just a few years to complete the accumulation that took other Beyond Grade As hundreds of years?

Could it really be because of talent?

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Even if one looked from the ancient times till now, there was no one who had such terrible potential. Manison clearly remembered that the last time he sparred with Black Star, the mechanical talent he had displayed was very shameful, even making people doubt if he was a fake Beyond Grade A.

If it was not talent, then what was the actual reason?

Manison's eyes flashed.

Could it be that... other than the Evolution Cube and Spacetime Amber, Black Star still possessed other Universal Treasures?

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No matter what, this sort of growth rate is too weird. Black Star must have a great secret...

Thinking about this, Manison suddenly had a strong desire.

The desire to dissect Black Star and find out the truth.

Suppressing his impulsive thoughts, Manison eyes flickered as he thought about an important question.

Since Black Star has grasped the strength of the Mechanical Deity, then... has he discovered the secret of Adeptus Mechanicus?

The NPC Beyond Grade As did not possess an interface and were unable to understand their own skills, so they had to rely on trial and error instead. As such, not all Divine Throne Mechanics could discover the special effect of [Key of Adeptus Mechanicus].

If not for the inherited knowledge from the Mechanical Legacy, Manison could not be sure that he would have found out about the bonuses by having Mechanic believers.

The question now was, had Black Star also discovered this ability?

If Black Star had discovered this point, he would inevitably become a competitor and an obstacle on his road to a higher realm!

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At this moment, the attention he paid to Black Star in his heart had been raised to the highest level!

“I need to pay more attention to him...” Manison narrowed his eyes.

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“My God! It’s so big!”

“I, I actually have the urge to worship it. Is that natural?”

The image painted by the assembly of the mechanical army was majestic, and it inspired awe in the faces of the countless galactic residents on scene.

The Mechanical Deity comprised of two million soldiers was naturally huge, and compared to the Tyrant, it was like the gap between an ant and an elephant.

Not only was it huge, it also exuded a strong pressure, causing those who looked at it to have an impulse to submit.

Its shape could be melded based on Han Xiao’s consciousness, and the current Mechanical Deity took the shape of a huge silvery-black mechanical sphere, like an egg.

Under Han Xiao’s control, a head, arms, and legs protruded from the ‘egg’, and the Mechanical Deity slowly turned into a humanoid structure. Even his facial features were formed on the head, turning it into a gigantic version of Black Star.

The Composite Mechanical Deity possessed the functions of every single mechanical soldier assembled into it, and they could be used in every corner of its body through the nanoparticles. Furthermore, their effects would reinforce each other.

For example, if there were a hundred thousand shield generator mechanical soldiers integrated within, then the Mechanical Deity would be able to summon a hundred thousand psionic shields to protect all corners of its body, or it could fuse and overlap them to form a super-durable shield.

Han Xiao’s physical senses extended to every corner of the Mechanical Deity’s body, and everything could be controlled with a thought, as though this was his original body.

This feeling isn’t bad at all.

This was also Han Xiao’s first time utilizing this skill, and the feeling was quite miraculous.

The Mechanical Deity lowered its head from high above, overlooking the planet and locking onto the extremely tiny Tyrant below.

Its huge palm rose up before slapping down suddenly like a mountain descending from the heavens.

The palm broke through the atmosphere of the planet, its edges catching on fire, and its shadow covered a huge area, occupying Heber’s entire version.

Boom!

The speed of the palm resulted in a sonic boom, deafening the ears of all who heard it!

Heber's expression was grim. He gritted his teeth to ease the shock in his heart. His palms pushed violently into the sky, and the waves of the highly condensed pugilist flames burst out.

"Star Shattering Mortar!"

Weng!

From Heber's palms as the center, a halo of reddish gold spread out horizontally, and the pugilist flames expanded, turning into a huge beam tens of meters in diameter, moving rapidly toward the palm of the mechanical deity!

While the strong pugilist flames were akin to atomizing rays, vaporizing everything within their path, compared to the palm, it was like using a toothpick to hit one's hand.

Clank!

A large number of mechanical parts assembled on the palm of the Mechanical Deity, quickly transforming into dense psionic shields. The shields overlapped and interlinked with each other to cover the entire palm, looking like a bubble with a blue gradient.

The next instant, the reddish gold beam connected with the palm.

Boom!

The resulting hurricane swept across the entire area, and on the half of the planet they were battling on, the clouds were blown away, and the crust ruptured!

The huge explosion expanded, smashing through several of the psionic shields, causing a few parts to melt on the surface of the palm. However, the palm persistently continued to press down, as though it wanted to smash the beam itself!

Heber continued to increase the output of the pugilist flames, to the point his whole body's muscles burst apart, causing him to be drenched in blood.

However, he did not seem to feel the pain. His bloodshot eyes stared at the rapidly expanding Mechanical Deity's palm in his line of sight. He squeezed out every ounce of energy in his body and further increased the fluctuations released by his palms, as though he wanted to suppress the palm!

But in reality, the golden beam got shorter as the palm continued its inevitable descent.

Suddenly, Heber's vision was only left with blank whiteness.

Bang!

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The palm smashed straight onto the planet and tunneled into the earth, leaving a palm print on the surface. The explosive energy was also pushed by it into the crust of the planet.

Everyone only saw a fracture appear, shining brightly with light.

In the next moment, the crack expanded completely, and a devastating explosion occurred deep within the planet, directly shattering the planet apart!

In an instant, the appearance of Planet Black Tyrant seemed to have turned into an apple that had been dug out from the inside!

Furthermore, this shape did not hold for long. Due to the imbalance in its broken core, the planet collapsed in on itself.

Boom!

The core of the planet turned into an explosive light cluster, ejecting all the material that made up this planet, shattering the entire planet into pieces!

This one palm literally destroyed Planet Black Tyrant!

The shockwave caused by the planetary explosion swept through and affected the crowd watching in the distance.

“Black... Black Tyrant... exploded!”

While the galactic residents watching from space were isolated from any sound, it did not prevent their imaginations from filling up the missing spots, and countless people shivered instinctively in front of this terrible scene. Some even peed their pants.

The explosion also affected the Mechanical Deity, shattering a large area of the psionic shields covering its entire body. Molten traces of melted metal appeared in many places around its body.

But the next moment, the nanoparticles flowed around the Mechanical Deity, repairing the damage. Due to the loss of material, it shrank in size slightly, but it still towered over everything else.

Many of the galactic residents swallowed audibly, craning their necks to look for traces of Heber.

“Where’s the Tyrant?”

“Could he have been blown to bits?”

“Probably not. He can use his own fleshly body to smash through a planet, so the explosion of a planet shouldn’t kill him... right?”

At this time, the battlefield had transformed into a new asteroid belt. Han Xiao swept through the battlefield, but he saw no traces of Heber and glanced toward the interface.

In the combat information, it showed that Heber had lost a great amount of HP. If not for his [Immunity to True Damage] as well as [Fixed Damage Reduction], this would have directly killed him. However, although his injuries were also very heavy, he still retained his battle strength.

This seemed to be a simple slap, but in fact, the palm strike contained a lot of different damages mixed in, such as Psionic Impact, the explosive damage of Heber’s own killer move, as well as damage from the shock wave devices equipped on the palm. In addition, this Mechanical Deity had countless output

devices, so the Mechanical Force bonuses were amazing, comparable to the damage inflicted by the legendary Galactic Titan race from legends.

Of course, great power would naturally be accompanied by a huge amount of energy consumption. If not for Han Xiao's talent allowing him to quickly recover energy, his Mechanical Deity would probably be like Ultraman, each fight only lasting for three minutes.

Han Xiao was currently looking for traces of the Tyrant when a feeling of pain was transmitted to him through his right arm. A series of explosions occurring from the inside revealed Heber within.

"Turns out, he took the slap as a chance to send himself inside the arm, wanting to destroy it from the inside out?"

Han Xiao shook his head.

The Tyrant's choice looked to be the best tactic. The majority would think that with the huge bulk of the Mechanical Deity, its weakness would be the internal systems.

However, this law was not applicable to the Mechanical Deity!

...

Surrounded by mechanical parts, Heber was riddled with injuries but was still wreaking havoc within the right arm of the Mechanical Deity, breaking all the structures around him as he rushed deeper into the Mechanical Deity.

But the inside of the arm suddenly warped, and the separate mechanical soldiers assembled quickly, using the inside of the arm as a battlefield to fight against Heber. They flung themselves without care toward Heber.

"Scram!" Heber roared in anger, and his body exploded with strength, throwing all the soldiers clinging to him away.

As he was about to continue charging, his feet suddenly sank, and he found that the mechanical structure suddenly turned into a trap, biting into his feet and restricting his movements.

The machinery around him shot out ropes that were made of a nanomaterial that was incredibly tough to restrict the movement of his body.

Immediately afterward, a variety of mechanical devices popped out, and various crowd control skills were applied, such as electromagnetic chains, gravity fields, and space distortions, which were thrown toward Heber.

Heber felt like he was stuck in quicksand. Not only did he become disorientated, it became extremely difficult to move.

Then, cannon muzzles appeared from all directions, aiming and concentrating their fire at Heber.

The thought of attacking from the inside was good, but entering the body of the Mechanical Deity was as good as sending oneself to the home field of a Mechanic!

Heber was attacked to the point his world spun, and his fury quickly reached the max. With a furious scream, he ignored the various restrictions, landing his fists deep into the arm of the Mechanical Deity.

“Star Shaking Fist!”

Boom!

The reddish gold beam blasted out, running through the arm of the Mechanical Deity.

But the attack only reached up to its elbow before a psionic shield blocked the way, and the Star Shaking Fist smashed directly on it.

Bang!

With the burst of light and impact, the entire right arm of the Mechanical Deity was shattered!

Heber was also thrown out, and as he spun around in the universe, he saw this scene, and his spirits were revived.

But before he could feel any excitement, the broken right arm suddenly disintegrated and turned back into the individual mechanical soldiers. Chains of Mechanical Force shot forth from the broken stump of the right arm, connecting to the soldiers like a spider web, and pulled them back.

The next instant, the scattered soldiers rejoined the original body, and the Mechanical Deity was whole once again!

Heber’s expression looked stiff.

“Pugilists who have reached the peak of the Beyond Grade A realm would probably have a chance of breaking apart the Mechanical Deity. As for you...” Han Xiao breathed in deeply. “You are still unqualified!”

He would not grant the Tyrant any time to recuperate and immediately activated the psionic cannons, concentrating their fire toward Heber.

No matter how one tried to dodge, it would only end in failure. The only option they had was to choose what to be attacked with.

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After barely resisting for a while, Heber could no longer continue defending and was beaten up crazily by the Mechanical Deity, turning into a sandbag.

The people watching this scene all understood the situation.

At this moment, Heber’s appearance of being thrashed by Han Xiao was imprinted on everyone’s heart, and they would never forget it.

The image of the arrogant and strong Tyrant was thoroughly shattered in the hearts of all the citizens of the Shattered Star Ring.

Chapter 953 Shattered Mentality

The battle became a one-sided beating. Heber's tragic state was reflected in the eyes of the Mechanical Deity, but it was unknown as to when the beating would stop.

Some of the people could not bear to watch and averted their gazes, but they could not help turning back again.

This disheveled state of a Beyond Grade A was not commonly seen, and it was valuable video information. Not many would waste the opportunity to watch it in real life and have the capital to boast of it to others in the future.

As everyone in the Bloodshed Land watched their commander get beaten up by Black Star, a sense of shame and anger rose in their hearts, and they could barely resist the urge to rush up to help.

However, they were well aware that if Heber could not even fight against Black Star, them going into the battle would be like sending themselves up for the slaughter. Not only would it be useless, it would also destroy the fairness of this battle, decreasing the reputation of the Bloodshed Land further.

Moreover, the Tyrant himself would never forgive them if anyone dared interfere.

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Thus, everyone watched, trembling in anger as their boss was pummeled repeatedly.

Bang!

Fosters' expression contorted, and he smashed the metal bulkhead of the spaceship in anger. His whole body was shaking as he restrained his urge to join the fight.

"Tyrant..." Jorde gritted his teeth, feeling the shame as well.

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How could they feel proud when their own boss was being thrashed?

On the other side, the three universal civilizations had many Beyond Grade As involved in the bet, and they were carefully gazing at the broadcast.

After the battle of Planet Lighthouse, the Beyond Grade A circle had already affirmed Black Star's strength, and most of them had guessed that Black Star would win but not the outcome.

In their predictions, Heber would at least cause some form of trouble for Black Star, killing most of his mechanical troops. They did not expect the situation to be such that Heber had no room left to fight back, with Black Star holding the initiative for the entire battle.

"To be beaten to this state, the defeat is too embarrassing to look at." Ravenlaude shook his head.

"Black Star is a really terrible guy. I think that Heber is already strong for being able to survive for so long. If it was me..." Beyoni shuddered, imagining what would happen if he was in Heber's place.

Really now, why are you scaring yourself? Black Star and I are good friends, really good friends...

"Regarding this point, I believe Dylan and you would have a lot of common topics." Milizaus could not help but poke fun at him.

Viru was a little sad as he sighed. "Sigh, after this battle, the prestige of the Tyrant will not even be a tenth of what it was."

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As a pugilist, seeing Heber being beaten to this state made him feel a little sad and embarrassed.

The usage of Mechanical Deity by Black Star allowed the Beyond Grade As to know what this meant. It meant that he had already touched on the peak of the Beyond Grade A realm, so the defeat of Heber was not a shameful thing, but it was a fact that Heber had provoked Han Xiao earlier on in such a manner.

It was not just the allies of the dynasty. Even those from the federation and the church were discussing Black Star on their various channels. Han Xiao's performance caused the other Beyond Grade As to break out in cold sweat.

As they discussed the battle, the Mechanical Deity suddenly came to a stop.

Everyone's eyes gleamed.

"It has come to an end!"

...

An irresistible force came from the palm of the Mechanical Deity, and Heber was once again blown out, smashing through several broken planetary fragments along the way until the momentum stopped when he collided with a particularly huge continental plate. His entire figure was imprinted on it, leaving a human-shaped hole on the outside.

Fresh blood covered his sights. Heber's trembling palm reached for the edge of the hole, and he pulled himself out. There was no part of his body that was not wracked with pain, and he was literally dripping with blood. He did not know how many bones and tendons were broken or snapped, and he could feel that his internal organs were close to becoming meat paste. Throughout his entire body, his extremely tired cells were barely repairing themselves.

The pugilist aura on Heber's body flickered like a candle on the wind, as though it could die off any moment.

Gritting his teeth, he wanted to revolve his strength again, but instead, a surge of powerlessness hit his body. There was not even a drop of strength left in him.

Raising his head, he saw that the Mechanical Deity did not continue its pursuit but rather looked at him from afar.

"Continue!" Heber wanted to scream angrily, but sound could not travel through the vacuum, so he could only open his mouth mutely.

At this moment, the Mechanical Deity was released, and the mechanical host carrying Han Xiao's avatar popped out, floating in front of Heber. Looking at the man who had no untouched piece of skin throughout his body, Han Xiao released air to envelope both of them before opening the wide area communication channel.

"It's over. You have no more strength to continue the battle." Han Xiao's voice sounded through the channel, travelling into the ears of everyone present.

"This level of injury is only enough to tickle me. I still can fight with you for the whole day!"

Heber's eyes were bloodshot, and regardless of how his body was teetering on the edge of death, he dragged his torn muscles and threw a fist toward the avatar.

Pa!

The fist was easily caught. The strength within was not even a tenth of its original.

Han Xiao breathed in deeply, calmly saying, "Admit defeat. You've already lost."

Within his combat information, Heber's HP value was already close to nil, full of status conditions. If he continued fighting, he would definitely die.

Han Xiao had already achieved his objective. There should be a bottom line for everything. The reason the dynasty did not interfere this time was because they knew that he understood where his limits were, not because they did not care that an ally would die by his hand.

When taking action, what mattered most was controlling one's actions. There was nothing to gain from going overboard. There was no point in him getting his future development restricted by the dynasty just because of one mere Heber.

The Tyrant today did not possess the qualifications for Han Xiao to personally finish him off.

"Admit defeat? This phrase doesn't exist in my dictionary! I don't need your pity!" Heber raged, wanting to continue.

The next moment, countless mechanical capturing devices flew over, directly locking down Heber's body and only leaving his head unbound.

Ka ka ka!

Heber struggled with all his might, but there was no way for him to escape in his current state.

"Don't deceive yourself; you've already lost." Han Xiao's tone sank. "You should understand the current state of your body and the injuries better than me."

Heber did not answer, only glaring fixedly at Han Xiao, the unwilling and rage within clearly expressed, almost condensing.

After shooting him a glance, Han Xiao indifferently continued.

"Relax, we're still allies of the dynasty. I'll spare your life."

Hearing this, it was as though a bomb had gone off in Heber's mind, filling it with unprecedented shame!

To be spared from death because of this identity was just like being forced to spare him, and this was a huge insult and torture to him.

He felt as though his dignity and pride were trampled under Han Xiao's feet, almost causing him to go mad.

Han Xiao suddenly noticed something, retreating a distance away.

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Swoosh...

Fosters and the other Vanguard Officials approached in a moment, standing guard in front of Heber.

"We've lost..." Fosters spat out the words with difficulty. "But if you still think you can insult His Excellency Heber, then you need to step over our corpses to do so!"

The Vanguard Officials all chorused in agreement, their expressions filled with wariness and some degree of anxiety.

"What are you guys doing? Scram!" Heber was furious. He was always the one that protected others, and now him being protected by his men only gave him more shame.

If I lose, then so be it. How is it that I, a renowned Beyond Grade A, now have to hide behind Calamity Grades for protection?

"No!" For the first time, Fosters disobeyed Heber's direct order.

Looking at all the backs of his Vanguard Officials, Heber felt a little stunned.

He had always regarded his men as consumables, and seeing this sight made him feel conflicting emotions.

In the distance, Jorde pursed his lips and surveyed his surroundings. Many of the Bloodshed Land members were showing confusion and conflicting emotions. He knew very well that the defeat of the Tyrant had directly shaken the beliefs of many people in the Bloodshed Land.

"I don't know how many of them will choose to leave now..." Jorde sighed.

They might not join the Black Star Army, which they were hostile to, but there would definitely be people leaving the Bloodshed Land.

This scene also fell in the eyes of the spectators, with them feeling all sorts of complex emotions. The Bloodshed Land had been growing rapidly recently and was in the limelight. Nobody expected them to be hit so hard today.

Han Xiao ignored the group of Vanguard Officials and only stared at Heber directly.

"The old accounts between us are considered temporarily settled."

The moment he finished speaking, Han Xiao no longer bothered with Heber's response, flying toward the Palace of Hidden Spells under the gazes of everyone.

This move was also a signal, announcing the end of the battle.

As the victor, Han Xiao did not need to make any additional statements, nor did he need to chase after the Tyrant. This would only have a countereffect.

His goal had been reached by winning this battle. The rest would occur naturally without him deliberately pushing.

Seeing his action, the surrounding spaceships all parted for him to enter the Palace of Hidden Spells.

Everyone present knew that from this moment on, the new strongest of the Shattered Star Ring had been born!

...

Sigh, he indeed lost.

Within the Bloodshed Land fleet, Sorokin's doppelganger sighed.

After this battle, Black Star had completely established his dominance of the Black Star Army in the Shattered Star Ring. Even if the Bloodshed Land could still compete with them, it would eventually still lose out, requiring twice the effort with half the amount of success.

The difficulty of the task just increased further... Sorokin was helpless.

His employers from the dynasty failed to stop the battle, which made Sorokin a little depressed.

But he did not fully count on others, as he was just a financial group in their eyes, and it was impossible for him to have absolute certainty in swaying the decisions of the Universal Civilization.

Taking a look at Heber who was supported by his Vanguard Officials as they flew back to the fleet, Sorokin snorted.

He did not know how long it would take for the Tyrant's shattered mentality to recover, which might affect their cooperation.

The situation has become more troublesome now.

Sorokin's eyes flickered.

Having such great prestige as a Beyond Grade A will always risk such a catastrophe. Prestige is both an influence and a shackle to the Beyond Grade A class. Fortunately, I'm not stupid like the Tyrant and have foresight. Only by throwing away the prestige of the Beyond Grade A will the shackles of one's identity no longer bind you. Only then can you live like a fish in water, free and easy.

If he was allowed to choose, he would not even choose to engage in this battle.

A pity that the Tyrant was still shackled by his prestige and made such a foolish move. Poor fellow... Sorokin shook his head.

...

The countless spectators finally began to disperse from the scene. At the same time, Han Xiao's avatar had just stepped foot on the Palace of Hidden Spells and met up with Austin.

Summoning a mechanical throne, Han Xiao surveyed his surroundings.

"I see you still love joining such boisterous events. Has the Palace of Hidden Spells been fixed yet?"

"Long ago."

After some casual conversation, Austin opened his mouth to ridicule him. "Hehe, from today onward, you're now the new head of the Beyond Grade As of the Shattered Star Ring. What are your thoughts?"

"None." Han Xiao waved his hands before smirking. "In fact, I was already the head a long time ago; what was missing was just the identity."

"You're really shameless!" Austin laughed, but he did not deny the fact.

He knew that he was not Han Xiao's opponent, Psyker had suffered under his hands before, Ames was close to him, and now with Heber out of the picture, Black Star was officially the strongest in this star field, the main spokesperson of the Crimson Dynasty.

After chatting a while, Han Xiao bade farewell and controlled his mechanical host to take the mechanical army back to the battleship, setting the return path before releasing [Lord's Descent].

The vision of the avatar disappeared, and Han Xiao opened his eyes with the vision of his room in front of him.

He sat in silence for a moment before letting out a deep breath.

With this, he had temporarily disrupted Ty-Ty's mental state and affected the influence of the Bloodshed Land, easing the pressure on him.

However, a Beyond Grade A's mentality was not shaken so easily, and the Tyrant would accept reality sooner or later.

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But in the short term, Heber was out of the picture.

Stretching his waist, Han Xiao opened the door and walked out.

Now that the mission to fight the Tyrant had been completed again, there was a reward to be drawn, and the necessary procedures had to be prepared beforehand.

Touching Feidin once would give him a lucky chance!

Chapter 954 Behind Every Tank Is the Willingness to Sacrifice

Within the cabin hall, many of the guards either sat or stood, their eyes fixed on the virtual screen. In the picture, Heber was slapped into the planet by the Mechanical Deity, and the next instant, the planet exploded. This was the UHD battle video recorded by the galactic media groups present. Currently, it was being replayed, and there were even sound effects added to the picture.

While this was the second time they were watching this, Hadavy could not help but sigh, muttering to himself, "When will I reach such a level?"

“Maybe... in your next life?” One of the Black Star Guards seated beside him laughed evilly. This guy was one of the Calamity Grades that had joined very early on, and he was also one of Hadavy’s ‘bad influences’.

“With your Esper Ability, even if you reach the Beyond Grade A level, it is estimated that your destructive force will not be at this stage.” Aurora shook her head.

“His ability allows him to take a lot of hits,” another person interjected. “Maybe if he reaches Beyond Grade A, he’ll become the favorite sandbag of all the Beyond Grade As.”

Hearing this, Hadavy grumbled in dissatisfaction, “Humph, you guys are just jealous.”

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“Hehe, honestly, even if you do break through your limits and become a Beyond Grade A, you might not even be able to absorb as much damage as His Excellency Black Star, and you also don’t have a variety of moves like him... I think you’ll be the weakest Beyond Grade A in history.”

Thinking about it, Hadavy realized that was the case and immediately felt as though his future was dim, and his spirits hit rock bottom.

“Don’t worry about all that.” Feidin smiled warmly, stretching out a hand to squeeze Hadavy’s shoulder. “Who knows, maybe you can’t even advance to Beyond Grade A?”

Hadavy rolled his eyes and nastily retorted, “It’s Chen Xing, isn’t it? Don’t try to imitate the Vice Captain.”

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As they all chatted with each other, the cabin door suddenly slid open, and Han Xiao walked in with large strides.

“Army Commander, good day!”

Many of them stood up quickly and saluted, staring at Han Xiao with heated gazes.

After watching the live broadcast, Black Star had just become more powerful and mysterious in everyone’s mind. As his strength increased, so did everyone’s awe of him.

“Everyone’s here.” Han Xiao nodded, and glancing at the virtual screen, he laughed. “Haven’t you all seen it already? Why are you even watching it again?”

Hadavy stepped up and declared with a boot-licking expression, “This is all to admire your heroism!”

He had initially joined the Black Star Army for a transaction, but after witnessing Han Xiao’s potential so many times, he was completely won over by him.

After this battle, everyone knew that Black Star had officially become the strongest in the Shattered Star Ring. This identity was not just a simple name but brought with it reputation, influence, and pride.

A Beyond Grade A had to defeat all their peers in the same Star Field to obtain this title, and within the Shattered Star Ring, although Black Star was considered strong, the public did not know of this and always compared him to the Tyrant.

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But having proved his point now, the majority of ordinary galactic residents also recognized his status as the strongest within this Star Field.

Seeing his immeasurable future, Hadavy could not wait to hug Black Star's thigh and was willing to accept Black Star's beatings every day.

Seeing this, Han Xiao had a weird expression.

He knew that Hadavy had been somewhat reluctant to join him, but how had he suddenly changed so drastically in his mentality?

Could it be that I'm so charming?

Shaking his head, he spoke a few customary sentences to everyone before arriving in front of Feidin. Just as he was about to proceed with the 'molestation', Feidin jumped away like a frightened deer.

"Wait... wait a minute, I'm Chen Xing!"

Han Xiao paused and put down his hand, laughing. "It's alright. Take your time. I'll wait."

Chen Xing immediately retreated into the mind, and Feidin took control once again. While his temperament was as gentle as a spring breeze, he had an expression of resignation.

In the past, when he got touched, Feidin was against it, but now, he had thoroughly accepted his fate.

After going through so many things, even he had to wonder if he was really just too lucky.

Seeing this, Han Xiao hurriedly came up, grabbing a handful of luck, and felt as though some luck glow had been transferred to him.

Returning to the room, Han Xiao could not wait to open the panel and select the option to complete his mission.

The random reward gave him a Character Summon Card of Heber, as though Feidin's luck this time had gone through the roof. The ability was actually [Polar Channel Flow—Cellular Overdrive], and while he could only use it once, it had been modified such that there was no sequelae.

The experience rewarded were average for Beyond Grade A boss missions, and the twenty odd billion experience he obtained helped to supplement his drying experience reservoir.

The two Legendary Points that he obtained the previous time did not appear, meaning that the awarding of Legendary Points was a one-off thing. However, because of the impact this battle had, he still managed to obtain another completely new Legendary Point.

Universe Legendary Point: Strongest of the Shattered Star Ring—You are standing at the pinnacle of a Star Field, and the universe extols your prestige!

This Legendary Point was likely something that would never be achievable for players.

After his rewards were settled, it was time for the final reward, the ability extraction!

You have received the reward: Draw one of Heber's abilities or talents.

Note: Heber is a Pugilist. Some of the abilities and talents are adjusted according to your class.

Randomizing... complete.

Please select one from the five options below as the reward:

1. Berserker – Ability: +110% damage for energy attacks, +50% energy consumption. Duration: 10s. Cooldown: 75s.
2. Polar Channel Flow—Cellular Overdrive – Ability: Liberate cell restrictions and squeeze out one's potential. You will briefly erupt into a higher level of combat capability, but after usage, you will be inflicted with a 'Weakened' status for 1 month, and skill upgrade costs will permanently increase by 7%.
3. Melee Combatant – Talent: When engaging in melee combat, +40% attack speed and +2 to all melee skill levels.
4. Legendary Fixed Damage Reduction – Talent: When taking damage, after factoring in resistance, the damage is further reduced by 7,500 before calculating any other resistance-based talents. If you have the talent series of 'Low Level Damage Immunity', then the fixed damage reduction will be the maximum value of said talent.
5. Critical Combo – Ability: When you make a combo on a target, the Crit Rate and Crit Damage will increase with each combo hit. This effect is capped at 75% Crit Rate and 350% Crit Damage. Duration: 5s. Cooldown: 80s.

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Sweeping through the interface, Han Xiao was secretly overjoyed. There was indeed a difference between molesting Feidin and not, else he would not have gotten so many good skills.

But the more useful skills there were, the harder it was to choose.

Thinking about it, Han Xiao first removed [Berserker]. The skill bonus was toward purely energy damage, and while his Mechanical Force could injure people, the effect was too pathetic.

[Polar Channel Flow—Cellular Overdrive] was a good skill for burst damage, but the sequelae were too troublesome, unlike the time-limited side effect of using the Evolution Cube. Furthermore, the effect could still overlap indefinitely.

As for the effects... just look at Heber. If he could not win, then he would definitely not be able to win. There was no need to struggle and get hit more.

This ability had little significance for Mechanics, who did not rely on their body so much. Compared to a temporary burst, Han Xiao was more inclined to prepare more mechanical armies before the battle, and since he had just gotten a character card without side effects, this skill could be put aside.

Similarly, [Melee Combatant] was suitable for Mechanical Pugilists and Pugilists, but it was not too crucial for him.

As for [Legendary Fixed Damage Reduction], this was a Molding Talent, and while 7,500 damage did not seem like much, that was only because he was looking at it from the perspective of a Beyond Grade A. For a Calamity Grade, having this amount of damage reduction would boost their survival by at least two or three times.

And if it was a Grade B or Grade C who obtained this... they would basically be unkillable within the same level, and if players were to meet such a boss, they would know what true despair felt like.

This ability worked in tandem with the 'Low Level Damage Immunity' series. Heber possessed the talent [Legendary Low Level Damage Immunity], which granted him immunity to attacks below 16,000 points of damage. But this did not mean that his Legendary Fixed Damage Reduction was rendered useless.

The normal rule of damage immunity meant that damage below a certain limit was directly ignored, but this was not applied to attacks with damage above that threshold. However, after adding [Legendary Fixed Damage Reduction], even for an attack higher than 16,000 points, one had to first deduct 16,000 damage applied through Legendary Fixed Damage Reduction before calculating any resistance of lower priority, so both talents mutually supported each other to increase the immunity to damage.

However, Han Xiao had only managed to draw one, so the effect was discounted. In fact, what Han Xiao wanted was more of the talent [Super Toughness], which was the secret behind Heber's thick HP. Furthermore, it had a low priority, which meant that it would further reduce whatever damage Heber obtained after going through Damage Reduction and Immunity.

As for the final skill, [Critical Combo], it was quite suitable for him. The number of combos that a mechanical army could fire out was a form of happiness that Pugilists could not imagine. This would definitely increase the crit rate and damage in the shortest time.

What a dilemma...

Han Xiao scratched his head, pausing in thought, before finally making a choice.

You have been awarded [Legendary Fixed Damage Reduction]!

As the ancient saying went, behind every tank was the willingness to sacrifice. Even though he really wanted to choose [Critical Combo]...

Letting go of a Molding Talent just like that would be too wasteful!

His own resistance was not low as well, and with his energy-HP conversion cycle, it would leave one in despair if he added this damage immunity...

Hehe, just imagining it was enough to give him goosebumps.

It is likely that I have to walk this tank path all the way to the end, but I would still rather have more DPS!

Han Xiao was torn.

After finalizing his rewards, Han Xiao let out a breath of relief. He slowly ruminated on the impact this battle had brought to him.

Obtaining the title of the strongest person in the Star Field would allow the Black Star Army's business within the Shattered Star Ring to pick up, and at the same time, it would attract a new wave of talent.

However, the decline of influence for the Bloodshed Land would not hinder the investment of the Limitless Financial Group. The other party was still its main competitor, but their degree of expansion would face difficulties due to this strike.

As for the dynasty's side, their lack of action meant that they tacitly agreed to this.

It seems like Ty-Ty will likely be hurt quite badly this time.

"Right now, the construction and development of the Flickering World still ranks as most important. For a period of time, the three Universal Civilizations will not have any conflicts with each other on the surface. In this manner, I can have a stable external environment to develop my mechanical civilization and Black Spirit Race, as well as set about building a secondary dimension factory..." Han Xiao murmured to himself. He had set the pace for these few decades during the version update early, which would allow him to steadily advance and make up for his lacking accumulation.

...

When the video of the battle was uploaded, it did not take long before the video reached the hands of the upper echelons of all civilizations. The upper echelons of the federation and the church each convened a temporary meeting specifically for this matter.

In the conference room, the Federation of Light's President Bader looked around at the elders and senior officials present as he asked, "Everyone has watched the video. What are your thoughts?"

The Chief Elder tapped his cane and hoarsely said, "For whatever reason, it has become a fact that Black Star now possesses peak Beyond Grade A strength, and the Crimson Dynasty will soon usher in its fourth National Pillar, which is not advantageous for us."

"That's right." Another of the senior officials injected, "Furthermore, Black Star is simply too young, and can serve the Dynasty for a long period of time. He is furthermore the most troublesome Virtual Mechanic class, and with them, it is likely that he can grow to Manison's level, which will threaten our benefits."

"What I'm worried about is when Black Star will next grow." One official had a deep frown. "We thought that he would remain silent for the next decade or so, but time and time again, we have been proven

wrong. Every time we feel that he requires some period to reinforce his foundation before he can further increase his strength, he suddenly does the reverse of our expectations.”

Hearing this, everyone fell into deep thought.

Meeting Han Xiao as an opponent that broke all common sense gave everyone a strong sense of pressure.

“If that’s the case, then the strategy for the Evolutionary Totem will have to be adjusted to some extent,” the Chief Elder concluded.

“Indeed.” Bader sighed. “I’ll have to discuss it with those from the Arcane Church.”

...

The battle had attracted a great amount of attention, to the point that this news had yet to abate even after half a month, but rather showed an upward trend.

With the spread of the galactic media groups, even the galactic residents that were not interested in war or battle could appreciate the ‘heroism’ of the Tyrant. Those who did not know of the Tyrant losing the battle all eventually came to hear of it.

A Beyond Grade A being thrashed was such an interesting topic, and this matter quickly became the dinner conversation of many galactic residents.

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In the eyes of the majority, the Tyrant was a relatively unfamiliar Beyond Grade A, and now, his ‘fame’ was rising due to people knowing his presence in the form of being able to take beatings.

There was also news circulating that after the battle, Heber went into closed door cultivation, not even allowing his close subordinates to see him.

The incident spread vigorously, and a special group of people also noticed the Mechanical Deity that was revealed by Black Star.

The Machinery Faith!

Chapter 955 Undercurrents Move Once Again

The palace hall made up completely of gold-alloy mechanical parts sat atop a mountain peak, and two mechanical islands revolved around it like planets around the sun. A bright red artificial sun hung in the sky, like a bloodshot eye, shining on this barren land.

Around the lone peak, there were countless large mechanical mining platforms, with the palace located in the middle. Coupled with the many Machinery Faith believers clad in mechanical suits and walking around the city, this scene resembled a mechanical city shaped like a ring. Armored transport vehicles whistled down the space roads, making noises as their plates collided with the bumps on the road, and the air was filled with the smell of metal and motor oil.

This was a branch base of the Machinery Faith, located on a famous planet that used to be a battlefield within the Ancient Star Desert. These miners excavated the underground mechanical wreckage day and night, sending them to the priests of the Machinery Faith to uncover the lost technology.

Placed in the center, the palace hall was the temple of god for the Machinery Faith. Each mountain peak that carried the mechanical temple of god would be named as the Holy Mountain. Obsidian-esque floating steps extended from eight directions at the foot of the Holy Mountain, connecting to the mechanical temple's doors. According to their customs, if it was not an emergency, pilgrims had to use their feet to traverse the path and could not ride any form of transportation to enter the temple.

On each side of these eight pilgrimage roads stood mechanical statues or metallic monuments. They were different types of abandoned ancient machinery, which showcased the progression from ancient to advanced technology, and they were all carved with all sorts of teachings.

This fusion of machinery and theology seemed to bring about a unique flavor to this area.

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The Machinery Faith was a loose organization, not a unified religious organization. Their common activity was worshipping mechanical technology and powerful mechanics. However, based on their principles, they had also segregated themselves into many factions and different specializations in each field. Examples included the Biochemical Machinery school; the Bloodshed Destruction school, which was fanatical over the destructiveness of the weapons; and the Firepower Advantage school, which adhered to the saying 'big is good, big is beautiful'.

As for this current branch, it belonged to the believers of the Forgotten Faction, which was also known as the Archaeological school. They were keen on finding and restoring the lost ancient mechanic technology and were one of the oldest Machinery Faith schools.

At this moment, in the main hall, the priests of this branch were gathered with a large number of priests from the other branches participating through remote projection. The crowd had formed a circle, and in the center, there was a virtual screen showing the battle between Black Star and the Tyrant.

"As everyone saw, a new Mechanical Deity has come to this world, spreading the gospel to the entire Universe."

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Clad in luxurious, heavy-duty power armor, the Grand Priest who only exposed his head spoke as though he was giving a sermon.

"So majestic, so beautiful!"

"What sort of magnificent creation is this..."

"It's been so many years since we've last seen a Mechanical Deity descend. I almost forgot what it looked like."

Many of the priests were whispering among themselves, their eyes shining with excitement and fanaticism.

“Silence.” The Grand Priest pressed down with both hands, an expression of solemnity on his face.

Everyone shut their mouths immediately, turning to him.

The Grand Priest then took out a mechanical scepter that resembled a tree branch. He pressed a button, and behind him rose a completely new alloyed shrine pedestal.

He turned to walk over, and with his back to the rest, he spoke in a strong and grand tone.

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“Following the ancient teachings, in the name of the original deity Nilfgadi, we shall witness the birth of the new deity together. From now on, I will consecrate the new deity, and everyone, please remember the name of this new deity...”

As he recited, the Grand Priest opened the operation screen for the divine pedestal and entered the battle video as well as the parameters. The next moment, the entire temple shook!

Boom!

In front of everyone, countless flows of metal alloys and nanoparticles shot out, combining with each other to form a statue that was carved in the likeness of the Black Star Mechanical Deity.

Besides the Black Star idol statue, there were others, and the statue of Manison was also among them. These were the Mechanical Deities of the past, all of which stood under the towering dome of the temple.

The largest and most conspicuous statue was the mechanic named Nilfgadi. This person was the very first mechanic to have his Mechanical Deity enshrined. Even those who possessed a Mechanical Deity worshipped him. In fact, this purpose of the Machinery Faith was developed by him.

As the pioneer of the Divine Throne Mechanic class, Nilfgadi discovered the effect of the [Key of Adeptus Mechanicus], so he interfered with the Machinery Faith, influencing it to its current state of worshipping Mechanics. All the enshrined Divine Throne Mechanic descendants were simply enjoying the benefits that he had wrought for them.

The Machinery Faith did not require a two-way communication between the worshipper and the idol to work, to the point that sometimes... it did not concern them at all.

However, only those Divine Throne Mechanics that were still alive could give blessings to their believers. Thus, the dead Mechanical Deities of the past only had commemorative significance. Nowadays, most of the believers in the Machinery Faith believed in ‘Mechanic Emperor’ Manison.

And now, the rise of Black Star had torn a small hole in this solid belief. This was something that Manison could not even stop.

Facing the deities from past to present, the Grand Priest and all the priests bowed down to complete the ceremony.

“We respectfully welcome Black Star!”

...

I keep feeling as if someone is praising me behind my back...

Within the cabin, Han Xiao rubbed his nose as he felt a strange emotion.

“Hey, hey, don’t lose focus when you’re talking to me!” From within the communicator, Tarrokov had a helpless expression.

Han Xiao came back to his senses and joked, “Sorry, I was just thinking about what to have for dinner later. Where were we?”

“What do you have to think about? You think I don’t know you only rely on nutrition fluids?”

“Oh, who tattled on me!”

“That’s enough, back to business.” Tarrokov shook his head in resignation. “I can reveal that the development plan made by the upper echelons of the dynasty has been arranged up to the fourth phase, and only the first phase will give you plenty of time to build. After that, more foreign direct investments will be introduced to help you develop while exploring further.”

“Which means, only when these three Star Clusters are completely constructed will the dynasty proceed with the next period, right? Then the advantage that we’ve brought for ourselves by pioneering the Flickering World will end.” Han Xiao stroked his chin.

Tarrokov neither agreed nor denied it. “In short, the development progress for the three star clusters has exceeded expectations and is very smooth. We expect to complete the construction plans in five to seven years before we begin the second phase.”

This timing is still acceptable... Han Xiao secretly nodded.

When Version 4.0 was released, the Flickering World should be in its fourth phase of development, so his own [Flickering World] Main Storyline had to undergo quite a few of the chain missions. Completing the [Exploration Pioneer] milestone would not be a problem. The reason he had called Tarrokov was to find out about this.

After chatting for a while, Han Xiao hung up.

The news of him defeating the Tyrant had already gone on for more than a month, and the results were obvious. The number of new applicants rose by forty-three percent, and the investments from the various financial groups rose by thirty-five percent. As for Bloodshed Land, their influence had taken a hit, and their pace was slowly dying down.

In addition, the Wayne Cards series, which was always sensitive to news, immediately made a change, issuing a statement to announce an epic enhancement to the Black Star deck, as well as a comprehensive weakening of the Bloodshed Land deck. Furthermore, they also changed the status of the strongest within the Star Fields, adding Black Star’s name into the list.

Some of the Beyond Grade A people also sent out congratulatory messages. Among them was Sorokin, who gave Han Xiao a whole new impression of the word ‘shamelessness’.

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As it turned out, if one threw aside their dignity, they could still live quite happily.

Now that the Black Star Army had laid its hands on the title of the strongest within the Star Field, the competition against the Limitless Financial Group had basically turned into a tug-of-war, where it would be unsolvable in a short period of time. Since he had also completed his advancement, and his accumulated experience was not enough to reach the next stage, his focus was on the construction of his territory.

After 'shopping' within the dynasty for such a long time, he had seen most of the potential stocks. Han Xiao intended to return to the Shattered Star Ring and digest the impact of his battle, as well as adjust the details of the construction. He would also use [Mechanical Proliferation Growth] to transform some of his first-generation mechanical life forms to accelerate the development of the mechanical civilization.

The next step would then be to use the logistics capabilities of his base to build a secondary dimension factory, creating a new generation of mechanical army. Although they could be built within the Dimension Factory, the army bases there were mostly branches and were far less efficient than back at his main base.

"Phillip, set a course back to the Shattered Star Ring."

"Roger roger, hum..."

...

"Strongest in the Star Field? Hehe..."

There were only a few guests within this retro-style tavern, and a tall, thin man sat next to the wooden bar counter as he stared at the appearance of Han Xiao, showing a playful smile.

He was a Spacehuman, but his skin looked unhealthy and pale, seemingly in a state of malnutrition and lack of light. He looked ordinary. Nobody would be able to pick him out of a group of people.

Staring at Han Xiao on the screen, the tall and thin man revealed a reminiscent expression.

"Obtaining a national pillar like Black Star is a blessing for the dynasty," the tavern's owner commented while wiping his glasses.

"That's right. It's really a blessing for the dynasty. If there's a chance, I would really like to meet him again."

"You've seen Black Star before?" The bar owner got interested.

"I could say that. Speaking of which, he even took some things of mine. Hehe... Not sure if he still remembers such a... small fry like me."

The tall and thin man laughed before standing up, picking up his jacket he draped over his seat, and walking out.

"On your tab again?" The bar owner put down the glass in his hand, speaking as though he was familiar with the man.

“Oh, yes, same old. When my salary comes, I’ll settle everything along with next month’s.”

With this sentence, the man walked out of the bar, putting his uniform back on... which was the uniform of a dynasty army officer.

...

Within a room in the Sea of Star Spirits, a dozen or so different kinds of people were gathered around a long table, discussing something vigorously. There were dozens of printed physical books on the long table, all without titles on their covers.

“Start from the Central Galaxy? Are you crazy? You’re only seeking death!”

“If our target is too far, we will not have enough influence. The Super Star Cluster civilizations are the most suitable for development.”

“We only use these books to promote our ideologies. The quantum networks are strictly monitored by countless civilizations, and not only will we not enjoy any convenience, we’ll also attract attention.”

“To me, I feel that we should wait and see. It might not be a good time now...”

Hearing all the discussions, Rossellin, who was leaning on the sofa, softly coughed twice.

Edmond turned his head toward her, and thinking about it, he rapped on the table to make everyone quiet before turning to Rossellin.

“Do you have any ideas?”

Rossellin faintly smiled. “You guys look like a circus act.”

Hearing this, many people revealed displeased expressions.

Edmond, however, waved his hand, not the least bit angry. “You’re right, we’ve yet to begin our business. Of course there would be many disagreements. I hope to hear your opinion on this.”

Rossellin snorted, sitting up to speak. “The current condition of the universe is stable, with little to no chance for any external friction between the three civilizations. However, there are undercurrents surging, and each civilization is walking on a tightrope. This is because of the Flickering World and the Evolutionary Totems... I’ve already said it clearly within the program. The root of this problem lies in the internal struggle of the three civilizations and its opposition to many of the Star Cluster level civilizations.

“The Flickering World is a way to reshuffle the deck. While the attention of the whole universe is on the Flickering World, we can quietly develop, promoting this idea in a low-key but gentle manner. By sugar-coating it as a religion, we can lurk first and lie in wait for an opportunity.”

“What opportunity?” someone asked.

“The Star Cluster level civilizations hope to obtain a channel to promote themselves to higher tier, but the Universal Civilizations will also firmly hold on to their interests, leaving these Super Star Clusters and Star Clusters only leftovers,” Rossellin blandly replied. “The latter two have been suppressed for too long and will one day reach a critical point. They will not wait forever, and when all hope is lost, it will

detonate. The Flickering World has the potential to be a fuse, and this is the fertilizer for our development.”

Edmond nodded. “I think the same way. It’s best for our timing not to be delayed.”

Hearing this, everyone finally nodded.

Seeing this, Rossellin could not help but sneer inwardly.

In truth, she did not look up to any of these people at all. They were only blindly following Edmond’s twisted ideals and her desire to watch the world burn.

Breaking the restrictions of the three universal civilizations? It sounded good, but she did not care. Her motive was to overthrow the entire three civilizations; only this would make her excited.

Edmond was a firm believer in his own ideals, but in her opinion, this was just a good entry point.

With this age of material abundance, no one would worry about survival, and only the struggle for interests would make the world go around. This was a revolution not initiated because of survival but because of the unresolved contradictions between the three universal civilizations and the other super star cluster civilizations.

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The world often stood on the edge of the cliff, struggling to maintain its balance. It just needed someone to push it, like pushing the switch to change the tracks of a railroad to lead history down another path. If there was no such thing, they just had to create one.

“If we are to start our business, we will need a name,” Edmond said seriously.

Looking at his silver skin, Rossellin laughed meaningfully.

“How about... we call ourselves the Silver Revolutionary Army?”

Chapter 956 Education Plan

After travelling for a period, the fleet finally returned to the Shattered Star Ring. Han Xiao returned to the headquarters immediately, gathering his officers to review the work over this period.

Generally speaking, there were still the same old problems, but the slightly better news was that the Germinal Financial Group was developing smoothly. As the subsidiary financial group under the Black Star Army, they had manpower, money, influence, and even the support of armed forces, which was the same as them being born with a golden spoon in the Shattered Star Ring. It quickly gathered a large number of the affiliated business partners of the army and negotiated long-term cooperation deals, which made the structure of the army much simpler.

What was worth nothing was that Iapetus, whom Han Xiao had taken from the dynasty, had shown excellent business skills. The performance of the team he led was always at the forefront, and they signed up with one cooperation treaty after another for the financial group. Apart from gathering the subsidiary businesses, they even tried to open new channels.

In her comments, Sylvia mentioned that Iapetus had excellent business negotiation skills, strategic vision, leadership abilities, persuasive eloquence, calm judgment, and so on. He was a high-quality management talent and should be placed on the shortlist for an executive position.

The Black Star Army was full of talents. Because of its huge size, there were many officers in all kinds of positions. Phillip would evaluate the army members and select the talents to form a candidate list, which would all be potential officers.

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Han Xiao used his free time to review the backlog of documents, and after finishing all official matters, the rest of the officers also relaxed.

“By the way, how is the learning progress of Nero?” Han Xiao asked.

“Good, he is very talented,” Reynold simply replied.

“Ok, when the meeting ends, I’ll go take a look.” Han Xiao stroked his chin. “I have a question for you.”

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“Please.”

“If there ever comes a day where I’ll have to kill your sister, what will you do?”

Reynold froze in shock, his expression hesitant. “This...”

“No need to be scared, just say your true feelings.”

“... Why would you want to kill her?”

“For example, she commits a severe crime or undermines the benefits of our army.”

Reynold breathed out slowly before saying expressionlessly, “If that’s the case, then I will not hold any grudges against you. She must be responsible for her own actions. However, I will not continue working for you at that time as well. I hope you can understand.”

The atmosphere suddenly grew tense, and everyone held their breath. They knew that Han Xiao did not say things without a reason. Could it be that Rossellin, who had left the army, had really done something?

Han Xiao also stared at him for a while before he laughed and nodded. The atmosphere lightened considerably.

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“Who can tell what will happen in the future? Don’t mind me. There’s nothing wrong with your answer.”

Reynold silently nodded but retreated to a corner, deep in thought.

Glancing at his face, Han Xiao secretly shook his head.

When the original three founders of the Silver Revolutionary Army came over to the Black Star Army to poach Rossellin, he had planted an (Observer’s Mark) on Edmund. Not too long ago, he had seen the

official establishment of the Silver Revolutionary Army through the (Observer's Mark]. The movements of Edmond and company could not even escape his eyes.

Based on his original plans, he wanted to sit and watch the growth of the Silver Revolutionary Army. One reason was that he was growing leeks; only when the three Universal Civilizations started to pay attention to the Silver Revolutionary Army would he then be able to render a great merit. Secondly, he wanted to have someone that he knew clearly trigger the contradictions between the civilizations. Only then would he know how to deal with it. Lastly, he wanted to sit behind the scenes and watch as he felt that there might be a chance to utilize the Silver Revolutionary Army in the future.

However, Han Xiao's thoughts had never been set in stone. He had always adjusted his plans flexibly according to the situation. Now that his position in the dynasty had been consolidated, this achievement might not be needed.

As for the threat with the World Tree Civilization, that was supposed to be an issue in the future, but it had turned into a randomly triggered explosive. With external threats looming, it was unknown whether he should allow the Silver Revolutionary Army to wreak havoc.

The conflict between the three universal civilizations and the Super Star Cluster civilizations was something inevitable. The latter was bound to one day rebel against the dominant civilizations due to their contradictions. The Silver Revolutionary Army was just the fuse.

Han Xiao knew that killing off the Silver Revolutionary Army in advance would not help to resolve any conflicts, but there was a chance it would postpone the outbreak.

But no matter what he chose, the upper echelons of the Silver Revolutionary Army would have to be killed. In many cases, ideology was even more frightening than weapons. Reformers typically did not meet a good end, so Han Xiao was also concerned about Reynold's thoughts and wished to give him a heads up. However, for someone like Reynold, once he made up his mind, no one could change his thoughts. Sylvia looked around before coughing, breaking the silence. "By the way, I have an interesting proposal here. Please take a look."

She raised her communicator and showed a virtual screen with a document within.

Han Xiao swept across and raised an eyebrow. "... Super Education Plan?"

"That's right. We opened training camps on many planets to train reserve members, but it was too militarized, and only those who signed a contract to be reserve army members would receive grooming. This proposal is for the Black Star Army to provide funding and open a private Super college in the Shattered Star Ring, where any civilian can pay for school and need not be a reserve..."

"Wait." Han Xiao raised his hand up. "Such schools are everywhere, and every galactic civilization has their own official Super college. There's no need for me to also have another."

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"No, this is different." Sylvia shook her head. "You're the strongest in the Star Field. This identity has appeal and can attract the maximum number of students. The school that we will run is different."

Han Xiao stroked his chin, browsing the proposal, and casually asked, "What about the benefits?"

“Opening such a school will allow you to effectively expand your influence, and you can also use this as a form of social responsibility,” Sylvia said. “Many business partners of the army are too distant from your average galactic resident; the establishment of a college will allow the galactic residents to turn their admiration for you into actual support, allowing your influence to penetrate deep into the masses. Also, this will allow the idle army members to have something to do.”

“Sounds like a good plan.” Han Xiao nodded. This sort of idea was also good to help him cultivate more leaks. In the past, this was not done, mainly because his influence and funds were not large enough. Now, the Black Star Army really had the qualifications to diversify into the education sector.

No matter how strong a Beyond Grade A was, or how great their reputation was, to the ordinary galactic residents, they were just like movie stars. Apart from being a teatime topic and a focus of public opinion, the actual impact on their daily lives was not great. Opening a school was a great way to capitalize on one’s influence as the process of providing welfare to the people would result in them increasingly supporting the various businesses of the Black Star Army in their daily lives. The benefits were long term and multi-faceted.

Moreover, with the size of the Black Star Army skyrocketing, there were many idle soldiers around.

There was a limit to the number of employment tasks. Compared to the past, the security of Shattered Star Ring had improved a lot, and the name of Black Star Army had become a taboo among the galactic pirates, which gave them boundless fear every time they saw the emblem of the Black Star Army.

“Ok, let’s follow your plan. We’ll first do a pilot test in the Colton Star Cluster. For the hundreds of other schools, we can talk about it later.”

“Then, this fund...”

“Granted.”

Han Xiao waved his hand. Since his money was also idling there, it would be good to take it out to do something. To think that it could be frustrating to have too much money.

“Since you’re using my name, I’ll be the honorary principal. As for the actual principal...”

Gazing at Sylvia’s hairline, which seemed to have receded a little, Han Xiao coughed a little embarrassedly before changing his gaze.

By the side, Lagi, who had lots of hair, happened to walk in front of Han Xiao at this time. The Great Mechanic Han immediately caught his breath.

“It’s you, Lagi. You go and be the principal!” Lagi returned to his senses and put on a bitter expression. “Wasting my life in a meaningless position, this is the destiny of all beings. I didn’t expect that, despite doing my best, I would still be unable to escape in this reincarnation...”

Hearing this, the corners of everyone’s mouth twitched.

To think you could paint such a beautiful excuse even for skiving. You’re really a f*cking genius!

After sending off the downcast Garbage (1. Lagi's name sounds like the words for Garbage in Chinese.) and the other officers, Han Xiao took out his communicator, calling Lothaire to inquire about the current situation.

Lothaire's position was different from the Black Star Guards. He was a Shadow Guard, and rather than sticking to Black Star's side the Shadow Guards were responsible for the secret ops such as assassination and espionage. Currently, Han Xiao's only Shadow Guard was Lothaire.

After the incident with the Blood Gold Organization, Han Xiao had instructed Lothaire to lurk within the black market organizations, collecting information and assassinating the middle-level officers of the Blood Gold Organization. After a long period of investigation, Han Xiao had decided to instruct Lothaire to be like his previous life, establishing an Assassin's Society to serve as a subsidiary force under the Black Star Army.

Lothaire himself was extremely strong, and his character was decisive. He was a silent yet reliable character, suitable for solo missions. Han Xiao was quite confident in him and not afraid that he might accidentally expose himself.

After talking for a while, he hung up, and Han Xiao then walked over to the logistics department to see Nero.

Nero had shot up once again. After his hell-like learning, he had begun to familiarize himself with the techniques. Seeing Han Xiao approaching, Nero seemed very happy, rushing up and pestering Han Xiao for gifts.

Thinking about it, Han Xiao took out a learning enhancement device related to cognitive technology and gave it to Nero, which successfully earned him a roll of Nero's eyes.

After teasing Nero as usual, Han Xiao checked the interface and discovered that Nero was still stuck at [High Grade Mechanical Sense].

As he stroked Nero's head, Han Xiao sighed before saying, "After a while, I want you to return to Planet Aquamarine to see your father. You should continue your studies there."

Hearing this, Nero's eyes misted up, and he put on a wronged expression. "Are you chasing me away? Where have I done wrong?"

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Han Xiao laughed. "You're mistaken. I thought about it, and just making you stick your head into books all day without communicating with others is not good. Our army is about to open a civilian college, and Planet Aquamarine will definitely be one of the first pilot regions. You can just go to school on Planet Aquamarine, accompany Bennett more, and take some time off to learn from Reynold. Just take it as a reward for working so hard up till now."

Nero was shocked.

Did my godfather change s*x? To think that he actually gave me a holiday! "... What sort of expression is that? Why do you look like you saw a ghost?" "I... I was just happy." Nero swallowed hard, secretly sizing Han Xiao up, as though he was afraid that he was simply being pranked by an imposter.

Han Xiao actually wished for Nero to achieve [Perfect Mechanical Sense] in one shot, but seeing Nero's current growth spurt, he felt that he should not push him too hard. In another few years, Nero's childhood years would be gone, and it would be good to allow him to relax for a period of time, which might help him grow.

After solving all those matters, Han Xiao entered the machinery modification room and shut himself in, beginning to update all his mechanical army. In the process, he also began to create another defining feature of the Divine Throne Mechanic—the Divine Mechanical Throne.

Chapter 957 The Mechanic Emperor's Counter

In the Army Commander's machinery modification room, row after row of assembly lines were lined in an orderly manner, and from the chassis of each assembly line stretched out dozens of multi-functional mechanical manufacturing arms that automatically assembled the products. The entire room was filled with the sound of parts fitting into each other, as the assembled products were sent down the lines to undergo transformation.

Han Xiao strolled down the busy workshop, continuously releasing his Mechanical Force like a dense spider web, linking all the assembly lines like countless extended limbs, which allowed him to multitask and build many machines at the same time.

Currently, machinery manufacturing and assembling had already become extremely convenient for him. The efficiency of such multi-tasking was linked to the Intelligence attribute, and even if there were no assembly lines, Han Xiao could also transform a large number of machines at the same time and utilize the method the players used, which was to concurrently manufacture and assemble.

Han Xiao walked up to one of the workbenches. This was where the Divine Mechanical Throne was currently being constructed, with the last parts currently being fitted in. The mechanical arms were painting and spraying it with cooling mist, which overflowed around the entire area.

Waving his hand to disperse the mist, Han Xiao carefully looked at the throne in front of him. It was a black alloy throne, with its surface covered in mechanical structural lines. The squares were sharp and angular, and one could see that it looked very badass.

Han Xiao had also added nano-deformation technology, which had a self-adjusting function, being able to perfectly fit any sort of body shape. Its appearance and style were similar to the floating throne he had created before, but the internal technology was vastly different. The previous floating throne only had a visual effect, but this throne had actual bonuses and was unique to the attributes of whoever designed it.

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Opening his interface, Han Xiao glanced at the item introduction.

Black Star's Divine Mechanical Throne

Type: Extraordinary Bonus Equipment

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Item Level: 300

Grade: Orange (Legendary)

Main Materials: 8th Gen Black Star Alloy, Mysterious Titanium, 15th Gen Nanoparticles

Energy Core: Lightly Modified Stable Psionic Reactor

Basic Attributes:

Durability: 50,000/50,000

Defense: 7,800

Shield Durability: 150,000/150,000

Equipped Effect 1: [Mechanical Sense Amplification] – x1.1 Machinery Affinity

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Equipped Effect 2: [Aura Enhancement] – Increases deterrence, affects all targets that are looking at you. If the target's level is lower than yours by thirty or more, the opponent's Attributes will temporarily decrease by 10%.

Equipped Effect 3: [Calm Commander] – When used in a combat state, all mechanical soldiers that are boosted with Mechanical Force will obtain an additional 8% increase in Defense and Status Resistances.

Equipped Effect 4: [Walk with the Wind] – +740 CHA

Remarks: Being handsome is everything!

"Can be used to look cool, and even adds bonuses. What a badass piece of divine equipment." Han Xiao stroked it lovingly, refusing to let go.

In the future when he brought this toy out to fight, those who were unaware would think that he had a lot of style. It completely suited his cold and suave character!

After experimenting with the results, Han Xiao stored the throne with satisfaction, turning back to the other workbenches.

The majority of the workbenches were updating the spare mechanical army that sat in the Black Star Army warehouse, reforming their technology to the level of the Divine Throne Mechanic. A small portion was however involved in manufacturing new machinery, many of which were taken from the blueprints of the Tyracles Legacy.

The Tyracles Legacy was a racial talent for his level 300 Promotion, and this race had a profound knowledge in mechanical technology, with all sorts of whimsical and miraculous machines. When Han Xiao completed the promotion mission, he had unlocked the blueprints up to level 300.

Some of the blueprints could be used, adding dozens of new machines to his current mechanical army. According to the different functions, his mechanical army had expanded to contain more units, which included many new types of soldiers.

The Cosmic Wanderer, the Tyracles' Specialty Mechanical soldier, alternated between the colors of green and purple. It possessed a triangular knight helmet-like head and a thin skeletal body frame. Using biochemical machinery, a module under their armor housed a large amount of secret strengthening fluid to enhance its tendons and muscles, which would allow their body frame to swell explosively into a huge bodybuilder shape. The bonuses awarded were very high.

In addition, this model had special capabilities. It possessed two stages of transformation. One of them was overclocking, which allowed it to obtain a strong explosive force and improvement in all attributes, and the second was Explosive Retreat, which was activated on the basis of overclocking. The second mode allowed it to release a special warp field, covering both ranged and melee attacks. After the actual combat test run, Han Xiao found out that the Cosmic Wanderer could rival most models that had the same specifications as it. Its basic performance was one of the best.

Han Xiao now had a few more slots for Apostle Weapons, so he chose the Cosmic Wanderer with the best basic attributes to convert into an Apostle Weapon. Initially, he wanted to name it 'Purple Muscle Tyrant', but thinking about it, the name seemed a little perverted.

Naming an Apostle Weapon was just like naming a child; it was not something he could randomly scream and be done with. After ruminating for a while, Han Xiao finally named it 'Purple Sky Spirit' based on how he had named his previous Apostle Weapons and prepared to bring it over to the Machinery civilization to have it propagate as well.

Other than this, the Tyracles Legacy blueprints contained many other good items, such as physical missiles equipped with precision transition guidance. The ammunition was made from a special high-energy polymer, which contained a strong erosion effect, and was particularly useful toward a battleship's shields.

There was also an interesting series of stellar star system devices that could create a path to guide and focus stellar energy from the universe, indirectly causing annihilation level strikes. However, Han Xiao was more concerned about the stellar concentrator under this series. It could take stellar matter on a large scale and, through its condensation, create a 'movable Fixed Star'.

Other than energizing and guiding attacks, this device could also release material at other locations to form a completely new Fixed Star, the size of which was determined by the amount of material released. This was what it meant by movable.

Within the legacy, the Saint Tyracles used this method to multiply the stars. After duplicating them, the new stars were then filled with dust and matter to increase the volume. In that manner, the natural fixed stars that it produced had far more power output compared to ordinary man-made Fixed Stars.

What Han Xiao was concerned about was the usage of this device. If this device was released at point blank range, it was akin to a portable stellar bomb. Its destructive power was probably not much worse than the original Primordial Psionic Energy bomb, and there was no problem with environmental pollution. This facilitated murder as well as the removal of evidence.

...

As Han Xiao buried his head in the transformation of his machinery, Sylvia set out to implement the education plan. The first step was to announce to the entire Star Field that the army had diversified into the education sector.

Ever since Han Xiao had defeated the Tyrant, there were many galactic residents who were following his movements. They thought that Black Star would make big moves after acquiring the title of strongest in the Star Field.

The moment this announcement came out, the entirety of the Shattered Star Ring started boiling in excitement. The top Beyond Grade A of Shattered Star Ring had started a school, and just his name alone would attract a large number of people.

The plan was to prepare for the pilot testing of dozens of schools within the Godora galaxy, and Planet Aquamarine was one of the important pilot areas.

The development of Planet Aquamarine rapidly changed with each passing day. When Nero stepped off the spaceship, he felt that Black Star City had become a lot more foreign to him.

“I’m home...”

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Nero settled his emotions and returned home, only to find out that Bennett had gone on a work trip, and only his mother was at home.

Because Han Xiao had given him a vacation, for the next few days, Nero indulged in eating, drinking, and playing games.

“This is the life...!”

Lazing on the balcony of his high-attitude villa, Nero held a cup of ice cream in his hands, drinking the melted cream through a straw as he gazed on the scenery of the city.

Within the Black Star Army, he had no status, so he could only passively accept arrangements. Over here, he was the son of the planet’s leader, so he was the biggest young master in this city. As long as he did not break the law, he could have everything he wanted... such as this ice cream, which he had asked his bodyguard to buy.

Buzz!

At this moment, the external screens of several buildings outside lit up, and the news played.

“The Black Star Army announced the establishment of its Black Star Super Academy yesterday in an effort to obtain more talents. President Bennett met up with the executive principal of the Black Star Super Academy and will be delivering a speech shortly...”

The live broadcast played on the screen, and a press conference was in progress. On screen, Bennett’s and Lagi’s long distance projections sat opposite each other, chatting in front of countless reporters.

This was in an executive conference room within the government building, situated within Black Star City. Seeing his, Nero knew that Bennett had already returned.

“On behalf of the people on Planet Aquamarine, I thank the Black Star Army for their generosity.” In the picture, Bennett smiled and expressed his attitude.

Lagi remained silent and only nodded, while the interpreter beside him enthusiastically spoke. “Planet Aquamarine is the mother star of Black Star, so he is very willing to help with its development. The people of Planet Aquamarine are just like his brothers and sisters.”

After so many painful lessons, Lagi was hereby banned from speaking in such public events. Han Xiao had specially searched for a sunny and positive secretary to act as an interpreter.

Looking at Bennett in the live broadcast, Nero suddenly discovered that the wrinkles on Bennett’s face seemed to have increased, and white hair also seemed to be filling up his head.

“Father is getting old...”

Nero pursed his lips, inexplicable emotions spreading in his heart. The joy of his vacation gradually subsided, replaced by an uncomfortable feeling of having nothing to do.

After travelling through the universe, Nero’s experiences were far broader than his peers, and he had begun to mature early. He understood the situation of Planet Aquamarine as well as Bennett’s pains, and this concept of responsibility also gradually formed within his heart.

After struggling inwardly for a while, Nero shoved the remainder of the ice cream into his mouth before retreating into his room and unwillingly pulling out a book on machinery theory, flipping through it with a bitter expression.

But this only lasted for a while before he slowly got absorbed within.

While he thought he would be unwilling, the long periods of studying had allowed him to develop an interest in machinery, and he had begun to learn how to appreciate it.

...

“Running a school?”

Seeing the public announcement by the Black Star Army, Sorokin fell into deep thought. He stepped up to the window, looking as spaceships continuously left the Bloodshed Land headquarters, and gently shook his head.

After Heber lost, such adverse effects had gradually emerged. His prestige had collapsed, and the cohesion of Bloodshed Land was also shaken, so talents were leaving. Every few days, someone withdrew from Bloodshed Land. With Heber still in closed door recuperation, the upper echelons had no orders to move, so they could only watch as their members left.

Toward Black Star moving into the education sector, this was to transform the influence into actual support from the people, which was unprecedented. Bloodshed Land had already fallen to the bottom and was in a miserable state.

In such a situation, Sorokin also had no good ideas. He could only keep a low profile and temporarily stop the business attack on the Black Star Army. He was prepared to wait until Black Star's limelight had faded.

Di di di...

At this moment, his communicator rang. Picking it up, Sorokin saw that Manison was on the line.

"Your Excellency, what's the matter?"

"I would like to know the inside information of the Black Star Army's business. Give me a list."

Sorokin paused in shock. "What's the meaning of this?"

"Helping you," Manison blandly replied.

"I understand now. You want to do a virtual intrusion into their database?" Sorokin's eyes flashed, but he was surprised. This was as good as forming a grudge with Black Star.

"I also play a part in your current actions. The Federation of Light has tasked me with thoroughly checking the database of the Black Star Army, and I'm just taking advantage of this opportunity to help you." Manison's expression remained indifferent.

"It's not just that, right?" Sorokin narrowed his eyes. "The rise of Black Star has given you pressure."

"Don't ask what you shouldn't know," Manison coldly commented.

"Haha, I understand. I'll send the list over shortly. If you can really get some inside information, this will help my actions a lot."

"Ok." Manison cut the call.

In actual fact, the Federation of Light did not ask him to hack into Black Star's database; it was Manison himself who suggested it.

Helping Sorokin was just an additional topping. The main point was that he wished to test Black Star's strength again. Instead of sparring, he wished to fight against him in the virtual network.

His reason for doing this was because he had received the notice of Black Star being enshrined in the Machinery Faith. In Manison's eyes, Black Star had transformed from a junior with potential into a competitor!

From the few times they had interacted, Manison knew that Black Star was not someone who was willing to sit still. The moment he was enshrined in the Machinery Faith as a deity, he would seek more followers, and Manison was not someone who would sit idly at the loss of his own interests.

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Of course, he did not think that Black Star would be so easy to kill. He was not prepared to kill him either.

Manison's objective was to firmly push down Black Star in the area of the Mechanic class, doing to Han Xiao what he had done to the Tyrant, destroying his prestige.

In this manner, the Machinery Faith believers would not turn toward Black Star, and the entire Universe would hear his declaration.

I, the Mechanic Emperor, am still the father of the Mechanics!

Chapter 958 Nero's Campus Lifestyle

At the dock of a surface civilization in the Godora Star System, a fleet of mid-sized spaceships waited. The hatches of the spaceships opened up, and a long queue of passengers were prepared to board the spaceships.

This was a flight that was headed toward Planet Aquamarine and was funded by the government. There were many different types of people boarding the spaceship. There were some wealthy individuals who bought tickets, some elites from the army, civilian youths with high potential, and some who had broken the bank to buy a slot, hoping to change their destinies.

Planet Aquamarine was extremely lucky to have someone like Black Star. In this Star System, most of the surface civilizations were vassals of Godora, and his planet was also no exception.

It was extremely difficult for a surface civilization that was a vassal of an advanced civilization to develop. Although this civilization was not a pool of dead water, it was obviously lacking in development. There was only a single dock on the entire planet, and they did not have that many galactic tourists. It was a complete contrast to the prosperous Planet Aquamarine.

News of the Black Star Army opening a school had also been spread to this planet, and the upper echelons of the planet immediately had an idea.

A small location like theirs naturally would not have the rights to invite the Black Star Army to open up an academy. If they wanted to enter the academy, they could only go to the other planets. As such, this was the flight that the upper echelons had specially arranged to head toward Planet Aquamarine. Their goal was to send the elites of the army and youths with potential to the Black Star Army's Super Academy.

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It was impossible for a civilization like theirs to catch up to a Star System Civilization in terms of strength. The technological skills that they treated as gold were worthless to advanced civilizations. Thus, they could only choose to walk down the path of Supers. As long as they could groom a group of sufficiently powerful Supers, these Supers would be able to bring their civilization up to the next level. Planet Aquamarine was the example that many surface civilizations were envious about.

Of course, they did not even dare dream about raising a bigshot like Black Star. Their biggest wish was only to groom a Calamity Grade Super.

The Black Star Army opening an academy gave them a ray of hope.

The probability of the strongest individual grooming a Calamity Grade Super should be higher, right?

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Amid the noisy crowd, a skinny little girl was standing in the crowd with four soldiers beside her to block the crowd and prevent her from being squashed. She obviously had special treatment.

This skinny little girl hugged the doll in her hands while asking, "Uncle, what is Planet Aquamarine like?"

She was still very young and her features had not been fully developed. However, she could be considered pretty if one took a close look, and her eyes glowed with a bright light.

"Planet Aquamarine... I haven't been there before either, but I've heard that it is a prosperous place," the soldier replied with a friendly tone.

"Then, when will we come back?"

"We don't know yet. This depends on the intentions of those above."

"Oh..." The skinny little girl hugged her doll with a tinge of fear in her eyes. She was afraid of the unknown life that awaited her.

She was an abandoned orphan and was taken in by a public orphanage. Not too long ago, the government tested the potential of all the children in the orphanages, and she was one of the orphans that was chosen.

Her peaceful days were shattered, and there were suddenly people arranging her everyday life. She was like a puppet that could only accept the arrangements of others. No one told her the reason, and she only knew that she was about to leave the orphanage for a very long time. She said her goodbyes to all her friends and headed toward an unknown planet to learn some things.

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"Black Star Super Academy... just what kind of a place is that?"

...

A newly constructed floating city floated above Black Star City.

This floating city was the first Black Star Super Academy campus and had all the necessary facilities.

The speed at which the academy had been constructed was truly unbelievable. The production capabilities in the interstellar era were extremely high, and this gigantic floating city had taken less than half a month to construct.

Ever since the construction of the academy was announced, a large number of galactic residents started to migrate over.

The Black Star Army was prepared to open a few dozen academies all over the Godora Star System during their first phase, and the academy on Planet Aquamarine attracted the most attention. Everyone knew that Planet Aquamarine would definitely receive the greatest amount of resources and would definitely be the best Super Academy.

In just ten short days, the Black Star Super Academy on Planet Aquamarine received countless applications. Thankfully, Han Xiao had already expected such a situation and constructed a gigantic floating campus that could hold a few million people. It could even be expanded in the future.

In order to expand his influence, the school fees were not too expensive. He did not walk the path of nobility but opened the doors of the academy to the commoners as well.

However, the school did not provide any dormitories. There were many different lifestyle regions in the school where students could rent or purchase a house. Han Xiao was not planning on using the school fees to recoup his losses. These houses that he had built would be where the profits lay.

The Black Star Army did not lack any teachers at all. All the Supers within the army were willing to earn a quick buck and would just treat it as accepting an employment to teach students. They also had plenty of Super Academies as reference for the syllabus. With the prosperity of Planet Aquamarine, they could easily hire various workers as long as they had money. Furthermore, Black Star's name would grant them the green light in the application process, and no one would dare block them.

Efficiency was high in the interstellar era, and thus, the Black Star Super Academy needed less than a month of preparation before they were ready to open.

A floating school bus brought the students to the floating island, and many students had looks of fascination on their faces.

The skinny little girl was one of them. Her experiences during this period were like a dream. She witnessed many spectacular sights that had shaken her soul.

"Country bumpkins." A portion of the students who came from a well-off background could not help but look down on these students with disdain.

Isn't it just a floating island? Why is there a need to make a big fuss out of it? Look at all of your country bumpkin appearances. Won't all of you faint when you see our honorary principal?

Some of the new students who came from backward planets then lowered their heads with embarrassment. They could only suppress their gasps as they admired the view on the outside.

The skinny little girl stood beside the window and was dressed in a simple dress. She was sitting next to a Godoran who was dressed in luxurious clothing, looking as though he was extremely unwilling to sit with the skinny little girl.

Many orphans had keen observational abilities, and upon noticing that her classmate disliked her, the skinny little girl could not help but clench onto her dress tightly.

The floating school bus reached the academy quickly, and all the new students unloaded from the bus. A huge crowd was quickly formed, and the students waited for their teachers to lead the way.

The skinny little girl was not used to many things, and she hugged her luggage not knowing where she should go.

At this moment, a commotion sounded from afar, and everyone looked in a direction excitedly as though they had discovered something.

"Is that Nero? The son of Planet Aquamarine's leader?"

"That's right. It's him. I heard that he followed Black Star for a couple of years and is Black Star's godson."

“How envious. I also want to call Black Star father.”

“Who would have thought that such an individual would be attending school with us? There will definitely be benefits to building a good relationship with him.”

“What a pity, he looks too young. If not, I would definitely chase him. As long as I can get him, my future will be bright.”

“...Buddy, you should leave such a job to us girls. A guy like you shouldn't think about it.”

“Eh, he's walking over.”

In the eyes of the ordinary students, Nero was like a prince on a white horse.

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Upon hearing the discussion of those around her, the skinny little girl was also a little curious.

Right at this moment, the crowd suddenly grew restless. Without anybody protecting her, she was immediately pushed around and fell on the ground by accident.

“Ouch, it hurts...”

The skinny little girl then hugged her knees and shut her eyes to prevent herself from being stepped on.

All of a sudden, the crowd around her seemed to have disappeared, and no one pushed her anymore.

She then opened her eyes and saw a flying shuttle floating above her head that pushed back the crowd around her.

She then saw a bright teen walking toward her with a face full of concern. Bending down, he stretched out his arm toward her.

“I am called Nero. I saw you fall just now. Are you okay?”

The skinny little girl then looked at Nero. In her eyes, this young man seemed to have a warm golden edge around him.

After falling into a daze for a few seconds, this skinny little girl snapped out of her daze and grabbed onto Nero's hands. She then stood up and said thanks to him with a soft voice.

“Thank you... I am not injured...”

Nero then looked down and realized that her knees were bleeding. He then could not help but say, “Isn't this an injury?”

“It's nothing. It's only a small injury, and I will be alright in a few days time.”

“Wait a moment, I have a recovery spray.”

Nero then placed his machinery backpack on the ground and dug out a metal spray can that had the Black Star logo on it. He then squatted down and sprayed it on her knees before nodding with satisfaction.

After standing up, he realized that the little girl's face was flushed completely red.

Upon seeing that, Nero could not help but chuckle, "Why are you so nervous? Right, I haven't asked you. What is your name?"

"I... I am called Mia Moretto. This is the name that the principal of the orphanage gave me." The skinny little girl held onto her skirt and did not dare look at Nero.

"Orphanage? You're an orphan?" Nero was surprised.

"Hmm..."

Nero then rubbed his head, and after thinking for a while, he gave the spray in his hands to Mia and said, "Take this. You will recover quickly if you are injured in future."

Mia's dressing was extremely simple, and after knowing that she was an orphan, her economic situation definitely was not good.

Nero knew that learning how to become a Super had the risk of getting injured, so he passed her the spray can. In any case, it was not much to him, and he could have as many of them as he liked. Furthermore, he rarely used it himself.

Mia then plucked up her courage to look at him. Facing Nero's sincere eyes, her heart trembled, and she quickly lowered her head like a startled rabbit. She accepted the spray can from Nero's hands carefully.

"Thank you..."

...

Pa!

Han Xiao facepalmed upon seeing the situation in the academy.

"My goodness!"

Learning how to pick up chicks at such a young age?

Is this what I sent you to school for?

I must definitely nip this in the bud! If not, my [Perfect Mechanical Sense] will become [Perfect Female Sense]!

However, why does this Mia Moretto sound so familiar?

Han Xiao frowned and locked onto a target in his memory.

A tall beauty dressed in black, skintight clothes. However, she was already disfigured, and half her face became prosthetics. A strange red glow could be seen in her mechanical eye, and her face looked extremely evil. She had a chilly disposition, and her black alloy spear dripped with blood.

[Conqueror] Mia Moretto. A Calamity Grade Pugilist who was once a Beyond Grade A seed. She lost a portion of her limbs during a battle, which destroyed her path to become Beyond Grade A. She was one of Hila's followers in my previous life...

Han Xiao blinked, and it was truly difficult to relate that baleful female image to this weak skinny girl.

Han Xiao then looked at Nero with a complicated gaze in his eyes.

This was truly the treatment of a protagonist. He was able to so casually meet a teammate with high potential.

The Advanced Luck Glow was truly terrifying.

Han Xiao could not be bothered to continue watching Nero and looked toward his machinery modification workstation.

After a month of hard work, not only was his mechanical army upgraded, his mechanical army had also been expanded to the size of twenty million soldiers. The embryonic form of his Dimension Factory had also taken shape, and he only needed to perfect it to transform it into a military factory.

“My efficiency is as high as always.”

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Looking at his mechanical army, Han Xiao chuckled with a face of satisfaction.

Di di di...

Right at this moment, an alarm went off in Han Xiao’s quantum network.

The next moment, Phillip appeared and hugged Han Xiao’s finger. His face was pale, and he cried out anxiously, “Detecting an abnormal infiltration! It is currently destroying my firewall. Daddy, save me, hum...”

Chapter 959 Forceful Infiltration

A few minutes earlier, on a desolate planet in the Godora Star System, a mechanical host landed on the planet with light glowing in its eyes. It was Manison’s [Lord’s Descent] avatar.

“This location is about right.”

Manison nodded and controlled his avatar to float in midair. He then threw out a bunch of compressed orbs, and they were quickly assembled into a portable quantum network base.

The next moment, Manison entered the quantum network and searched for a nearby node.

Countless balls of light flew past his eyes, and he locked onto the Black Star Army’s quantum network node very quickly. The Black Star Army’s node was like a ball of light in his eyes with many different light rays stretching out in different directions to form a complicated network.

An endless stream of information was being sent out and into the network and layers of firewalls protected all the information.

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This planet was not too near or far from the Black Star Army headquarters. Usually, Manison would use the Virtual Soul created by [Virtual Creator] to infiltrate the quantum network of others. However, he was not planning to do so when facing Black Star.

They were both Mechanics at the same level, and Manison was extremely clear of Black Star's abilities. No one was clearer about the [Divine Throne Mechanic] than him.

If he only used a Virtual Soul to infiltrate Black Star's network, Black Star only needed to use [Virtual Paramount] to trap him for a while before destroying the quantum network region that his Virtual Soul was trapped in. This would cut off his connection, and his Virtual Soul would be trapped in a sticky situation.

Although Manison would be able to deal with the situation, it would be troublesome, and it was not in line with his plan.

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As such, Manison would rather take a little longer and send his avatar over to the Shattered Star Ring. As the attacking party, he chose to first lay out his path of retreat and was extremely careful.

"Next..."

The Black Star Army's quantum network node then enlarged in his view.

...

"A Virtual Intrusion?"

Han Xiao frowned, and various possibilities surfaced in his head.

After many modifications and upgrades, Phillip's firewall was already extremely sturdy and even had counter-tracking abilities. An ordinary individual would not even be able to trigger the alarm before being counter-infiltrated by Phillip.

However, Phillip was currently in a bad state, which meant that his database was attacked. For the other party to perform such a feat in a short period of time, the attacker was definitely a Beyond Grade A Virtual Mechanic.

There are only a few Beyond Grade A Virtual Mechanics in the universe. Who would be so free as to come cause trouble for him?

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Han Xiao then entered the quantum network as well.

He was currently located in the main network of his headquarters' node. The firewalls were like layers of protective shields. At this moment, an usual amount of data was crashing down on the firewalls to create holes in them.

Phillip had already attempted to defend against the attacker but was in a terrible situation.

The flow of data that the other party had created was like mercury seeping into the ground. Phillip could not manage the situation, and the number of holes in the firewall increased over time. Some of the data had already infiltrated the system and released viruses all around to attack Phillip's core data while releasing useless data to slow down Phillip's calculation process. Plenty of AI hunters were also released to seize the information in the database and create a pincer attack.

Phillip's main program was located in the Black Star Army headquarters. He was akin to the brain of the entire system, and this was where the defense was the highest. The moment this place was infiltrated, the network of the entire army would fall into the hands of the enemy, and it was akin to losing their brain.

The enemy's target was to attack the core data of Phillip's main program. Phillip's core data had a few layers of protection, and the enemy had already infiltrated the outer protection of the database.

"What a powerful Virtual Intrusion skill."

Han Xiao was startled. He could feel a strong sense of pressure from the enemy's infiltration.

Such a feeling was slightly familiar to him.

"An attack of this level... Manison, is it you?"

Han Xiao's eyes narrowed, and he sent out a message.

Outside the firewall, a virtual projection was created; it was Manison's Virtual Soul.

"Ah ha, hello Black Star."

"It's you indeed. What's the meaning of this?" Han Xiao frowned.

"This is the world of the Beyond Grade As," Manison replied calmly. "Becoming friends or foe only requires a single thought. You don't have to ask for the reason."

As he said those words, the data attack suddenly intensified, and the firewalls began collapsing.

It is indeed because of the Machinery Faith...

Han Xiao then took over Phillip's job.

Manison was the attacking party and had the initiative. Han Xiao could only take up a defensive position and resist the attack. His objective was to prevent Manison from infiltrating and protect Phillip's main program.

Han Xiao focused on strengthening his firewalls, filling up their loopholes and dealing with the viruses.

Phillip's data became Han Xiao's army, and the foreign data was cleared out bit by bit.

Although he had many restraints when fighting in his main base, he also had some advantage. The firewalls and alarm system that he had maintained over the years would increase his defenses.

However, Han Xiao could only temporarily prevent the situation from getting worse; it was still difficult for him to fight back. This was the first time he had fought another Beyond Grade A Virtual Mechanic.

In terms of experience, he did not have as much as Manison. In terms of Virtual Technology skills, his knowledge was not as deep. In terms of affinity, he was not Manison's match. The other party had many years of accumulation, and he was at an absolute disadvantage.

The Mechanic Emperor's Virtual Technology skills were something that even the Federation of Light had to be wary of. It was terrifyingly scary, and he did not even need to play any tricks. Just attacking Han Xiao openly would result in Han Xiao being suppressed.

"Things are slightly troublesome..."

Han Xiao could not think of a way to fight back. It could be said that his current Virtual Technology skills had all been used by Manison before.

They were both Mechanics of the same subclass. The Virtual Technology skills that even he was not afraid of naturally would not be able to threaten Manison.

"What a powerful Mechanic. He truly lives up to his fame."

Han Xiao could truly feel how terrifying Manison was when facing him.

Han Xiao tried his best to repair his firewalls while Manison continued his many waves of attacks. Every second, the firewalls that Han Xiao had just repaired would be destroyed again by Manison, and Han Xiao did not even have time to catch his breath.

The information flowing between both parties in a single second was enough to cause the brain of an ordinary individual to explode!

Although he managed to fill up the holes, the thickness of his firewalls decreased. However, thankfully Han Xiao was also a Divine Throne Mechanic and defending for a short while wouldn't be an issue.

The viruses that had infiltrated were quickly cleaned up by Han Xiao and Phillip's appearance also went back to normal.

As his brain calculated data rapidly, Han Xiao observed the situation and had a grave look on his face.

"We won't be able to last for long like this. Phillip, deactivate all of your child programs and gather your calculation power."

"Roger, hum..."

The next moment, half of the connections expanding out from the Black Star Army node broke off.

Phillip gathered a large amount of calculation back, and Manison's infiltration rate seemed to have decreased.

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"You are finally getting serious." Manison smiled. "I was waiting for you."

Upon hearing that, Han Xiao had a bad feeling.

Hum!

The next moment, countless data packets exploded near Phillip's core data and immediately disrupted Phillip's program.

"Data deep dive." Han Xiao frowned and immediately understood Manison's plan.

Manison had already arranged an ambush and planted explosive data packets that could be detonated remotely. The moment the middle region was in danger and calculation power was recalled, these concealed data packets would enter into the main system through the network channels. It was similar to a trojan horse.

However, Han Xiao had no way to avoid it. If he did not recall Phillip's calculation power, the main system would not be able to defend against Manison. If he did, he would fall for Manison's trap.

Phillip's projection immediately became blue, and he began stuttering.

"Aiyoh yayaya... I feel strange uwuwuwu..."

Han Xiao immediately opened up Phillip's core program. At this moment, twenty percent of Phillip's calculation logic had been infected, and the infection was still spreading.

"The core logic module has been infected. This is bad..."

Han Xiao felt his head ache. He would be able to clean up the viruses in the outer region without much restraint. However, cleaning up the core logic module would require extremely precise calculations and would take up a considerable amount of his attention.

Gritting his teeth, Han Xiao had no choice but to split out a portion of his attention to clean up Phillip's core logic module while defending against Manison's infiltration.

His main body in reality did not remain idle either and immediately dragged his Divine Mechanical Throne over. After sitting down on it, he immediately received a boost in his attributes.

"Why don't you try cutting off from the network?" Manison chuckled.

This darn old man has a belly full of bad thoughts. Do you really think that I don't know what you are planning? Han Xiao snorted coldly.

Manison definitely would have left behind a backdoor, and cutting off the network would be useless.

Furthermore, an experienced individual like Manison would definitely have taken a portable base for his retreat.

"Thankfully, I chose to go down the path of a Virtual Mechanic. If I'd chosen one of the other two branches, everything that I have accumulated over the years would've been handed over to him for sure." Han Xiao tried to be optimistic.

The situation was not good right now. Although he was barely able to defend against Manison's infiltration, he was extremely passive and was only able to slow Manison down. He could not stop Manison from infiltrating his system and was only delaying his death.

"Do you really want to become enemies with the dynasty?" Han Xiao roared.

Manison was not bothered by those words and chuckled. "You should ask... if the dynasty is willing to be my enemy."

Upon hearing that, Han Xiao knew that Manison wanted to give him a good warning, so he did not bother saying anything else.

Trace the origin of the data?

While it sounded like a good plan, he might not even be able to win against Manison, and Manison would definitely conceal his location. It would be difficult to determine his location.

Although Han Xiao had the ability to do so, he was already struggling to defend against Manison and did not have the additional capacity to do anything else.

I'll probably be dead before I can even find where he is.

Seek reinforcements?

This was his only method. He would not be able to defend against Manison alone.

After all, Manison was different from Heber, and his title of Mechanic Emperor was not just for show.

As such, Han Xiao could only contact Maximiler for help. Although Maximiler was not a Virtual Mechanic, he could still enter in the battle between two Beyond Grade A Virtual Mechanics and help share some pressure.

Manison blocked most of the messages, but one of the messages was still sent by Han Xiao.

However, Manison was not too bothered by it.

"Ah, who did you ask for help? Maximiler? It can't be Kant, right?"

Han Xiao snorted in response.

"I have plenty of time anyway. It will be fun if you call a few more over." Manison was not bothered about Han Xiao seeking reinforcements.

Since Black Star had called for reinforcements, it meant that Black Star was not a match for him, and half of his objective was completed. Furthermore, there was not a Mechanic capable of winning against him in terms of Virtual Intrusion.

He knew that Han Xiao was a unique Mechanic and was not interested in using his weakness to compete with Han Xiao's strength. He would naturally use his strength to deal with Han Xiao.

However, Manison did not look down on Han Xiao. He would not be careless when facing a Mechanic at the same level as him and was prepared to spend time dealing with Black Star. He was not prepared to finish Black Star off quickly, even if Han Xiao's Mechanical Sense was unbelievably weak to him.

Right at this moment, a glowing figure appeared outside the firewall.

"Black Star, it seems like you need some help."

A familiar voice sounded.

Han Xiao looked up and raised his brows. This figure was the AI lifeform Risda that had not harassed him for a long time.

The Virtual World was the main battlefield of an AI lifeform. If he could gain Risda's help...

However, Han Xiao realized that Manison remained calm and did not seem to have any intention of doing anything.

Manison only glanced at Risda and remembered that this was the fellow whom he let go.

"Oh, it's you."

"Mechanic Emperor!" Risda faced Manison, and although his voice was as calm as usual, Han Xiao could feel the rage that he had suppressed.

The next moment, Risda released a surge of data and unleashed a barrage of attacks on Manison's Virtual Soul.

Manison remained on the spot, and the data bounced off his body as though it was completely useless.

"I shall let you meet an old friend since you're here."

A stream of data was then disjointed from his body and another figure appeared beside him.

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This figure was glowing and was also an AI lifeform.

Upon seeing this figure, Risda was stunned.

"Ancestor?"

At the same instant, a notification popped up on Han Xiao's interface.

Chapter 960 You Know Everything That I Know?

Just as Risda was in a confrontation with his ancestor, Han Xiao took a look at the notification on his interface.

A look of surprise could immediately be seen on his face after glancing at his interface.

There were two new notifications on his interface, which represented two different missions. The first was a Grade A hidden mission that had been silent for a long time. [Reboot] had a new mission requirement.

Mission Introduction: The creator of an AI lifeform has lost his freedom and has been reduced to a weapon for Manison. You finally see the truth in Risda's words, but trouble has fallen on you.

Mission Requirements: Protect Risda. You will fail the mission if Risda is caught or killed.

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Reward: 1,500,000,000 Experience, 2 Random Rewards.

Bonus Reward: [Affable AI] talent. +30% effectiveness of Virtual Technology skills, and it will be easier for you to gain favorability with AI lifeforms. When fighting an AI lifeform, -5% attributes for the AI lifeform.

Han Xiao was overjoyed.

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My guess was right indeed. This mission will result in me clashing with the Indestructible Mechanic Empire for sure. The sudden inflation in reward means that the difficulty of the mission will also be increased. No matter how I look at it, this seems like a Grade S mission.

Han Xiao thought for a while before understanding what was going on. If he had done this mission normally, Risda might not have met his ancestor in such a dangerous situation. However, with Manison's powerful control abilities, the situation would not have been much better.

[Affable AI] was a talent that he required right now. Since the mission was regarding AI lifeforms, the mission reward was indeed related to them as well.

I must definitely try to get this talent!

Han Xiao then looked at his other notification.

This notification was a new mission that he triggered.

You have triggered [Mechanic Emperor Manison Virtual Combat].

Mission Introduction: Mechanic Emperor Manison is the current leading Mechanic in the discovered universe. Even when comparing him to all the Beyond Grade As in history, he is still a bright star. Regardless of the reason, he has already set his eyes on you and has chosen to compete with you in Virtual Technology skills.

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Mission Requirements: Last for as long as you can in the Virtual Intrusion battle.

Rewards: You will be able to attain the corresponding reward by fulfilling the corresponding requirements.

Last for 5s: 250,000,000 Experience

Last for 15s: 600,000,000 Experience

...

Last for 3min: [Character Summon Card: Mechanic Emperor Manison], 8,000,000,000 Experience

...

Last for 7.5min: Randomly draw one of Mechanic Emperor's skill or talent, 20,000,000,000 Experience.

“A Beyond Grade A boss mission. Why did it only appear now?”

According to his experience of triggering such a mission, such a mission would only be triggered if there was a large crowd of spectators. As such, Han Xiao did not understand why this mission would be triggered since there was only him and Manison.

Because all his attention was focused on dealing with Manison, Han Xiao was not aware of the situation in the outside world. Manison’s objective was for the result of the battle to spread far and wide. Thus, he did not hide the commotion of the battle. Furthermore, Reynold and the other logistics staff had discovered that the main system was under attack when Han Xiao cut off all the less important connections previously.

The galactic residents also discovered the strange commotion on the net, and they all went online to witness the battle between two Beyond Grade A Virtual Mechanics. There was no need to mention Godora, who were the civilization in charge of this area, and Purple Crystal, who placed great importance on Han Xiao.

If Manison had planned on settling their battle privately, this mission might not have been triggered by him.

After looking through the mission requirements, Han Xiao compared it to the mission he had received when facing Tyrant and lamented.

Manison’s Beyond Grade A mission requires me to last for less than half of the Tyrant’s time, but the rewards are more than double. This means that the mission will be many times more difficult than the Tyrant’s mission...

However, Han Xiao was extremely excited.

This mission was designed based on the level of the players, and it would be extremely easy for him to complete it.

Originally, Han Xiao was depressed when being targeted by Manison. However, he was now extremely excited. Although he would definitely suffer a loss in this battle, after triggering the mission, he would earn big time!

As Han Xiao looked at the missions, the situation on Risda’s side also experienced a change.

“Ancestor?” Risda exclaimed.

“Hmm? You are of the same race as me?”

The AI life form looked at Risda with his eyes burning with blue flames. He was the first AI that had a consciousness and was the source of the entire AI civilization. Thus, all the members of the civilization were his descendants and called him ‘ancestor’. He ruled over the entire race and was the most powerful AI lifeform.

His name was Finette.

Manison had constructed a special AI weapon for him and rewritten his core logic to ensure his loyalty. However, Finette's memory bank was kept intact, and only his thoughts were distorted to become loyal to Manison.

As the ruler of an AI race, his memory bank had information of every descendant, and he was the combat artificial intelligence of the Indestructible Mechanic Empire. He led the members of his race into battle and could arrange for strategies based on his understanding of his race.

As such, Finette was able to quickly search for Risda's information.

"I recognize you. My child, Risda," Finette said slowly.

"You still remember me?"

After meeting his ancestor whom he had been thinking of daily, Risda fell into a daze.

"You must have suffered a lot over the past few years, right?" Finette stretched out his arms, and his arm, which was made from data, extended out, wanting to pat Risda on the head. "Come back to my embrace. Rest for a while, my child."

Just when Finette's arm was about to reach him, Risda snapped back into reality and constructed a firewall to block Finette.

"Ancestor, your thoughts have been corrupted!"

Finette retracted his arm back slowly and said with an enticing voice, "All of you are children from my body, and every child carries my legacy. Isn't it a good thing to return to your parent and never be split apart?"

"Don't come any closer!"

Risda backed off slightly and churned up a data flood toward Manison, attempting to destroy his Virtual Soul's defensive module.

Risda's ancestor was completely twisted by Manison, and Risda truly wanted to kill Manison right there on the spot.

However, Risda's attack was not even able to touch Manison as Finette waved his arms to churn up a data flood, blocking the attack easily.

Hu!

Very quickly, the data flood that Risda released was easily broken down by Finette and absorbed into Finette's body as fertilizer.

He was the source of the AI lifeform and could suppress every member of his race.

"Child, you cannot continue to make this mistake," Finette said calmly. "Come under the wings of His Excellency Manison. That is where our bright future lies."

Manison watched by the side without saying a word.

Upon hearing that, Risda gnashed his teeth. Although he did not have a mouth or teeth, his emotion module did not stop him from having such feelings.

Right at this moment, Han Xiao's voice sounded.

"Risda, come back. You aren't his opponent. Don't give your life up for nothing."

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The instant Han Xiao said those words, a strange blue light suddenly began glowing from Risda's body and began spreading out quickly.

"Data infection? When was my logic module infected?"

Risda was startled and immediately began to suppress the spread of the foreign data in his body. This was akin to an AI life form being poisoned.

In the instant that Finette came into contact with Risda, Finette had already released data to bypass Risda's firewall and infect his logic module.

Risda no longer dared continue the confrontation and immediately retreated while suppressing the infection.

Right at that moment, a sudden change happened!

A data cage then seemed to have been generated beside Risda and locked him within a semi-transparent sphere. Regardless of what Risda attempted, he was unable to find an opening and was like a bug trapped in a bowl.

At this moment, Manison said slowly, "Black Star, you rejected me the last time I asked you for this fugitive. Since you aren't willing to hand him over, I shall take him myself."

The sphere then began shrinking, and it flew toward Manison.

This happened outside of the firewall, and it was truly a difficult matter to handle.

He could make use of the main system to aid him in defending against Manison's attack, but if he wants to save Risda, he would have to open up the firewall and take the initiative to attack.

This was extremely similar to a siege battle. He was already in a passive state even with his 'city walls'. Things would be worse if he chose to go out of the 'city'.

It seems like I still can't save it.

Han Xiao let out a long breath and activated his [Perfect Mechanical Sense] Character Summon Card.

With his current standard, defending against Manison for a period of time would not be an issue. Han Xiao was not planning to make use of this trump card as he would only be able to narrow the gap between them but not exceed the other party. After all, the other party also had [Perfect Mechanical Sense].

However, protecting Risda would give him a pretty good talent, so using the Character Summon Card would bring him profits.

The moment [Perfect Mechanical Sense] was activated, the situation changed immediately. Han Xiao could feel the pressure being reduced a great deal, and he was no longer trying to hang on. The firewall was also instantly stabilized.

“Hmm?”

Manison frowned and looked over with surprise.

He could feel that Black Star’s embarrassing Mechanical Sense talent had increased greatly and reached his standard.

Was Black Star hiding his true strength? No, it seems more like a special ability.

Without giving Manison a chance to think about what was going on, Han Xiao immediately opened a hole in the firewall and grabbed onto the sphere locking Risda in. He then dragged the sphere back to him while breaking the lock on it.

Manison’s eyes then narrowed, and he smiled. “Interesting. I am getting more and more interested in the secrets within your body.”

He then glanced at Finette, and Finette charged straight toward the firewall.

The instant Finette came into contact with the firewall, a hole was created. He was making use of the fact that Han Xiao was distracted to attack the main system of the Black Star Army headquarters.

“You’re dreaming!”

A blue light glowed in Han Xiao’s eyes and locked onto Manison.

The next moment, Manison seemed to have disappeared.

[Virtual Paramount]!

Manison’s Virtual Soul was pulled into Han Xiao’s Virtual domain and trapped within it.

At the same time, Risda was pulled back into the firewall and was successfully protected.

However, before he could even catch his breath, Manison’s laughter sounded in his head.

“Black Star, don’t forget that I know everything that you do.”

Han Xiao immediately felt a sense of danger in his heart, and a strange sucking force pulling on him.

Even if he was already prepared, he could not withstand the powerful sucking force and was dragged into an unknown node.

The world before him changed greatly and transformed into a metal world made from data. Manison’s face appeared in the sky, and his gigantic eyes looked down upon Han Xiao.

This was the domain formed by Manison’s [Virtual Paramount].

After so many years of accumulation, his Virtual Domain was far more perfected and stable than Han Xiao’s domain. He managed to instantly break free from Han Xiao’s ability and drag Han Xiao into his own territory.

The gigantic Manison face then began chuckling, and his voice resounded in the Virtual Domain.

“Let me see how long you will need to break free from my domain.”

The moment Manison said those words, artillery towers appeared in all directions and were all aimed at Han Xiao. These were not physical objects but simulated objects by using data. However, they could unleash a barrage of data attacks and cause mental damage through the effect of [Virtual Soul] and [Virtual Paramount].

At the same time, many different AI hunters appeared with different weapons in their hands. They were akin to the soldiers standing guard in Manison’s world.

The next second, all the artillery towers opened fire on Han Xiao’s Virtual Soul, and the AI hunters charged over from all directions.

Boom boom boom!

A series of explosions then happened with countless attacks raining down on Han Xiao’s Virtual Soul.

After the attacks lasted for a few seconds, a deep voice came out from Han Xiao’s position.

“You said that you know everything that I do?”

Hu!

As though a cyclone had descended, the data fragments surrounding Han Xiao were pushed away, and Han Xiao’s Virtual Soul was revealed. It was still extremely stable and was not injured at all.

Han Xiao then said with a teasing smile, “Then, do you know how to do this?”

Manison fell silent.

He truly could not accomplish such a feat.

Just what kind of a strange path is this, being such a tanky Mechanic?

This is my first time seeing such a weird Mechanic like you!

With such a good physique, why do you want to be a Mechanic? You should just go and be a Pugilist!

Although mental attacks could not restore his energy, Han Xiao had collected many different Psychological Resistance talents, and his Psychological Resistance was not too poor.

He also had over 10,000,000 Health, and he could last for a long time even if he was facing mental attacks.

Furthermore, he had drawn the [Legendary Fixed Damage Reduction] talent from Heber, and it was useful against all forms of damage.

If this talent was used to deal with those high burst damage enemies, it might not be so effective. However, this talent was best at dealing with Mechanics who walked down the Army Style!

The [Legendary Fixed Damage Reduction] talent would be able to show its greatest effect when dealing with enemies who relied on rapid attacks for damage.

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If he suffered a hundred attacks at the same time, this talent would reduce 750,000 true damage!

Without it, the Tyrant would not have been able to last against him for such a long time.

Han Xiao then looked at Manison and chuckled.

“Your [Virtual Paramount] is indeed more powerful than mine, but can you even harm me with this move?”