

Mechanic 1021

Chapter 1021 The Rise of the Players

Maple Moon answered the communicator. A person resembling a mercenary appeared on the screen, alert and evidently curious.

“This is the armed forces convoy of the New Moon Financial Group. I’m Commander Feldman. Who are you?”

Hearing this, Maple Moon felt her heart leap with joy.

The guilds had investigated the current status of Planet Harker in advance, and seven organizations occupied the planet and were competing with each other, guarding the planet in different directions. They did not want more people to further divide their resources. If one encountered the armed forces or Star System civilizations, then the difficulty of negotiation would increase.

Having met a financial group off the bat, things would become a lot simpler.

Of course, with the current capabilities of the players, it was impossible for them to investigate such situations alone. All their intelligence was derived from the Black Star Army, allowing them to query for real-time intelligence in the Flickering World. This was an excellent resource provided to the players.

Maple Moon calmed herself and said, “This is an armed force consisting of Sky Territory, Thunder Storm, Rivervale...”

Feldman felt confused.

He had never heard of all these organizations before, nor did he recognize the emblems the players used.

He had no idea where this little ragtag group came from...

Feldman shook his head, speaking in a deep tone. “Planet Harker currently does not welcome any external influences. Please leave immediately before we take drastic measures.”

“You’re mistaken. Our objective is not to set up camp on Planet Harker. You can treat us as mercenaries.” Maple Moon took out the prepared speech. “Didn’t you post a recruitment notice on the Flickering World Regional Channel? We plan to work with your financial group as a hired armed force.”

Feldman felt surprised.

Right now, what the Flickering World had in spades was open positions. Practically all the organizations were desperately trying to recruit armed forces, and those high levelled organizations were the most attractive. Small financial groups like them almost had no chance to recruit anyone in the free competition zone, so he did not expect someone to answer their call.

However, why did they not contact the financial group in advance, instead just turning up? They could not be an unsavory group, right?

Feldman thought about it, shaking his head.

He estimated that the combat strength of this group would not be too good as well, so he did not hold much hope. However, every little bit of strength mattered now.

After a pause, he casually said, "Alright, first tell me about your battle situation, then we'll consider if you're worth hiring."

Maple Moon was so excited. She had to clench her fists together. Acting composed, she replied, "Alright, our joint armed forces have a total of 7,000 Supers, of which 5,800 are Grade B..."

"Hold up, what?"

For a moment, Feldman thought that he had hearing problems.

7,000 Supers was not a lot by any means, but to actually have 5,800 Grade Bs...

Even the whole of Planet Harker did not possess so many Grade Bs!

From the perspective of Han Xiao, Grade B was only good for cannon fodder, but in the eyes of many of the galactic organizations, a Grade B Super was the core force, enough to even serve as the main combat members.

Back when Han Xiao was still roaming as a mercenary, Grade Bs were already considered experts, great figures in the eyes of the masses.

Even the mercenary groups such as the Purple Gold Army and Sky Ring, before being brought under Han Xiao's wing, never had more than a few hundred Grade Bs. If not for the two Calamity Grades holding the fort, their battle strength was negligible!

Are they trying to lie to me? Feldman's expression was full of disbelief.

Because guilds such as Rivervale and Long Sky had large numbers of peripheral members, gathering thousands of people was an easy task. The majority of players had also advanced to Grade B when Version 4.0 opened, and those who had not yet reached that grade were newcomers or small-time players.

Maple Moon pretended to ignore him, continuing to speak. "At the same time, we're a subsidiary organization under the Black Star Army. We were once the Immortals troops under Black Star..."

"Hold up some more! You said that you guys are under the Black Star Army, and the Immortal troops at that?"

Feldman began to tremble, his mouth agape.

Was this not a group of ragtag mercenaries? Why did they have such huge origins, belonging to Black Star?

His first response was to think that he had been scammed!

In his eyes, Black Star could be considered a galactic giant, unattainable by mortals. The New Moon Financial Group that he worked for could not even be compared to a fart from Black Star himself, but the Immortal troop from the Black Star Army was their famed trump card, so why would they even run over to accept their employment?

Feldman immediately accessed the public channel of the Black Star Army to check on the information of these organizations. What he saw gave him a huge scare!

Sky Territory, Thunder Storm, Rivervale, and the other organizations mentioned were really semi-independent affiliated organizations of the army. Their members were all made up of Immortals, and they had been registered not too long ago!

On Maple Moon's side, the other professional players such as Frenzied Sword were observing Feldman's expression of shock as though he was a frog in a well, and they screamed out internally with pride, feeling greatly satisfied innately.

Just mentioning the name of Black Star made the other party fall into a state of shock.

It's good to have a backer!

Because of the unparalleled realism within the game, the players could deeply immerse and interest themselves. Seeing the reactions of the NPCs often gave them a sense of accomplishment.

Thus, everyone wished to borrow the prestige of the Black Star Army to improve their own influence. In a general employment relationship, the mercenaries would not have the chance to divide the resources within the planet, but with the name of Black Star, the conditions could be re-negotiated.

The choice to not monopolize the planet, instead cooperating with other organizations, was due to their lack of funds. Mining equipment required money and manpower. If one found an NPC organization to cooperate with, such costs could be avoided. While the players had high personal strength, the NPC organizations still had the advantage in numbers. Thus, it brought out the players' sincerity in wanting to cooperate.

Seeing that the other party was not responding, Maple Moon could not help but cough loudly. She urged, "How is it? Do you think we're good enough? If you do not require our services, we can leave."

Feldman snapped out of his daze as though he was woken up from a dream and anxiously shouted, "No, no, to employ you is our honor. Please follow my instructions to descend. I'll inform my superiors immediately!"

The moment he spoke, notifications appeared on the interfaces of all the players present, and when they glanced over at them, they gave a small cheer.

"It's here. The mission has activated!"

"Damn, beautiful work!"

"Haha, I just knew it. This is the way to play the game!"

What appeared on their interface was not an employment mission but a faction mission labelled [Seizing Planet Harker]. The notification indicated that they could choose a faction and aid them in obtaining dominance over the planet. This was a sort of triggered storyline mission.

Very quickly, the player's fleet followed Feldman to land on a certain base on the surface of Planet Harker. When the players disembarked from their spaceships, they saw a group of officers wearing the uniforms of the New Moon Financial Group waiting, looking excited and nervous.

As the players stepped forward, the people from New Moon Financial Group came up to welcome them. The leader walked up to Maple Moon, stretching out his hand, appearing warm and full of enthusiasm.

“Hello, I’m the Head Supervisor responsible for New Moon Financial Group at Planet Harker. My name is Smedix. On behalf of Planet Harker, welcome.”

“Your name... is quite unique.”

Maple Moon’s mouth twitched as she held back her smile, shaking hands with him.

Smedix did not understand what she meant, but he did not take it to heart either, warmly continuing.

“You came at a good time. We’re in dire need of mercenaries now, but I have a small question before that... Your application, is it the Black Star Army’s intention, or is it your own?”

“Both.” Maple Moon’s answer was ambiguous. This question was not within what she expected, but it seemed to be more beneficial toward their side.

“Then let’s talk about the employment cooperation. Do you have any conditions?” Smedix asked.

Maple Moon exchanged a glance with the rest, and nodding, she spoke up. “We hope that this will not be a simple employment. In addition to remuneration, we would like to cooperate in the development of Planet Harker.”

“Cooperative development?” Smedix’s heart jumped as he thought of many things.

If the Black Star Army wished to occupy Planet Harker, with this group as the vanguard, there was no way the New Moon Financial Group could even compete against them.

Right now, Planet Harker could hold seven organizations mainly because everyone there was small in scale. If faced with a bigger organization, there would be no need to fight. All they needed was to tidy up their items, obediently cleaning up the planet to hand it over.

But Smedix thought that cooperation might not be a bad thing, if he was able to hold onto Black Star’s thigh... er... leg hair.

Currently, the strongest entities on Planet Harker were the two Star System civilizations, but because this planet was only their resource collection point, the other organizations could still hold on. If the entire force of the Star System civilization came over, the financial groups would most likely have to move. However, with the protection of this group of Immortals, this was equivalent to borrowing the protective talisman that was the Black Star Army.

With the competition growing more intense, there might even be other organizations that would come over to Planet Harker. A strong backer would prove beneficial to them in the long run.

Thinking such, Smedix made the decision, gravely nodding. “No problem, we will formulate the specific terms here before passing it for your review. Is that ok?”

“Okay.” Maple Moon nodded in return. She was only in charge of the negotiations and did not understand anything about contract law. For that area, their club would have specific talents in such areas. Their club president also had some knowledge on contract law, and in the worst-case scenario, they could search for a template on the quantum network or spend some money for Phillip to check it.

This was the advantage of being in the army. As long as they had money, they could obtain any service. Being rich was certainly the strongest ability one could have.

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The New Moon Financial Group vacated an area to serve as the stronghold for the guilds. The next day, both sides arrived at a consensus and signed a formal cooperation agreement.

After signing the contract, the players immediately triggered the corresponding employment missions. Currently, the bulk of their mission lists were related to Planet Harker. Some were triggered by themselves, and others through the New Moon Financial Group. There were also some milestone-related missions released by Han Xiao to incentivize the players, such as 'Find a planet to build a resource collection point', which encouraged players to expand their reach like dandelions.

The same matter provided them with so many different types of missions, and if they could complete all of them, the players would obtain a huge reward with half the effort.

After the contract was finalized, Maple Moon and the others approached Smedix to offer their suggestions.

"Since we're partners, but you have not publicized our origins, the other organizations do not yet know of our identity and strength. This is our advantage, so I hope we can take action immediately to carry out a raid, snatching the resource base."

Smedix thought about it and nodded. "You're right. Where are you looking at?"

Maple Moon opened the virtual screen showing Planet Harker and selected a few places. All of them were the resource bases of the other organizations on Planet Harker.

"Y-you guys want to attack so many at once?" Smedix stuttered.

"Relax, we're confident." Hao Tian smirked.

During an interstellar battle, a fleet was important, but the resource bases were on the surface, so Supers were the main focus. Since the entire number of Grade Bs on Planet Harker did not even match up to their numbers, there should not be a problem with battles on multiple fronts.

"... Then we'll follow your plan. My troops will do their best to cooperate." Smedix secretly decided to hold tightly onto this leg hair that he had been offered.

...

The Ursa Civilization was a Star System civilization that lived on the blackhole edge. It had also participated in the competition within the Flickering World, with one of their collection teams being part of the seven on Planet Harker. They were the most powerful and had established several resource bases on the planet.

At the edge of a canyon sat a base with various hovering equipment rising and descending into the canyon to mine resources. A large number of Ursa soldiers were within the base, patrolling around, and artillery and traps were arranged in the periphery, providing a strong fortified defense.

Somewhere in the base, two people in officer uniforms walked slowly as they inspected the base.

“I heard that a small fleet arrived on Planet Harker yesterday, and it was the New Moon Financial Group that received them,” one of them, a bulky figure, said. He was the Head Supervisor of this base, a mid tier officer of Ursa, named Hundejab.

The other was the captain of the Super unit that was stationed at the base. He was a Grade B Super and was specially recruited to the Flickering World. He pursed his lips and casually remarked, “It should be reinforcements from the New Moon Financial Group. The defense captured their fleet markings, and there are no files on those organizations in the Mercenary Alliance. It’s likely that they are some small shrimps.”

Because the players’ guilds were affiliated to the army, Han Xiao did not register them with the Mercenary Alliance. His intention of obscuring it was to turn the army into a platform of a similar nature to the Mercenary Alliance. Thus, their files could only be found on the army’s website, and no one knew of the players’ guilds. The Ursa team did not discover their origins, instead thinking that they were small-time mercenaries.

“Since the New Moon Financial Group has reinforcements, there will definitely be movements,” Hundejab coldly said.

“You’re saying that their target is us?”

“Impossible,” Hundejab flatly replied. “The New Moon Financial Group does not have the guts.”

“Are you that sure?”

Hundejab had a calm expression. “Of course! This is the strongest defensive base here. Not only does it have a lot of defensive measures, but there are also more than seventy Grade B Supers stationed here. If the New Moon Financial Group is smart, they will not attack here even if they had the courage to...”

Boom!

Before he finished speaking, an explosion rocked the base, and the duo staggered.

“What’s happening!” Hundejab was shocked, immediately boarding a hovering vehicle to observe the situation.

He only saw a large number of anti-gravity vehicles marked with the New Moon Financial Group emblem approaching them at rapid speed. The vehicles were equipped with shields and electromagnetic kinetic weapons, allowing them to ignore the mines placed in the outer area and exchange fire with the base defenders.

The alarm within the base suddenly rang out. “Enemy attack! All personnel, man your posts!”

Hundejab was furious. “The New Moon Financial Group actually dared attack me?”

He had just made a prediction, and the next second, the enemies had arrived! His expression was ugly, and by the side, the Super saw his commander’s expression and did not provoke him further, simply saying, “I’ll bring the Supers to meet the enemy.”

“Good!” Hundejab gravely nodded.

The Captain of the Supers left, leaving only Hundejab on the scene. He coldly gazed at the approaching enemy forces and regained his confident image.

“Since you dare to target me, I’ll give you a painful lesson!”

Very quickly, the New Moon Financial Group arrived outside the base, and the ground forces of the base also took the initiative to advance and attack with their Supers to halt the advance.

As both sides exchanged fire, they grew closer at a rapid speed. When they were about to collide, an abrupt change occurred!

The ground vehicles leading the New Moon Financial Group suddenly opened their doors, and figures jumped out one after another. There were about a hundred of them, and as they rolled on the ground with the inertia, their bodies suddenly swelled into disproportionate sizes. Their speed increased sharply, and they pierced into the ground forces of the base.

Boom!

These biochemical aberrations withstood the artillery fire with their thick skin and flesh, and their huge arms seemed to possess endless power, sweeping through all the vehicles in their path.

The ‘Black Star Army Badge: Evolution’ that was derived from the Ovitan Badge was also marked with a thirty-percent discount, allowing the guilds to purchase a large number of them and distribute them to the players.

A hundred of these players entered the [Evolution Limit: Aberration] state and instantly tore the ground troops of the base into pieces!

Hundejab’s expression sank, and he passed down a command. “Let the Supers attack and deal with these monsters!”

On the frontline, the Captain of the Supers led thousands of men onto the battlefield, most of them Grade C and Ds. At the front of the unit were the dozens of Grade Bs as the vanguard.

On the other side, the New Moon Financial Group also launched a charge with their thousands of players.

A medium-scale Super battle was about to break out, and seeing the inferior number of players, Hundejab smiled.

“Their supers only number a quarter of ours. They’re finished!”

Just as he spoke, both sides clashed. But the result was completely contrary to his expectations. His eyes almost popped out in disbelief!

The thousands of players broke out with Grade B combat strength and instantly took the upper hand, killing their enemies freely!

Seeing this scene, Hundejab’s expression changed into one of despair!

“How could there be so many Grade B Supers?”

Chapter 1022 Demons

In a small-scale surface war without the participation of any Calamity Grades, thousands of Grade Bs were enough to dominate a battle.

While the Ursa Civilization had four to five times the number of Supers in their base, in front of the suicidal players, they were just sacrifices, exploding into fireworks of dazzling light and heat as the aberrations imploded, finally merging into a whole, a pile of ashes.

The extreme evolution and self-imploding tactics were the two trump cards of the players. In their eyes, their life was just for that second of brightness and illumination, transforming themselves into matches and burning to warm others. This act was so ‘noble’ that it would literally make people cry.

The large number of Grade Bs in this battle provided the players with an overwhelming advantage, and with the help of the New Moon Financial Group, there was no suspense left in this battle. The resource base was quickly captured by the players, and Hundejab and the officers in the base were captured alive.

At this moment, the base was filled with explosions, and the ground and the structures had scorch marks. Some of the New Moon Financial Group and the guilds were clearing the battlefield, counting their loot. At the center of the base, Hundejab and the group of captives squatted there, holding their heads with both their hands as they were surrounded by a group of players.

“How is it? Should we get rid of all these people?” The Vice-Captain of Rivervale, Evil Sword, turned his head to look at Frenzied Sword.

“Hmm...” Frenzied Sword sighed. “Let me think about it.”

The joint forces of these guilds attacked a separate resource base, and this particular raid was led by Frenzied Sword of Rivervale.

When they were fighting, they obviously did not care about the people, but now that they had defeated the enemy, it was time for the professional players to farm experience. This was one of the missions of the guild to provide resources for the professional players.

Maple Moon glanced at Hundejab and the others, blinking. “Should I first ask them for their names and see if it triggers a mission?”

Hearing this, the rest had agreed to her plan.

Maple Moon approached the group of captives, asking, “Who here is the commander?”

The group started to stir, but the majority seemed as though they were unwilling to betray their superior. However, Hundejab gritted his teeth and said, “I’m in charge of this base. The name’s Hundejab. You are the forces employed by the New Moon Financial Group, right? What are your origins?”

His shock had still not subsided. There were thousands of Grade B supers! Where did they appear from? They disintegrated the line of defense that he felt was so solid, so how could they be an unknown organization in the mercenary world!

Maple Moon smiled secretly but pretended to be nonchalant as she replied, "We're the Rivervale Guild, previously part of the Immortal troop from the Black Star Army. We're currently an affiliated armed force to the army."

Ka!

This news struck like a thunderbolt on a sunny day. Hundejab and the rest were stunned, their expressions filled with disbelief. He did not even expect to hear the name of 'Black Star' from these people.

The New Moon Financial Group actually got acquainted with the Black Star Army?

Hundejab had an expression of shock, and his mental state was in a disarray. He initially still had some anger in his heart, but it all dissipated in a flash, only leaving behind feelings of panic.

His first thought was to think it unreal, but when he thought back to the anomalous situation on the battlefield, he had a sudden realization.

No wonder it seemed that some of them had died but reappeared. He did not understand it at the start, but he figured out that if they were originally the famous Immortal troops of the Black Star Army, then their origins were not falsified!

"Y-you guys..."

Facing the influence of Black Star, Hundejab could not remain stubborn, and the confidence he harbored from being part of a Star System Civilization was completely crushed.

If even he was so befuddled, then the other captives were worse, trembling all over in fear.

Maple Moon thought for a while and felt that she had to voluntarily trigger the mission. Thus, she asked, "Is there anything you want us to do for you?"

Hearing this, everyone froze in shock and despair.

We're finished. They're now asking us for our last wishes!

Feeling the atmosphere fill up in fear, Hundejab gritted his teeth and turned back to shout, "None of you should be begging them for mercy! Dying on the battlefield is our honor!"

Even while he was battling, he had psychologically prepared to sacrifice himself. At this point, his intention resurfaced.

Maple Moon scratched her head and honestly said, "Why don't you all just start begging me? Maybe I'll let you all go."

"Dream on! Even if I'm faced with death, I will not let you fool with us!"

"Uh... are you really not going to struggle? It might actually work."

“Devil! Demon! You’re all delusional!”

And thus, a scenario began that left the New Moon Financial Group’s members in utter shock. They witnessed the captives begging to be put to death at all costs, while the capturers were the ones persuading them to beg for mercy.

However, at this time, the New Moon Financial Group saw quite a few expressions of conflicting emotions on the captives’ faces. Immediately, their bodies shivered as they guessed what the Immortals were aiming at.

The Immortals were actually trying to divide the enemy... what a scary bunch!

Because not everyone was as stubborn as Hundejab, there were a few that stood up, and under the angered glare of Hundejab, they began to plead for mercy.

Looking at her interface, Maple Moon saw the mission [XX’s Plead] appear. The conditions were that they would obtain a small amount of experience if they allowed them to go free. She turned to look at Frenzied Sword. “Should we do this mission or not?”

“While the experience is low, it’s still something. Just do it.” Frenzied Sword nodded.

Hearing that, Maple Moon let those that pleaded move to the side, which prompted even more captives to begin begging for mercy, seeing that there was a precedent.

Some of them triggered the missions, but some of them could not. Thus, the players appeared to be choosing vegetables at a market, selecting the captives to put aside.

“The rest of them don’t have any missions available; do it.”

Without any hesitation, the players turned into executioners, killing those stubborn people such as Hundejab and the elites. Although most of them were weak, they had bonuses because of their identities. The experience obtained through killing them was reasonable, and this would even increase their final rating for the Planet Harker mission.

By the side, the spectating New Moon Financial Group members avoided looking at the players. “This is too cruel...”

If it were them, they would not dare provoke the Ursa Civilization and would probably have released all of them. However, the Black Star Army was actually so cruel, killing them without batting an eye.

Indeed, all those from the Black Star Army were dangerous characters!

Seeing this scene, those captives who had begged for mercy got nervous. Frenzied Sword allowed them to leave as and when they wished, and only then did they scramble out of the base.

The professional players then turned to their interfaces.

The moment this group of captives had run out of the base, the mission of pleading for mercy had been marked as completed.

“The mission requirements were so relaxed? Oh, then again, it’s just a small mission.” Frenzied Sword scratched his head suspiciously. Turning to look at the rest of the players, they nodded.

Barely three minutes later, the released captives were all gathered once again in the square, their faces full of disbelief.

You released us, then captured us again. What is the meaning of this?

“Let’s try again.” Maple Moon coughed awkwardly. “Is there anyone who wants to plead for mercy?”

Her tone was sincere, but in the ears of the rest around her, it sounded full of ridicule and sarcasm.

Turns out, you were just fooling with us!

Can you not?

You can kill me but not humiliate me. If we had known, we would have followed Hundejab and the rest to choose death on the spot!

The majority chose to remain silent, but a small portion broke through their limits and begged once again for the second time. However, this time, there was no sign of any missions appearing on the players’ interface.

“Seems like it’s a one-off mission.” Evil Sword shook his head, appearing a little regretful.

“I expected that. If this was repeatable, there’d be something wrong.” Maple Moon rolled her eyes.

Frenzied Sword also sighed before drawing his blood-stained sword. “Since that’s the case, there’s no other choice.”

Thirty seconds later, the group once again got their hands on another bunch of experience.

The professional players wiped their hands clean, joining the ranks of players cleaning up the battlefield.

They left behind the group of New Moon Financial Group members, who had witnessed the entire frightening process of ‘fooling the captives before killing them’. All of them had chills in their hearts, and their bodies were frozen in shock.

To give someone hope then break it so ruthlessly, sinking them into absolute despair, those Immortals were just too vicious!

Many of them involuntarily shivered, and looking at each other, they came to a similar conclusion.

They absolutely could not provoke this group of madmen. They were demons!

...

The several groups each attacked a base, all of which ended in victory. Such a record alarmed the other six organizations on Planet Harker, leading to them hurriedly inquiring about the origin of the reinforcements invited by the New Moon Financial Group.

Since the attack had succeeded, there was no need to keep it a secret. The background of the players was soon revealed, and after verifying it, the other organizations were all frightened.

Black Star Army? F*ck your mom, this is someone we cannot afford to provoke!

Not only was their background frightening, the combat strength of this group of Immortals was even more terrifying. With over five thousand Grade Bs, there was nowhere on Planet Harker they could not go to!

The greater one's name, the longer the shadow cast. Once this news got out, coupled with their battle records, three of the organizations immediately retreated. They felt that this was a hopeless scenario, and thus, they gave up on Planet Harker, recalling all their resource bases.

The remaining three were the two Star System Civilizations as well as another financial group. They were not willing to give up Planet Harker, so they only responded by reducing the bases and shrinking the area of their troops, taking a defensive stance.

However, the players did not take any action to advance and attack immediately. Instead, with the help of the New Moon Financial Group, they occupied the resource bases that they had attacked, resuming the collection of resources.

In one of the largest bases, the core players of the bigger guilds such as Long Sky, Rivervale, and Thunder Storm were standing in front of a warehouse door. Watching the batches of resources being sent in by the transport vehicles, the eyes of the players all turned into the symbol of Enas.

"This is an endless stream of gold!" Jade Green Sky exclaimed with an expression of joy. "Our guild has obtained another huge but stable income channel, and our financial situation has finally improved."

"It seems that this method of gameplay is indeed correct." Hao Tian calmly nodded, silently calculating the amount of equipment this sum could be exchanged for.

Everyone was in a good mood, and the majority of the players looked forward to earning more money.

There was no way about it. While the army sold things at a low price, the follow-up consumption was high. Weapons needed to be strengthened, ammunition resupplied, mechanical suits repaired, the Evolution badges recharged, and so on. That all cost Enas!

Their purses were all sucked dry by the sleazy Black Star Army. The players did not lack much, but they sure as f*ck lacked money!

Since the guilds had chosen to establish their base camps in the army's area, these core players naturally chose to head to the free competition zone to establish a bridgehead, complete missions, and earn more money. Right now, they were getting closer to the right track.

In the eyes of many of the players, their bright future seemed to be waving to them.

...

The guilds established a stronghold on Planet Harker, and the guilds of the other players also found their own opportunities, spreading their leaves and blooming within the Emerald Star Cluster.

After Planet Phiri was destroyed, Hila had found another planet to serve as a stronghold, and she was also participating in the trend of free competition. Right now, most people were actively opening up their maps to occupy mines, and Gorutan also did not have time to find Hila to create trouble.

The player guilds that were affiliated with the army slowly spread within the Emerald Star Cluster. Now that the actions of the Black Star Army were monitored, this movement was discovered by many other organizations.

Many of the organizations were quite curious about the situation in which the Immortals troops had turned into semi-independent affiliated organizations. They did not know what Black Star was planning, so they decided to just silently watch.

As the Chinese players gradually established their strongholds in the free competition zone, the first batch of foreign players finally arrived in the Flickering World after a long journey. The first batch were the Southeast Asian players, who were based near the Blackhole Edge.

Chapter 1023 The Burning Soul of a Whistle-blower

In the Dawn Star Cluster, one spaceship after another sailed out of the stargate, stepping into the territory of the Flickering World.

The major organizations had long been freely exploring the Flickering World, and those that had just arrived were only tourists, small obscure organizations, and reinforcements.

This fleet consisted mostly of reinforcements from the Blackhole Edge. Its composition was complicated, with armies from Star Cluster and Star System Civilizations, armed forces, financial groups, and even players present.

In the entire universe, the Shattered Star Ring appeared to be an exception in having a player-formed faction. They were all from the Black Star Army. As for the others, their makeup was extremely scattered.

Within the Blackhole Edge, the most powerful player to join in this trip was inside a neutral organization named Nineteen Towers Psionics Association. The organization could be understood as a regional organization of mages and psychics, and one would obtain contribution points within the organization through the provision of magic services. The contribution points would then be exchanged for resources and knowledge, just like a platform for professional exchanges.

In the spaceship, the professional players of the Blackhole Edge gathered together. They were composed of players from different clubs across several countries.

In the International League, the players from Southeast Asia did not have much of a presence, as their results for each season placed them at the bottom. The only impression the audience had of them was that they were not very good in tactical operations. They tended to be reckless, and their fighting style was fierce.

The teams in Southeast Asia that were more popular were the Red Bay Club with Old Yue, the Titan Club with Old Qin, as well as the Archipelago Club in Indonesia. These three were the regulars participating in the International League.

At this moment, the common topic was related to the Pro League.

“There has been no news about the Pro League yet, but the opening of the World Server is likely to cause a change in the competition format, and the mode of qualifying through sub-areas might be cancelled,” Venomous Snake, the Captain of the Red Bay Battle Team said.

“If there is no longer a division-based system, it will be difficult for us to qualify.” The Captain of the Archipelago Team, Gravel Castle shook his head as he replied with a tragic expression.

The reason they appeared every year was purely based on the division system. In the Blackhole Edge, the weak fought the weak, so without this system, they would not make it into the International League.

“Thus, those of us who come from the same Star Field must now unite and seize the opportunity given to us through the World Server, developing ourselves well,” Venomous Snake said.

“This is difficult. The advantage of the Chinese players in the World Server is too huge. We cannot compete against them alone. We can only see if the clubs of the other countries are willing to ally with us.”

“Unfortunately, we’ve already invested too much in our current faction, so we cannot jump ships. Even if we enter the Black Star Army now, we will not be able to win against the local Chinese players. We have to come up with a plan to give us an advantage.”

At this time, Venomous Snake narrowed his eyes and muttered, “While we cannot jump ship, we still can utilize the benefits offered by the Black Star Army. The best method would be to allow some guild members to join the Black Star Army and increase their contributions within. They could then purchase a large amount of resources at discounted rates. At the same time, we can get them to monitor the movement of the players in the army, which will be beneficial for us.”

“Espionage?” Everyone present shared a look. “This is indeed a good idea, but will this cause us to be targeted by the Black Star Army?”

“What does the business of us players have to do with them?” Venomous Snake was nonchalant. “What we should take notice of is the Chinese players. We need to be careful of them stealing the supplies that we purchase.”

“Good, then we shall do it that way!”

Everyone confirmed the battle strategy and buried their heads to discuss the details.

...

The Lesykes Army was a large private mercenary group active around the Blackhole Edge. However, it had an official secret backer—it was the secret military force of the Ursa Civilization. This organization was named after the leader, and right now, the Captain Lesykes had just brought his reinforcements to enter the Flickering World.

In the command room, Lesykes shouted in an excited tone.

“Increase speed. Rush over to the free competition zone as soon as possible.”

The Ursa Civilization had many secret mercenary groups under them, so the civilization rarely gave him any missions. Normally, he was only disguised as a normal mercenary, so he attached great importance to this opportunity to acquire some merits.

Initially, he only sent in the advance troops, and he remained in the base camp to monitor the operations of the mercenary group. However, when the Flickering World was officially opened, the players, who had disappeared from the Blackhole Edge for twenty years, came back online.

In every Star Field, the traits of the players were different, so the impressions they left on the local organizations were also different. Due to the scattered population of the players within the Blackhole Edge, their exposure was far from comparable to the players in the Black Star Army. Thus, their threat level was also lower.

However, there were also a large number of local organizations that had noticed the special existence of the players, thinking that they might be the same species as the Black Star Army's Immortal troops. But the problem was that because the players were too scattered, the local organizations were unable to figure out their actual population. Before the players showed their ability to resurrect, they would behave like any other person, making it difficult to distinguish them.

Lesykes was one of the few to notice that the players had reappeared, and he was extremely impressed with these guys who did not seem to fear death. Therefore, he made a personal decision to recruit them en masse.

As it happened, many of the players in the Blackhole Edge were also looking to enter the Flickering World. They hit it off, and he was able to recruit over ten thousand of the players to transport over to the Blackhole Edge as a support force. This would allow him to claim extra credit.

Not long ago, he had received some good news; the Ursa Civilization had fallen into trouble on the front line. One of their collection units was overturned by the Immortals of the Black Star Army, and they desperately required reinforcements. Lesykes felt that he had suddenly become the person who supplied coal during a snowstorm, and he could not help being overjoyed.

This batch of reinforcements is just in time to help the civilization fight against the Black Star Army. Not only that, in the fight with other organizations, they can also use these Immortals to take the advantage. I've made a big contribution this time! Lesykes thought to himself secretly.

...

At the same time, among his fleet, a group of players from the Blackhole Edge stood in front of the porthole, whispering among themselves while enjoying the view of the Flickering World.

"We're almost here. Hurry to the free competition zone. I'm almost dying of anxiety!"

"Look at what missions this mercenary group can do in the Flickering World."

"Stupid, why would you even still follow this mercenary group? There are so many strong organizations in the Flickering World. What's the point of remaining with this tiny organization?"

"Makes sense. When we arrive in the free competition zone, we can kick this mercenary group aside."

Now that the many top-tier organizations were beginning to gather in the Flickering World, why would the players stick with the smaller groups? Only by switching to a stronger advanced faction could they then meet their increasing needs, especially their need for Class Knowledge.

Lesykes, who was full of hope, did not realize that he was being treated as a tool by the players.

The consequences of betraying a strong organization were serious, but for such a small organization like Lesykes', the players did not give a hoot.

The top choice for the average player in the Blackhole Edge would be the three Universal Civilizations or any Beyond Grade A or advanced civilization in the Blackhole Edge, followed by the Black Star Army.

Players in other Star Fields naturally had no sense of belonging to the Black Star Army. Only the benefits and development prospects would move them. In this respect, the Black Star Army was just like a firefly in the night, extremely evident.

Throughout the many versions, the various benefits players of the army received had long been eye-catching for all the other countries. Now that they could finally cross Star Fields, the reputation and appeal of the army from several versions had accumulated to achieve the effect of allowing a large number of ordinary players to be inclined toward Han Xiao.

Among them, the ones that wanted to join the Black Star Army the most were the Mechanic players from the Blackhole Edge!

Due to the difference in planets in Version 1.0, the composition of Supers in each Star Field was also very vast. The most common Class in the Blackhole Edge was the Mage class, followed by Psychics. The overall focus there was more toward the arcane, and the mechanic department only accounted for about twelve percent of the total players in the Blackhole Edge.

In comparison, the Black Star Army was simply like a paradise for Mechanics, and with Han Xiao as the top mentor of the Mechanic Class, there was no need to worry about the lack of Class Knowledge.

In the eyes of these people, one sentence could summarize the meaning of Black Star to the mechanic players.

If the Heavens did not give birth to me, Black Star, then the Mechanics would essentially be fumbling in the dark!

As for the Mechanic Emperor... while it was rumored that he was extremely strong, the players were not too familiar with him. They instead gravitated toward Han Xiao. After all, the Chinese players had forged the route for them, so they knew that Han Xiao was a reliable person.

The group chatted around, and at the edge of this crowd, a player with the ID of Muay Thai as Warning appeared to be alone, looking out the window.

This hidden mission told me that the Lesykes mercenary group is actually an affiliated organization belonging to the Ursa Civilization. I heard from my friend that their Long Sky happened to grab some resources from the civilization and had a conflict, so our group is probably here to serve as reinforcements...

The friend he mentioned was actually a peripheral member of the Long Sky Guild. They had once gotten into a spat on the forums, but they had suddenly realized that the other party also made sense, so they apologized to each other and finally became friends.

With this in mind, a bold idea surfaced in the mind of Muay Thai as Warning, and the soul of the whistleblower started to burn brightly.

If one wishes to jump ship, then they definitely have to present a gift!

...

At the same time, somewhere in the Emerald Star Cluster, a small financial group's exploration fleet docked at a temporary transit station that was constructed by an advanced civilization for a rest. The crew went for some leisure time, only leaving the logistics personnel behind to clean and repair the equipment.

Buzz!

Within the maintenance channel inside the spaceship, two ground crew members wearing protective gear were holding onto maintenance tools, working in front of a complex piece of machinery. Sparks constantly splashed around.

It took a while before they completed their job. Evans took off his hood and wiped his sweat.

He then opened the logistics task list on his wrist, glancing at it, before opening the communication channel to report to his superior.

"Ground Handling Group No. 005 has completed the task. The issue with engine group component T1018 has been eliminated. We will now proceed to sector C0080 for cleaning."

"Received, continue your work. You still have three more tasks to complete."

"Understood."

After finishing his report, he left the communication channel before patting his companion's shoulder. "Let's go to the next area."

His companion, however, waved his hands in frustration. "We just finished our task. What's the hurry? Let's rest for a while."

Evans tried to persuade him. "We're pressed for time today, so we should try to get them done before work ends. It's best not to take a break during working hours, or else we will not be able to finish."

"Then we'll just postpone it till tomorrow. It's not just a one-day stop here." The companion sat down in dissatisfaction. "If you want, you can go on ahead. I'll rest here."

Evans frowned but shook his head and no longer tried to persuade him. He could not control anyone; he just needed to do a good job himself.

He went along the maintenance tunnel by himself, and the figure of his companion soon disappeared, leaving him alone.

The lighting in the maintenance tunnel was dim, with only one light source situated at a large distance away. After walking for a while, Evans suddenly found a red light flashing in front of him. He stopped walking.

“The lights have gone out? Did I see it wrongly?”

Evans found it a little weird. He observed the environment detector, but there was no change. He initially thought it was his eyes playing tricks and walked forward a few more steps.

Buzz!

At this moment, a burst of red lit up his vision. The light source appeared on his side, less than a meter away!

Evans quickly reacted in shock, jumping to the side and tumbling on the ground, holding the welding torch in his hands as he stood up to face the light source.

What greeted him was a bizarre scene of an unknown red light zipping around in the air, constantly moving and leaving a trail of red light behind it. There was a lot of beauty to this scene.

“What is this thing?” Evans showed a wary expression as he secretly took out his communicator, wanting to report this anomaly.

However, the next moment, his eyes blurred as the red light dashed over at an inhumane speed, piercing through his body.

Evans hurriedly looked down but found himself unscathed. Instead, he felt full of energy. His fatigue from working was swept away, and his physical strength was restored.

At this moment, the red light paused before frantically hovering around him.

Evans seemed to have felt an emotion of happiness from this bundle of light, causing him to freeze in shock.

Before he could recover, the light seemed to stop suddenly, and as if pulled by some invisible presence, it suddenly disappeared, leaving Evans standing there with a blank expression.

After a long pause, Evans slapped himself hard.

“Ouch it hurts, I’m not dreaming... It seems like I’ve finally gone crazy.”

Chapter 1024 Jumping Ship

As the fleet passed by the Black Star Army’s territory, the aspiring Lesykes was quickly dealt a harsh blow.

When he arrived at Planet Black Gate, the Immortals that he had painstakingly recruited from the Blackhole Edge suddenly broke out in a massive rebellion!

Not only did these players leave the faction, they even took over the spaceships carrying them!

Players in any area were accustomed to maximizing their benefits. Since they had already decided to leave, they would take advantage of the other party. Plus, it would be troublesome to travel without a

spaceship. Many players seized control of the spaceships carrying them, leaving the designated fleet route and turning toward the Black Star Army.

Even those few players who were not planning to jump ship immediately were also forced to join in. After all, they were on the same ship, and if they fought and blew up the spaceship, there was no good end for either side.

With so many players in each spaceship, it was impossible to determine the ownership. Most people would only follow the spaceship to the transit station, where they would then scatter and act independently. This was the disadvantage of a lack of a huge faction to rally everyone.

Due to the large number of players rebelling, the total size of Lesykes' army shrank by half, and the loss of the spaceships and supplies within were significant to Lesykes, making him feel as though he was bleeding out.

"Crazy, those guys are crazy! They have no morals at all!"

Within the command room, Lesykes was jumping around in anger.

This sudden incident was completely out of his expectations. He was immersed in his dream of achieving his meritorious service and did not expect this group of players to suddenly stab him in the back.

When they were still in the Blackhole Edge, these Immortals were still pretty law abiding, so why was it that they went all crazy the moment they arrived at the Flickering World?

He found it difficult to understand, and subconsciously, he felt as though this whole thing was a conspiracy, that some organizations had secretly meddled with them. He did not even consider their personal motivations.

After all, Lesykes did not understand the players. In his view, some foul play had to be going on, otherwise there would be no reason for all these players to riot together.

The stolen spaceships quickly dispersed and disappeared off their radar. Thus, Lesykes gave up on the symbolic chase. The strength of the Immortals also gave him some reservations, and with the spaceships having a similar speed, it would be hard to catch up to them. With this area being the territory of the Black Star Army, he dared not draw too much attention.

"*sshholes!"

Lesykes was hurt and angry, and he left a black mark on the files of this group of rebellious players, reducing their credit rating on their resumes.

After completing this matter, he managed to quell his anger somewhat. Upon seeing that half of the Immortals had stayed, he felt a little thankful.

"At least half of them are here. Even if I get less credit, there's still some merit. I didn't make the trip for nothing."

Lesykes, however, no longer dared relax around the players, commanding, "Separate the rest of the Immortals and increase the defenses of each spaceship..."

After this experience, he had his guard up against the players.

However, even with his vigilance, another round of betrayals took place once again when he arrived at the free competition zone. The majority of Lesykes' armed force consisted of the players. Thus, no matter how guarded the rest of the crew were, they were useless in the face of overwhelming numbers. The players had remained up till now just to obtain a free ride to the free competition zone.

The players that he brought from the Blackhole Edge had almost completely gone, and Lesykes almost went mad with anger.

Well done, this daddy here personally ran all the way to escort you guys to the Flickering World, thinking of achieving some merit, but ended up gaining nothing. It's like fetching water using a rattan basket[1]!

The bad news poured in one after another. Lesykes quickly discovered from his intelligence that even with the black marks he left on the players' resumes, there were still top-tier factions that took in these Immortals, the most prestigious being the Black Star Army.

Lesykes found this whole thing a little hard to accept, as though he had been bullied, and his heart was full of grievances!

Dammit, why!

This life is too hard!

What he did not know was that, in a tiny batch of players left behind, there existed people like Muay Thai as Warning, serving as spies and tracking the movements of the fleet, constantly reporting back to the army.

In terms of the attractive force of the factions, the gap between him and the Black Star Army was too large. Even if he could temporarily obtain the players' bodies, he could never obtain their hearts.

...

There was naturally more than one organization that suffered from this massive wave of dissention. After entering the Flickering World, these Blackhole Edge organizations mostly experienced the phenomenon of a large number of players leaving, and the Black Star Army was the main place to go for these players.

The attractiveness of his faction had accumulated and matured over several versions, resulting in this surge in players wanting to join the army. There was no need for Han Xiao to do anything; the manual leek collection job had evolved into a fully automated process.

Within Black Star Palace, Han Xiao glanced at the EXP gauge of his attributes panel, his eyes gleaming.

"This wave of experience has shot up real quick."

His plan to expand the leek plantation had finally begun to take effect, with this first batch of 'foreign leeks' pulling themselves out from the roots to transplant themselves in his plantation.

The players from foreign countries all had their own choices, and only a portion of them would choose to join the army, but even this number was also considerable. Based on his estimation, around 17 – 24%

of the total population of players from the Blackhole Edge would join his army, which amounted to millions. Most of them would be ordinary players.

“This is only the first batch. When the players from the other Star Fields come, the size of the army will swell to double or triple of what it is today.” Han Xiao was secretly pleased.

There were many newcomers from the newly recruited Southeast Asian players, and they had a high demand for Class Knowledge. It was this new wave of consumption that made Han Xiao’s efficiency in harvesting experience soar.

Every time a new batch of newcomers arrived, it was followed by a huge wave of experience.

“I estimate that the Southeast Asian clubs will also infiltrate the army.”

Han Xiao secretly smiled. He did not intend to stop them.

He could sell more equipment and supplies, so why not? He could gain quite a bit of income from there, and re-equipping the different countries to allow them to fight against each other was akin to him being a weapons dealer, capitalizing on this business opportunity.

Furthermore, if they wished to enjoy the discount, they would need to have the corresponding rank, which meant that they had to contribute to the army. This could not be achieved in a short amount of time.

“Judging by this speed, I only need a few more waves of players to obtain enough experience to rise straight to level 320.” Han Xiao was secretly excited. This was much quicker than his expectations.

As for the large number of players jumping ship from the Blackhole Edge, he had long expected this. The continuous decline in the players’ credibility was one of the important factors in establishing their title as the Cancer of the Universe. They never had a good reputation, and this also included the fear and vigilance the outside world felt toward them.

One of the important signs for players to enter the stage of the universe was for the World Server to be launched. Their sense of existence had now greatly increased, which would attract the attention of many organizations, regarding them as a whole entity.

In his previous life, as the players spread chaos, leading to a decline in their overall reputation, it got to the point where some small organizations did not even dare recruit players. The consequence was that the players instead gathered toward the top organizations, switching factions to continue upgrading themselves.

These were all things that Han Xiao had witnessed, and he understood that there was no way he could force the players to remain obedient merely through means of faction welfare. As the players got stronger, they would have more thoughts, and they would become harder to control.

The players would only have attachments toward characters that they were familiar with, and for their own personal development and national war advantages, they would need to plunder for benefits and resources, starting wars.

With the growth of their strength, chaos was inevitable. Thus, Han Xiao had always been committed to developing his own organization. One of those objectives was to deal with this situation.

He also understood that, since the army was now an important target for the players to jump ship to, this situation would soon be discovered by the organizations that were monitoring him, and they would eventually form some speculations of their own.

For the time being, this had little impact on him. Firstly, his position was high enough, as was his strength. Secondly, there were also many players joining the other organizations, so the situation was not too exaggerated as of now. The various organizations would at most feel surprise. However, as more foreign players joined, the special features of the army would become more noticeable, and then the trouble would begin.

As Han Xiao shook his head to clear his thoughts, he inadvertently thought of something else.

“I didn’t expect Evans to already come into contact with the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy...”

Not long ago, Phillip, who had been constantly monitoring Evans, had sent back a report, and Han Xiao was able to see the process and confirm for himself that the cluster of red light was likely related to the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy. However, this appeared much earlier than the time stated by EsGod’s inheritance.

He hypothesized that this was likely just one of the sub-bodies that separated from the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy, returning to the universe ahead of time. It could be sent earlier as well as a coordinate marker. Whichever was the case, it was soon dragged back to the Secondary Dimension by the main body, and the Primal Esper Ability Entity had yet to descend.

This also solved one of Han Xiao’s doubts. There was no wonder that the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy finally chose Evans as a host, as it turned out that he had come into contact with it well in advance.

The moment the red light passes through a person, a mismatch would cause the person to explode and die. Not only was Evans unscathed, he even got rejuvenated. Thus, the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy could confirm that he had the qualification to become a host. He was prepared as backup.

“The date of the birth of the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy is getting closer as well. Judging from my current rate of acquiring experience, I should be able to achieve the Promotion to level 320 before it is born.”

Chapter 1025 Milkmaid’s Promotion—Life Replenishmen

A couple of days later, in the outer square of Black Star Palace, the newly arrived batches of players from the Blackhole Edge were looking left and right in curiosity and wonder. Their mixed uniforms and equipment made them look like a group of incompetent soldiers, a stark contrast to the uniform look for the Black Star Army members.

A large number of Southeast Asian players had jumped ship to join the army, and some of them could not wait to enjoy the benefits of being part of the Black Star Army, buying supplies in bulk and accepting the Main Storyline mission of [Flickering World] from the army. The other group were more casual players, and after joining the army, they arrived together at Black Star Palace with the idea of recognizing the future Players’ Main City of their faction.

Among them, most of the players were Mechanics. They came to the Black Star Palace with the mentality of performing a pilgrimage.

Because most of the Chinese players were out on missions, with the addition of this new batch of players, the originally silent palace turned lively once more.

“This is the base of the Black Star Army in the Flickering World? It’s quite spectacular.”

“The space is huge, and the facilities are abundant. Really good stuff.”

“Will I be able to meet Black Star?”

The group of players from the Blackhole Edge chattered on, excitedly looking around Black Star Palace, their eyes sparkling.

They had roamed about the universe in the last three versions, but the factions they served could not even be compared to the Black Star Army. Just based on the size, they were not on the same level. Even the mother planets of some Star Cluster level civilizations were not as well built as Black Star Palace. For many of these players, it was their first time setting eyes on such a magnificent location.

“There are a lot of high-levelled NPCs here, a whole bunch of characters with the ‘Fatally Dangerous’ note.”

“If we cause trouble here, we’ll definitely be killed, right?”

The majority of the players suppressed their arrogance, not daring to mess around in Black Star’s territory.

They were not afraid of the smaller organizations such as the Lesykes Mercenary Group and could behave fearlessly. But in the face of a behemoth like the Black Star Army, they did not dare cause trouble as these organizations had the ability to restrain them.

Among the group were also spies sent in by the Southeast Asian clubs. Because the Black Star Army did not show any bias toward the players, they had smoothly mixed in.

Disregarding the countless screaming players around them, these spies with their own special missions opened the dazzling array of faction stores and mission lists, looking through them.

Having successfully joined, as long as they worked hard to contribute and increase their ranks within the army, they could enjoy more benefits and do more purchasing for their guilds.

Their plan was a success!

At this moment, Hadavy, Feidin, and the rest of the Black Star Guards hurried over, attracting the attention of this group of players.

“Hey, look over there, the famous Black Star Guards!”

“The senior figures of the Black Star Army! I have all their decks, and now I can finally meet them in the flesh.”

“Feidin! I love you!”

In the distance, Feidin heard the screams, and he came to a stop. Glancing over, he saw the motley group of Immortals and could only helplessly wave back.

Feidin had a high reputation among the players, and this reputation was not just limited to the Shattered Star Ring.

Since these Blackhole Edge players wanted to join the army, they had done their research beforehand. Furthermore, due to the promotion via Wayne Cards, Feidin was a popular idol in the Black Star Army.

“Why is it that you’re so popular? Even those newcomers like you so much.” Hadavy was a little salty.

“You will find the answer when you look into the mirror,” one of the Black Star Guards murmured.

“...” Hadavy could not come up with a response.

Looking at Hadavy’s struggling expression, Feidin could not take it and could only ruefully smile as he patted his shoulder. “Don’t worry too much. You’re not that ugly.”

“... I can’t cheer myself up with this.”

The entourage of Black Star Guards did not stop to chat with the new players. They quickened their footsteps, disappearing from the players’ sights.

At the same time, the eyes of those spies hiding in the crowd flashed.

Some of them not only shouldered the mission of purchasing supplies for their guild, they also had another mission, which was to infiltrate the army and monitor their movements.

While the Southeast Asian clubs did not change factions, the Flickering World contained a multitude of opportunities for them to reach out to top tier organizations. They had also secretly contacted some organizations, of which the most commonly contacted one was the Limitless Financial Group.

Sorokin had a strong interest in the player community. He tried to test out the players from the Black Star Army in the past but had suffered a loss instead. Right now, given that the players from the other Star Fields were grouping in the Flickering World, it was an opportunity for him, and he had arranged some people to contact the Blackhole Edge players.

While he did not have an interface, after a long period of research, Sorokin had also figured out some rules regarding the players. Thus, he specifically looked for those players who did not immediately switch over to join the army to issue employment tasks. The contents were to request for the players to provide information on the movements of the Black Star Army. In particular, he wanted to know Black Star’s own movements, and the rewards were generous. While he did not know of the underlying principle, the fact of the matter was, as long as he offered enough money, the players would turn into the best spies.

Using gold to pave the way resulted in many of the Southeast Asian clubs accepting Sorokin’s mission, which was equivalent to him having a pair of eyes inside the army.

Sorokin’s focus on Han Xiao’s movements was intentional. Not long ago, Gorutan had gotten into a conflict with Hila. The federation and the church each had their own thoughts about Hila. As their

collaborator, Sorokin had to monitor Han Xiao's movements, providing intelligence for both parties to plan their operations.

Many of the spies glanced at each other, softly exchanging words.

"The Black Star Guards are all present, which means Black Star should also be inside."

"Without seeing him directly, can this still be considered as completing the mission?"

"Should be. The Black Star Guards' responsibility is to protect, so wherever they are, there is a high chance that Black Star will also be there."

...

On the other side, Hadavy and the rest of the Black Star Guards arrived at the core of the palace. They orderly proceeded toward an advanced training room, where a mechanical host bearing Han Xiao's Lord's Avatar took guard at the door. Aurora sat in the middle of the room, spewing out life energy that spread out in a white-gold halo around her. This halo followed her breathing as it fluctuated.

"Army Commander." The group greeted the avatar at the door before turning to look at Aurora.

Hadavy breathed in deeply, feeling his spirits rejuvenate, and exclaimed, "What an intense life energy fluctuation. Her quality seems to have sublimated once again?"

Feidin nodded. "Black Star, is this Aurora's advancement?"

Han Xiao's avatar nodded. "Her accumulated life energy has finally broken through the critical point and brought her a qualitative change in her life level."

Before Version 4.0, Aurora had been close to the threshold of the Calamity Grade. With the extra half year of accumulation, she had finally hit the required amount and broken through.

Watched by the group, Aurora closed her eyes, her eyelashes trembling slightly as the light emitted by the life energy became brighter, gradually filling the entire room.

After a long time, the light was slowly reabsorbed into Aurora, and her body displayed some obvious changes. Her platinum blonde hair swayed slightly even without any breeze present, and every strand seemed to be filled with endless vitality.

Her skin had become smoother and more supple without flaws. The milky white skin revealed a sacred aura, as though she was some exquisite artwork.

Aurora opened her eyes, slowly breathing out. Her breath, filled with the energy of life, seemed to change even the air of the room itself, giving the hard, cold steel of the room a feeling as though one had stepped into the wilderness of nature.

Her advancement was vastly different from most Calamity Grades'. There was no destructive movement; all she required was sufficient life energy, without any bottlenecks along the way.

Standing up, Aurora's eyes revealed some happiness, and she walked up to Han Xiao's avatar before excitedly chattering. "Uncle, I've reached the Calamity Grade. Are there any changes?"

Han Xiao sized Aurora up. Her originally petite and cute looks had transformed into something taller, with a better figure. Her facial features had also changed to be more refined, and the holiness seeping out from within her made others involuntarily feel warm toward her. This was a completely different style compared to the cold, glamorous blade that was Hila.

“You’ve become prettier,” Han Xiao joked. “Other Grade As are called Calamity Grades, but for you, no matter how I see it, there’s nothing Calamitous about you. Excellent, I’m proud of you.”

Aurora blinked a few times, her heart blooming with joy from the praise. However, as though she recalled something, she suddenly pouted. “Humph, so many flowery words, but you still ran over to my sister and did not personally witness me step into the Calamity Grade.”

Han Xiao was helpless about it. He had left Black Star Palace a few days ago, quietly going over to the Emerald Star Cluster to meet Hila.

He was clear that with a sudden influx of players, there would be many more eyes. Thus, it was inevitable that there would be spies monitoring his movements. He had left the Black Star Guards there as a simple misdirection while he went off to the Emerald Star Cluster. He had two reasons for going there; one was to compete for the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy in the near future, and the other was to reduce the risk Hila would face. While his Lord’s Avatar could display some strength, it was nowhere near the abilities he displayed with his true body.

However, this caused him to miss the promotion of Aurora.

Han Xiao dryly coughed before exchanging a glance with Feidin.

With Feidin’s ‘emotional intelligence’, even if he could not read anything from the eyes of the machine, he understood what Han Xiao was trying to say. He immediately changed the topic as he asked, “After reaching the Calamity Grade, how much have your abilities changed?”

Hearing that, Aurora rolled her eyes toward Han Xiao before turning to Feidin. She carefully looked within her body before raising her hand to emit a ball of life energy. The intensity was a lot stronger compared to when she was at Grade B.

“My life energy accumulation has increased many times from when I was a Grade B, and my healing powers have further increased. Right now, the same amount of life energy should be three or four times more potent than in the past.”

Hearing this, Han Xiao felt a little regret that he was not present, or else he could have tried to find out how much Aurora’s ‘milk’ had improved.

Hadavy could not wait, however. “Let me try it out.”

Aurora shot him a side-eye but emitted a beam of life energy that sank into his body.

The next moment, Hadavy’s eyes opened wide, and he experienced such great comfort that he moaned uncontrollably.

“Uhhh...”

Han Xiao shivered, almost activating the mute mode out of reflex.

D*mn you, what's with that moan?

When I first knew you, you were a stubborn battle maniac, so why is it you've fallen to such a depraved state?

Was your brain beaten to mush by me the past few years?

Distressing indeed!

"What are you moaning for?" Everyone felt the same chill run up their spine.

Hadavy hastily covered his mouth and only recovered after quite a few seconds. He exclaimed in joy, "So good! I felt as though I relaxed a lot, like a weight had been taken off me somehow!"

Seeing his exaggerated expression, everyone half believed and half doubted him. However, all their doubts vanished once they experienced it for themselves. They stared at Aurora with their mouths agape, as though they were looking at some priceless heirloom.

Aurora turned shy at the stares, whispering, "After I advanced, my abilities seemed to have more functions, such as being able to stimulate the potential of the target and improve their status while accelerating recovery."

"This is indeed true." Feidin nodded. "I feel that my spirit is now more sensitive, and my energy is more lively. Not only that, but her life energy seems to have some soothing ability to placate one's emotions."

Han Xiao was quite surprised, but because his true body was not present, he could only go around and tap on his guards to get their combat information.

In addition to treatment, there were also selective gains for targets of her life energy. The additional ability gave a twenty-percent increase toward the upper limit of one's HP, Energy, and Stamina. There was an overall twelve-percent increase in resistance, a seven to eleven percent range increase for all attributes, and a ten to fifteen percent increase in ability strength. This bonus range should gradually increase as she continued to develop her abilities.

Not only was she a milkmaid, she was also a super strong support character!

At the same time, her life energy was able to appease the mental state, expelling any violent tendencies and calming the target down. It would even eliminate any hostility that the target held toward her and produce a desire to protect her. While her power was extremely lacking in attack power, she had a special protection ability.

In addition, the shelf life of her life energy could now be extended by tens of times. The blood connection between Hila and Aurora also increased, resembling that of quantum connection where they could feel each other's vital signs regardless of distance.

Aurora also had a vague feeling that if she further developed her ability gene chain, she would be able to share her life energy with Hila regardless of the distance. At present, she needed to familiarize herself with the changes in the Calamity Grade.

"Worthy of an S ranked Esper Ability. The higher the state of life, the more features it unlocks." Han Xiao was happy for her.

In the past, Aurora turned into jam too early, so no one knew what would happen if she advanced. Right now, she was giving him a lot of surprises.

At this moment, Han Xiao suddenly had a hypothesis and immediately dragged Feidin and Aurora to the biological laboratory, using them for an experiment.

He got Aurora to repeatedly wash Feidin with life energy, and he withdrew some of Feidin's cells each time, comparing the difference in the cells' basic activity.

Before long, the results of the experiment returned. Comparing the data between each baptism of life energy, Han Xiao could not help but sigh.

"I should have thought of this a long time ago. The abilities of the two sisters are diametrically opposed, so if Hila can rob the life of people, Aurora... can increase one's lifespan!"

The experimental data clearly showed that the later samples all showed some form of weak increase in basic cell activity.

In other words, the more 'milk' one got from Aurora, the longer their life span!

At Grade B, this feature had yet to awaken, and right now, she was only a Calamity Grade. Thus, the effect of life extension was weak, far less than Hila's ability to reap life.

But if she continued to grow, then would she not become an enhanced version of Tripitaka's flesh[1]?

It seemed like he had just gotten his hands on another support treasure...

Chapter 1026 Leek Field Expansion

"Phillip, destroy all calculation evidence and the experiment report."

"Roger, hum..."

The screen disappeared as Han Xiao waved his hand before he turned to Aurora and Feidin behind him, speaking in a solemn tone.

"This matter is only known to the two of you at the moment. Don't tell anybody else for now, or else there will be trouble. Do you understand?"

"... You're saying that there'll be people like the Germinal Organization's Leader?"

Aurora pursed her lips. The painful memories of her past flashed through her head, and a trace of fear flitted across her face. This, however, was quickly replaced by determination.

She was different from the self in the past. She had Han Xiao and her sister by her side, and she believed that she would not repeat her past mistakes.

"Yes, if word gets out, this will arouse the interest of many of the hegemony of the universe. You'll be dragged into the storm." Han Xiao nodded.

If Hila's ability to reap one's longevity made others fear her, then Aurora's ability would drive all Beyond Grade As crazy. She had the ability to control the entire universe. Most Beyond Grade As wished to extend their life span. Even those species with naturally long life spans were no exception. For example,

if EsGod was still roaming around, he would not have spared no quarter to seize Aurora's power. This priority would have been even higher than the Evolutionary Totem.

Not only the Beyond Grade As, even the advanced civilizations would be tempted. With Aurora entering the Calamity Grade, she had a high efficiency in the generation of life energy. Most likely, they would not treat her like the Germinal Organization had treated her, but they would put her under house arrest, with her only job being to produce more life potions.

In this way, he would also stand at the cusp of the storm, facing the covetous gazes of many Beyond Grade As. Thus, he had to have strength that far outstripped his current self in order to suppress the greed in the hearts of others. Aurora's ability was a double-edged sword, so Han Xiao did not intend to disclose Aurora's information before he reached a higher level.

Feidin nodded and agreed. "Relax, I've always regarded Aurora as my sister, and I will not leak the news."

Han Xiao left them with some more instructions before sending the two off. He remained in the room alone, sighing to himself.

After Aurora entered the Calamity Grade, her connection to Hila had improved, becoming akin to a symbiotic relationship.

Now that Aurora had just advanced, she still needed time to familiarize with her abilities. When she awakened her new ability to treat Hila remotely, it would be very scary to face Hila.

In his previous life, because Hila lost Aurora early, without the other end of the symbiosis, she could only rampage in the cold universe alone. Right now, while Hila had not yet embarked on an endless killing spree and her growth rate was slower than in her past life, with this milkmaid Aurora that ignored distance, Hila's combat power would far exceed that of her past life.

"I'm afraid Hila will catch up to me in terms of tank-ability..." Han Xiao was helpless. Hila had unlimited uses of the Aurora Character Summon Card.

The Super High Risk Esper Abilities were all overpowered, and the two sisters could even form perfect coordination and soul resonance, which was terrifying. Only mental and spatial abilities could possibly restrain the sharing of life between the two.

Thinking about it, Han Xiao opened the communicator, sending a message to Ames, telling her about the news of Aurora entering the Calamity Grade.

...

In the outer space above Planet Aquamarine, Floating Dragon Island remained. Ames did not participate in the competition in the Flickering World, choosing to stay in the Shattered Star Ring. She wished for Floating Dragon to develop in a low-key manner, not chasing after fame and fortune. Such was the nature of a salted fish, stiff and unmoving.

While she did not participate in the lively trend, Ames was still updated about the Flickering World. Han Xiao knew that Ames enjoyed having fun, so he shared first-hand information with her every day, telling

her what was happening in the Flickering World daily to satisfy her curiosity. Since then, regularly checking Han Xiao's news had become a daily necessity for Ames.

In her bedroom within the palace, Ames leaned against the headboard of her bed, condensing a small sphere using her force field to nudge at the giant white bear lying on the floor beside her, as though teasing a cat with a stick. It was obviously a fierce creature, yet in front of her, it appeared extremely obedient, rolling livelily around the floor.

When Ames moved into Planet Aquamarine, Aurora had placed all the pets she raised on the planet in Floating Dragon, asking her teacher to help care for them as her pastime.

There was another person in the room. Jenny stood to the side, reporting on the business situation of Floating Dragon. Even if Ames was not paying attention, she continued to seriously read the details out.

"... the recent polls show that thirty-nine percent of the Floating Dragon soldiers are dissatisfied with the status quo. Compared with the previous survey, the proportion has now increased by seven percent. Many of the subordinates came here after hearing the reputation of the Beyond Grade A, hoping that they would achieve some fame under your name and advance their careers, but with the lack of battle opportunities, their hearts have moved. This is especially so given that we have not participated in the Flickering World exploration. We have thus lost quite a few warriors..."

Ames seemed to let the words flow in and out of her ears, as she continued to use her force field to nudge the bear.

Jenny dryly coughed before continuing. "Ignoring the trend of the times is not wise. We should change our decision and set foot in the Flickering World..."

Ames suddenly raised her head to glance at her, slightly smiling as she said, "I thought you didn't like writing reports? This is your twenty-second time asking me to send troops into the Flickering World. Why are you so active now?"

"... Didn't you mention wanting to develop?" Jenny stroked her receding hairline. Toward this fickle shopkeeper, she was full of resignation toward her behavior.

While she detested work, she was unwilling to let go of the development Floating Dragon had been going through these few years. She could not allow herself to see Floating Dragon go to waste just because of her laziness.

"As my subordinates, they should adapt to me, not me to them." Ames seemed not to mind it, only sighing. "If only Black Star was still under me, I wouldn't need to worry about such things."

"..." Jenny's expression became pained. My heart, it hurts!

Ames ignored Jenny's expression, waving her hand as she spoke. "In any case, there's no need to persuade me further. I will not go to the Flickering World. I have no interest in that area."

Before Jenny could squeeze in another word, Ames' communicator rang. The moment she took it out, her eyes lit up.

"Black Star has sent me another message. Jenny, please wait outside."

Seeing this, Jenny could only force her words back down and walk out of the room, feeling sour in her heart.

I have not even finished talking about the official matters, but because of the daily news that Black Star sends, you do not even want to hear the important business reports anymore...

I'm obviously the first in line here...

Without caring about Jenny, Ames read the news that Han Xiao sent over in detail. Other than the news shared and the warm greetings, there was also a piece that refreshed her spirits.

"Aurora has finally reached the Calamity Grade. My students are really great." Ames was in a good mood.

At the end of the letter, Han Xiao also sent her an invitation to visit Black Star Palace and meet up with Aurora.

"To go over to the Flickering World..."

Ames hesitated.

If it was sent over by Black Star, she could not possibly reject...

What good timing.

Thinking thusly, Ames called Jenny back in.

"Prepare the spaceship. I'm going over to the Flickering World."

"You've thought it through? I'll assemble the team immediately!" Jenny exclaimed in joy.

"What team? I'm going solo." Ames waved the communicator. "Black Star invited me over to play."

Jenny's smile vanished in a flash.

Sigh, I've wasted half a day of saliva, but you immediately respond when Black Star asks you to go.

So, this is the feeling of someone who has been swayed by the other party...

At this moment, there was a song that could perfectly depict Jenny's feelings.

In this world, who is still not living a life that's akin to purgatory[1]...

...

In the Flickering World's free competition zone, more than a dozen general purpose spaceships were slowly cruising through the universe, carrying the guild members from several well-known Southeast Asian clubs such as Red Bay, Titan, and Archipelago.

"Everyone, our next move is critical and is related to whether we can quickly gain a foothold in the Flickering World."

In the meeting room, the Red Bay Captain, Venomous Snake, rapped on the table as he spoke in a serious tone.

“Snake is right,” a Red Bay veteran, Forest Python, echoed. He used to be the captain of Red Bay and actively gave up his position when he was older, opting to train the newcomers instead. Venomous Snake had taken over as the new captain from the previous season.

“The current advantage of the Chinese players is huge, so we have to huddle together. Before the players from the other countries arrive, we must not provoke them first and develop in a low-key manner,” Titan’s Captain, Bangkok Buddha, analyzed. “However, the approach of the Chinese players is full of foresight. Maybe we can imitate their gameplay and communicate with the NPC forces in the same manner.”

The Chinese clubs had an unparalleled advantage in the free competition zone, having already obtained a lot of help from the NPC organizations. This group of Southeast Asian guilds that were new to scene were naturally afraid to touch them. They first had to stand firm and develop themselves.

Due to the intervention from the army, the Chinese guilds had learned about the high-efficiency gameplay of Version 4.0 in advance, and the guilds of the various countries would naturally discover this point when conducting research. Thus, the Southeast Asian guilds wanted to copy their gameplay methods.

“But it’s not as easy as it seems.” Some of the people hesitated. “The Chinese players are able to succeed simply because they’re affiliated with the army, but our faction has no such system, no independent qualifications, and no way for us to become a regular organization.”

The guilds in the bigger clubs had not jumped ships at all and still belonged to factions from the Blackhole Edge.

The other factions did not have multiple regiments like the army, and for them, becoming a regular organization and turning independent right now was impossible.

Moreover, they were not free but rather recruited and bound by their factions. Before going to the faction base, they only had a limited time to move freely, which was incomparable to the time that the army players had.

“The Main Storyline Missions for our factions have been announced, and the free time we have in the free competition zone is limited. Let’s quickly look for opportunities,” Venomous Snake concluded.

Everyone discussed various countermeasures and decided to adopt the method of casting out their nets wide.

Very quickly, they hit countless nails. Because they were not an independent organization, they could only borrow the name of their faction and act as a special team. The vast majority of the organizations that they contacted directly rejected them. They were also foreign organizations, and not local tyrants such as the Black Star Army, so all of them were competing against each other. There was no need to invite wolves into their camp.

As for the remaining organizations, they were willing to listen to their requests based on the strength that they showed. While the scale of the Southeast Asian guilds was not as large as the Chinese guilds, it was still possible to form a group of more than ten thousand by uniting together.

But for Red Bay, Archipelago, and the other Southeast Asian clubs, they were not independent organizations, so they could only propose cooperation agreements. Only this way could they then develop a stronghold.

After hearing their requests, even those organizations that were interested immediately hung up on them.

Venomous Snake and the rest felt surprised. This was turning out far from expected. The Chinese players had achieved great success through this method, so why was it that they had such a difficult time communicating with the NPC organizations?

After researching, they figured out the crux of this matter. The organizations rejected them as they were unqualified as partners.

The players belonging to guilds such as Red Bay and Archipelago were mostly from Star Cluster level civilizations, which did not carry much weight in the Flickering World.

The reason behind the success of the Chinese players was because they belonged to the Black Star Army. Many organizations were willing to cooperate with them in order to embrace the thigh of the Black Star Army, which was their backer, to stabilize their strongholds and deter other organizations.

But the Star Cluster Civilizations, which were also foreign forces, did not possess such a privilege.

These people were helpless. Their faction was unwilling to lend them strength, and they also could not replicate the practice of the army players. It was no wonder they snagged only so many nails in their strategy.

The deeper they understood what the Black Star Army was capable of, the more they envied the Chinese players.

After exerting a Herculean effort, the Southeast Asian guilds finally managed to find a few small breakthrough points, completely incomparable to the scale of what the players in the Black Star Army were getting. After which, they had to respond to the call of their factions and follow them to work, temporarily unable to move freely.

Even Red Bay, Archipelago, and the other first tier guilds in Southeast Asia found it difficult to start, let alone the other Blackhole Edge players who did not join the Black Star Army. Without the capital to imitate the gameplay of the army players, they could only brute force their way through as they had done in the previous versions before Version 4.0.

As more and more players arrived, the situation quickly got complicated, and the World Server gradually took shape.

At the same time, Han Xiao had already arrived and hidden himself within the Emerald Star Cluster.

Han Xiao had carried out many plans for the army, and his leek field had successfully grown and expanded. It was time to mercilessly reap the harvest.

As more 'fresh leeks' moved their bases to the Black Star Army, his efficiency in gaining experience in the short term multiplied.

When the Black Star Army expanded to nearly eight million members, the amount of experience he needed to upgrade to level 320 was finally accumulated!

Chapter 1027 God's Trait Transformation

In an unexplored area within the Emerald Star Cluster, a high-speed spaceship was proceeding at warp speed.

Only Han Xiao and a portion of the Apostle Weapons were sitting in the command room of the spaceship, watching the star map. His target marked in red flashed on the screen. The coordinates were located somewhere in the central area of the Emerald Star Cluster.

This was the place where the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy revealed in EsGod's inheritance would be born. Most of the organizations had not explored to this point. He travelled in the high-end spaceship that he had built, so he did not need to stop like the other forces and could penetrate deeper.

The time for the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy to appear was not far off. He went earlier to camp and do a stake out.

Because of Evans, only Han Xiao could be sure that the coordinates given were correct. The other forces that obtained information on the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy also had to try their luck in the several coordinates shown in the data, which could potentially reduce his competitors.

Han Xiao chose to come out with his true body for insurance. If the competitor was not strong, his avatar could do the job, and there was no need to reveal his position.

However, right now, Han Xiao was preparing to find a place to stay as his experience had finally reached the requirement to level up to level 320. His Promotion was still the priority.

During this period, he had been rushing along the journey. With the Black Star Army's foundation, he did not need to worry about it. He just had to wait for the foreign players to arrive in the Flickering World, and they would naturally join the Black Star Army.

Right now, the population of players in the army had reached about eight million, which was far from the limit. Once the remaining players in the other Star Fields came over to the World Server, the size of the army should break through the ten million mark. It would serve as a replenishment of newcomers, and he would even have a big wave of experience flowing in.

"Once all the players gather in the World Server, the players in the army should measure up to 11.5 million. This should be the biggest player faction at the moment. The number should only be second to the three Universal Civilizations in my past life."

Not all the players had arrived in the Flickering World, but they had already attracted the attention of the various major organizations, and the situation was moving toward the familiar early stage of Version 4.0 in his previous life.

Because of his own existence, the millions of players that should have been scattered around were instead situated within the Black Star Army, which would cause some deviation in the timeline. However, Han Xiao was mentally prepared for this, and the stage of making a lot of money through the

players was about to pass. The major organizations would soon come to value the abilities of the players as much as he did.

“Let’s not think about this for now. Anyway, my situation is quite good. The advantage is on my side, and I’m firmly seated on my benefits.” Han Xiao pushed aside the thought, slowed down the spaceship, and parked in the middle of the universe.

He then exited the cabin and flew using his physical body away from the spaceship. He commanded the Apostle Weapons to guard his surroundings before opening the instrument that would isolate energy fluctuations, hiding the anomalies that would occur during his advancement.

Opening the interface, he looked at the astronomical experience numbers. Han Xiao could no longer wait.

“I’ve finally saved enough to advance and complete my promotion. It’s been so long since I experienced this sort of rapid levelling up.”

Even as he murmured to himself, he did not hesitate, immediately pumping all the experience into upgrading. His total level, which had remained stagnant for a long time, suddenly rocketed!

[Divine Throne Mechanic] leveled up to Lv.8.

+450 Energy, +5 STR, +5 DEX, +15 END, +20 INT.

You have received 15 Free Attribute Points and 1 Potential Point.

...

[Divine Throne Mechanic] leveled up to Lv.20.

+450 Energy, +5 STR, +5 DEX, +15 END, +20 INT.

You have received 15 Free Attribute Points and 1 Potential Point.

You have reached Lv.320, triggering the Promotion Mission for Lv.320!

Han Xiao had accumulated a lot of Mission Completion Cards over the decades, and the moment he saw that the mission was a troublesome one, he immediately pulled out his mission completion card.

Lv.320 Promotion Mission completed!

Promotion succeeded!

+90 END Bonus! 1 END = 570 Health = 580 Stamina.

The LV 320 special blueprints for the Tyracles Mechanical Legacy have been unlocked!

Your Energy Level has reached Lv.21. Energy has passed 78,000.

You have gained the talent [God's Trait Transformation—Machinery] (0/?)

You have gained the talent [God's Trait Transformation—Void] (0/?)

You have obtained 2 God's Trait Transformation points.

You have received a [The First Sanctum] Ability Fragment.

The effects of all your Virtual Technology skills have been increased by 50%.

Han Xiao's body jolted once, and every cell in his body seemed to have become a black hole, ravenously swallowing the cosmic dark matter around it, using it to improve itself.

The upper limit of the [Divine Throne Mechanic] was Lv.60, and he could only perform his Class Advancement at level 360. His next racial species sublimation would be at level 340.

In Han Xiao's mind, level 320 should have been a normal promotion, but the notification that appeared gave his spirit a boost.

"God's Trait Transformation?" Han Xiao's eyes sparkled.

He was not completely unfamiliar with this term. In the later versions of his past life, this term constantly appeared within the Beyond Grade A circles, which was then overheard by the players. Although there was little intelligence on it, based on the hypotheses that were written on the forums, this should be an important factor to upgrade one's life level above the Beyond Grade A realm.

Furthermore, his own Machinery Deity had the term 'Deity' within, and if one had to talk about a Godhood, then it might have something to do with the Machinery Faith and the [Key of Adeptus Mechanicus]... However, he had not experienced anything to do with divinity whatsoever at this moment.

Why is it that as one's life level increases, it becomes more and more ideological? This is making me, a mechanic that only believes in materialism very awkward...

"In any case, it seems like the threshold of Lv.21 Energy Rank and 78,000 Onas of Energy are needed to trigger the God's Trait Transformation?" Han Xiao murmured to himself whilst enduring the pain that came with the advancement.

The calculation method for energy rank was quite complicated, not just a simple addition and subtraction. The larger the value, the larger the gap between every one point. For example, the energy levels of 100 to 200 and 9,900 to 10,000 were both similarly separated by a hundred points, but the difference in their actual energy values was huge. The higher one's energy was, the harder it was to increase.

When he had broken through the level 300 watershed to become a Mechanical Deity, his total energy was around 71,000.

In the next decade, he had constantly practiced new Energy Training Techniques, raising the upper limit of his energy, and he had also spent a lot of experience and potential points to improve his skills and

knowledge. At the same time, he had also extracted abilities from Heber, Manison, Silver Shadow, and many others, gaining powerful talents and skills. With the [Perfect Mechanical Sense] from Nero, along with his various bonuses, his total energy finally broke through 78,000.

“The two God’s Trait Transformations are split into Machinery and Void respectively... Oh, this corresponds to one’s class and race. So, are these the two possible evolutionary routes, or do I need to add them both at once?”

Han Xiao glanced at the interface, where he saw a small ‘+’ sign beside each of the God’s Trait Transformation talents, and the effect was labelled with a ‘?’.

“It seems like I will only know the effect when I add points. Since the system gave me two God’s Trait Transformation points when I was promoted, let’s try one in each... The suffix of the skills should represent the final form of this talent, which should occur when the talent is maxed out. But the total number of points is labelled as a ‘?’, so how many points should I add?”

Han Xiao tried adding a point to the [God’s Trait Transformation—Machinery] talent, and the effect of it was displayed.

God’s Trait Transformation—Machinery (1/?)

Stage One: +1,000 Machinery Affinity, +20% Ability power. Base effects of all Mechanic class abilities are slightly enhanced.

Han Xiao glanced at his skill list. With the slight enhancement to his class abilities, it meant that every skill had undergone a slight improvement for every level. The effect of strengthening all his Mechanic-related skills was not high, but it provided a comprehensive improvement.

“The bonus is acceptable, but I don’t find it too powerful. Maybe it’s because it’s only at the first stage? I guess, the more points I add, the more powerful the effects unlocked.” Han Xiao raised his eyebrows.

He hesitated but finally decided against adding another point to it. He added it to the [God’s Trait Transformation—Void] talent instead.

God’s Trait Transformation—Void (1/?)

Stage One: Exclusive Racial Talents are enhanced, and all Racial Talents of the Void Race Evolution route will be strengthened. You have been awarded 1,750 Attribute Points.

The total affinity bonus from [Mechanical Genius] increased from x1.25 to x1.28, and Machinery Creation Performance increased from forty percent to forty-four percent. The racial talents of his other Void abilities also showed some increase, with the cooldown times of most of them being reduced.

Han Xiao nodded. “This one is not bad.”

With his God's Trait Transformation points spent, he did not know how to obtain more. Were they only given when he promoted, or was there another way to obtain them?

If this was only given during advancement, that would mean that the sooner one reached the 78,000 benchmark the better. After all, if one's level was low, advancing would definitely be more convenient, and one could obtain more points this way. In this manner... could that also refer to potential?

Han Xiao decided not to think further, opting to look at the other notifications.

What was this [The First Sanctum] fragment? He had not heard of this in his past life.

The introduction was also labelled with question marks. Han Xiao could not understand what this was, but from the name of [The First Sanctum], it seemed as though it had nothing to do with the Mechanic class. Furthermore, he only had a fragment, so he could not utilize it and could only stare at it.

"I keep having the feeling that this should be a key factor for something... I should find an opportunity to ask the dynasty if there's any information in this area. Most likely, I'll have to exchange contribution points for it, just like the time when I obtained the information on the Machinery Faith."

After removing everything unrelated, Han Xiao then turned toward the [Tyracles Mechanical Legacy]. There would be new blueprints unlocked at level 320 and 360.

He glanced through it quickly, and his pupils suddenly narrowed to a point. A hint of surprise leaked out.

F*ck me, I've hit the jackpot!

Chapter 1028 The King and the Emperor's Cape

Among the [Tyracles Mechanical Legacy] blueprints unlocked at level 320, there were blueprints that were shining gold in color!

Not one but two!

The Gold Grade represented equipment that was on the level of a Universal Treasure!

Han Xiao had a joyful surprise.

He originally thought that he would only get the opportunity to unlock the Universal Treasure blueprints when he reached level 360, but it unexpectedly came out in level 320. The Gold blueprints of this race might be higher than he initially imagined.

He hurriedly opened the item introduction, and the two blueprints' information appeared in his eyes.

[Blueprint: King]: This blueprint records the highest crystallization of wisdom from the Saint Tyracles Race for Superpower soldiers—The 'King'. Made exclusively for Beyond Grade A Mechanics, the blueprint's cost is high, with a set of armor comparable to the price of a large fleet, and it is extremely difficult to produce. Since its birth, the total number of finished products created by the Saint Tyracles Race numbered no more than ten. Only a Mechanic with enough strength will be able to control this mechanical suit.

[Blueprint: Emperor's Cape]: After the Saint Tyracles Race witnessed the imposingness of the Mechanical Deity, they began to zealously research, producing this extraordinary mechanical creation. This is a piece of equipment that can only be utilized by a Mechanical Deity.

Han Xiao carefully looked through the blueprints, as well as the effects of the two pieces of equipment.

The Saint Tyracles Race had advanced extremely far in the Mechanic class. The [King] mechanical suit displayed it, reaching the level that could be considered a Universal Treasure, which blended many of the advanced skills of the Saint Tyracles.

This Mechanical suit was armor designed for a Beyond Grade A Mechanic, and the reference parameters of the blueprint showed that just the basic performance of the King outstripped his current mechanical suit by at least thirty percent! His own mechanical suit was high-end Orange equipment, considered one of the best within its grade quality!

In addition to conventional combat weapons, the King also had unique features that made it extremely suitable for Mechanics.

As a dedicated equipment for Mechanics, the King provided an extra bonus toward mechanics, which provided users with an additional x1.075 coefficient to their total Machinery Affinity, only slightly less compared to the increase from the Divine Mechanical Throne. Furthermore, it increased the range of effect for the Mechanical Force bonus by thirty-five percent while reducing the energy consumption. This would strengthen normal mechanics to provide their army with a longer period of blessing.

Moreover, the King was equipped with a special energy converter that could absorb Mechanical Force and enter an enhanced state. There were multiple modes, such as improving the performance of the Mechanical suit, strengthening melee capabilities, and providing instant acceleration and defense, so as to get rid of any ambushes that the Mechanic most feared.

While this man-made combat equipment was at the level of a Universal Treasure, it did not belong to the scope of a Space Wonder, so the quality of its stats were more reflected in its performance. It would not be equipped with an unsolvable power like the Spacetime Amber. It was closer to the Universal Treasure level equipment made by the Divine Craftsman Thorne.

However... the King belonged to another type of equipment.

It was the core function of the King that made Han Xiao truly satisfied!

When the Federation of Light manufactured their Multi-Dimensional Sky Opening Transportation Device, they had borrowed the knowledge of the Saint Tyracles Race, and the core function of the King was related to this.

The reason why the Multi-Dimensional Sky Opening Transportation Device was the strategic weapon of the Federation of Light was because it had the capability of unlimited transmissions. Not only was the distance long, it was also immune to interference from all spatial related devices, which was the most important thing. The King had a similar immunity as well.

'The King' possessed a unique accessory called the Throne, and both sides would resonate with each other. No matter where the King was, the user could instantly return to the location of the Throne together with the suit. This transmission ignored all external interference, and it would still take effect even when trapped within wormholes or space stabilization anchors.

The introduction for this function was simply a statement—'The King cannot be restrained.'

It was not just restricted to that. When the King returned to the Throne, the follow up effect of this function could be activated in the next three minutes. This allowed the user to blink back to the original position of the King. To be able to shuttle back and forth between two points... simply put, this was horizontal warping.

"There is the shadow of the Multi-Dimensional Sky Opening ability within. So long as I'm wearing the King, I will not need to be afraid of sudden ambushes like EsGod. I can immediately choose to warp back to my Throne, leaving the danger zone." Han Xiao's eyes gleamed.

In view of his true body's physical susceptibility toward ambushes... this toy was akin to a divine artifact for him!

While it was a fixed position warp and not as effective as the Multi-Dimensional Sky Opening Transportation Device, it still had an irreplaceable role. For the mechanic with a weak body, this was a magical escape technique. As the saying went, where there was life there was hope, and this was very apt for the mechanic.

Han Xiao looked at the manufacturing requirements, thinking to himself, The cost is high, but it is still in an acceptable range for me. Some of the core materials will be hard to get, but that was during the exploration era. Right now, we're in the Galaxy Calendar. As long as you have enough money, you can get your hands on any materials you want.

Han Xiao was not worried about the cost nor the rarity of the materials.

As the top Beyond Grade A in the Shattered Star Ring, the strongest in the Flickering World, and the 'Sugar Daddy' of hundreds of financial groups, finances were not an issue.

His main concern was the difficulty of manufacturing. It was no easy task to build Gold Grade equipment. It did not mean that he was guaranteed to produce Gold Equipment as long as he followed the blueprints.

There was a high probability that the finished product would not reach the quality of Gold Grade Equipment. There would be all sorts of reasons that led to the finished product not reaching the ideal state as stated on the blueprint.

"I'm now at level 320 and am considered a pinnacle Beyond Grade A Mechanic. The basic manufacturing abilities will definitely meet the mark, and coupled with the talents provided by the my Divine Throne Mechanic class, the success rate should not be too low."

During a prior class advancement, he had received a talent named [Spirit Instrument], which improved his success rate of manufacturing from gold blueprints. He finally had a chance to put it to use.

As for the other unlocked blueprint, the [Emperor's Cape] was special equipment that was to be used by the Mechanical Deity. In short, the King was the mechanical suit for the Mechanic, while the Emperor's Cape was used when the Mechanical Deity descended.

In appearance, it looked like an oversized war cloak. It was able to reduce the consumption of energy needed for the Divine Throne Mechanic to maintain the Mechanical Deity, indirectly extending the combat time.

Not everyone could be as perverted as Han Xiao. Most ordinary mechanics did not have as many energy conversion abilities, so the Emperor's Cape served to allow the Mechanic to use the Mechanical Deity for longer periods of time.

Other than reducing consumption, it would also provide additional protection and stabilize the interior of the Mechanical Deity. Because it was made up of countless machines, the stronger the bonds between each machine, the higher the mechanical defensiveness of the Mechanical Deity.

In his battle against Heber, that little Ty-Ty had rushed into the hand of his Mechanical Deity, trying to wreck it from the inside. Although he had failed, he had managed to temporarily destroy the right arm of the Mechanical Deity. If not for the fact that Han Xiao's energy recovery speed was frighteningly high, just the consumption needed to reform the arm would have required the Mechanic to give up a kidney.

If he had the Emperor's Cape, the internals of his Mechanical Deity would become extremely durable, such that it would still last a length of time even when invaded by a pinnacle Beyond Grade A pugilist.

In addition to its protective ability, the Emperor's Cape also brought about movement speed bonuses. Because of its huge size, the speed of the Mechanical Deity was greatly affected, so the Emperor's Cape could improve the agility and attack speed of the Mechanical Deity.

"These two are both Gold equipment that are tailor-made for Mechanics. Indeed, the famed Mechanic haven, this Saint Tyracles race."

Han Xiao was drooling at the sight of the two. After rejecting the dynasty's proposal to give up the Evolution Cube, he had thought that there would be no more chances for him to obtain Universal Treasure combat equipment in the short term. The effect of these two blueprints gave him a surprise, as they could immediately improve his combat capability, which was what he was currently lacking.

"I've got to find a way to quickly manufacture them. Right now, there are many Beyond Grade As flocking to the Flickering World, and the major organizations also roughly understand my current strength. If something happens, it will be a crisis for me..."

Han Xiao calmed himself down as he gazed at his attributes panel.

Total Level: 320

Main Class: Mechanic

Race: Black Star Race

Attributes: 8,016 STR, 7,945 DEX, 11,714 END, 20,933 INT, 6,430 MYS, 1,368 CHA, 1 LUK

Free Attribute Points: 2050

Potential Points: 28

Health: 13,984,273

Stamina: 11,806,980

Energy: 182,075 (Lv.21)

Lv.21 Energy Level bonus stat: +3,206 STR, +3,928 DEX, +4,870 END, +6,505 INT, +3,123 MYS, +1,381,520 Stamina Limit, +4,282% Machinery Affinity

Energy Rank: 82,600

Grade: SS

Grade S Bonuses: +150 END, +45% All Resistances, +40% to Highest Attribute, +25% Other Attributes, 750 Free Attribute Points, and 50 Potential Points

Remark: Standing at the peak allows you to see more of the scenery. However, this is not the end goal in the route of evolution. You must pierce through the fog to slowly touch upon the secrets to an even higher realm of life.

Chapter 1029 The Dynasty's Plans

Compared to when he was at level 300, the attribute growth was obvious, but this mainly came from the bonus given by his Lv.21 Energy Level and was due to Han Xiao's accumulation during the version update.

As his energy level continuously increased, he would also gain ever-increasing strength. This was an important part behind the power of the Supers.

The Endurance bonus for his promotion this time was '+90', which was twenty points more than his previous promotion. Because it was more difficult to upgrade in the later stage, the enhancement to one's attributes brought about by each advancement would also increase, and the increase in Energy Rank would also cause one's S-level rank bonus to upgrade even higher. There was a close connection between all the attributes, causing Han Xiao to be comprehensively strengthened.

Just an ordinary promotion already gave him such a sharp increase in stats, causing Han Xiao to be extremely satisfied.

"As for the more than 2,000 Free Attribute Points..."

Han Xiao thought about it but left them untouched for the time being. His Intelligence and Endurance were all quite high, so he decided to provide himself with some flexibility depending on the situation.

As for his potential points, they would be used to upgrade his Class knowledge, with the Ultimate Knowledge having priority.

At present, there were only three of his Ultimate Knowledges that were maxed out, namely [Virtual Creator], [Eternal Power Source], and [Relativity Theory]. The other three belonged to the other

branches of the Mechanic class, and there was a three-times penalty imposed. Levelling them from Lv.1 to Lv.5 would require a total of 288 potential points.

Han Xiao had gained quite a few potential points since the update of the version. He had raised the three Ultimate Knowledges a little each, and the twenty-eight free potential points he had on the interface right now were just right to max out his [Mechanical Life Tinder] skill.

However, Han Xiao did not do so after some thought. He turned and added a level to [Ultimate Mechanical Engineering], raising it to Lv.3.

This class knowledge was related to one's manufacturing and production, and Han Xiao wanted to increase the success rate of the Emperor's Cape and the King, so he first prioritized this knowledge.

"A plan cannot always keep up with the changes. I wanted to go there and camp, but now I need to work while I wait." Han Xiao shook his head.

Now that he was alone and unable to use the workshop in his base, he could only use the army workshop in his secondary dimension, and he even had to go out of his way to obtain the raw materials.

He counted the days, and he probably could not even create it before the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy was born. The time needed to manufacture a Universal Treasure-level equipment was quite hefty. That was especially so for the Emperor's Cape, which was physically huge.

"Right now, I've reached level 320, and my battle strength has experienced yet another leap, drawing closer to the Mechanic Emperor and Void Overlord. I can gauge their strength even better now..." Han Xiao sighed.

Seeing the gap in strength narrowing bit by bit, his mood was definitely good.

However, after this promotion, his upgrade costs once again skyrocketed. Because the effects of each promotion in the later stages were extraordinary, the upgrade fee naturally corresponded to this.

"I'm afraid it will take a long time to accumulate enough experience to upgrade to level 340. Also, I have to find an opportunity to ask about the God's Trait Transformation as well as The First Sanctum."

...

In Tarunamir Palace, the top leader of the hawk faction, Bekorodi, sat in a conference room with his eyes closed for a rest. After a while, a remote projection appeared. It was Gaud.

"You're here." Bekorodi opened his eyes.

"I hope you called me over to inform me about some good news." Gaud's expression was calm.

"It's indeed good news," Bekorodi said in a deep voice. "The request you submitted has been approved, and the dynasty's top management has decided to give the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy to you... provided that your Esper ability is truly as what you've said and that you can control the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy."

The dynasty had bet on Black Star, thinking that he would be an important National Pillar in the future, but the dynasty did not mind having another person as strong as him. After all, someone with Gaud's

Esper Ability was too rare, so the dynasty was willing to spend the resources to cultivate this high potential Esper. Furthermore, this person still belonged to the dynasty, and he was not an ally who did not have to listen to all their orders.

“I’m very clear what my ability can and cannot do, so as long as the dynasty is willing to put their trust in me, I will not disappoint them.” Gaud thinly smiled.

“As long as you can prove yourself, the dynasty will not be stingy with the resources to cultivate you, just like Black Star.” The moment Bekorodi mentioned Han Xiao, his tone got a little deeper.

Black Star rejecting his one to three exchange had left Bekorodi extremely dissatisfied.

However, Gaud only replied with a smile that was not a real smile, skirting past this topic. He instead asked, “Now that the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy is about to be born, what does the dynasty intend to do?”

Bekorodi nodded. “The dynasty has already sent troops to the various locations shown by the intelligence, and we have spotted abnormal movements from many of the organizations, which confirms that they likely also got their hands on EsGod’s legacy. They will be our competitors in obtaining the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy...”

“What sort of organizations are they?”

“The number is small, but their composition is complex. There are all kinds of organizations, but the church and the federation’s side do not seem to have moved, so we cannot know if they are aware of this matter...”

“It sounds like there are many uncertainties. Can we ensure that the dynasty will get the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy?”

“The current situation is unclear. The Oracle of the dynasty has tried to scry for information, and it feels like the Emerald Star Cluster is the most likely place in which the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy will appear. It just so happens that the Flickering World is our territory, so the dynasty has decided to engage a few Beyond Grade A allies for help.” Bekorodi narrowed his eyes as he spoke.

“Black Star?”

“He’s not on the list.” Bekorodi shook his head.

The Black Star Army had the greatest amount of influence in the Flickering World, so it stood to reason that Black Star should be the most reliable. However, the dynasty did not request help from him, and Bekorodi did not disclose the reason.

Gaud smiled to himself as he realized the implications.

Tsk, it seemed like the problem with the Evolution Cube caused quite a rift between Black Star and the dynasty...

His eyes flickered, and Gaud calmly said, “Since that’s the case, I have a suggestion. We should tell Black Star to turn away so as to prevent side issues from arising.”

“I don’t have the authority to command Black Star.” Bekorodi waved his hands. “In addition, the latest news states that his Black Star Guards are all within his palace, and even Ames has gone over to visit him from Shattered Star Ring. Thus, it is likely that his true body is still within his base. He probably knows his limits and will not interfere in this matter...”

Bekorodi paused for a moment before his expression sank. “However, even if Black Star decides to interfere, the dynasty can still strike a deal with him. With his current situation, the chances of him rejecting us again are miniscule. He should know what to do in order to mend his relationship with us.”

“That’s good. I hope that there will not be any accidents during the operation.” Gaud narrowed his eyes.

The dynasty did not wish to see a special talent like him encounter any unnecessary risks before growing up, so he could not join the operation.

What Gaud needed to do was obediently stay put and wait for the dynasty to hand him the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy.

Getting the dynasty to work for me is so convenient... Gaud secretly smiled and shook his head.

Chapter 1030 Movements of the Competitors

“They want me to snatch that famous Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy on the dynasty’s behalf?”

In a certain dynasty’s ally stronghold in the Flickering World’s free competition zone, Ravenlaude was surprised to receive this message from the upper echelons of the dynasty.

As a member of the senior celebrity group, Ravenlaude was quite highly regarded among the Beyond Grade A allies of the dynasty. His position was far above people like Kohler or Beyoni. Although he did not exactly have a good relationship with Black Star, the two of them held no grudges against each other.

Of course, Ravenlaude had no idea that the Spacetime Amber was supposed to belong to him but was taken away by Han Xiao in advance, or he would have joined the ‘dynasty anti-Black Star alliance’, which had Heber as its one and only member.

It was common for the dynasty to ask him for help. What Ravenlaude was surprised about was the information about the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy appearing. This was the first time he had heard of this.

“The Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy...” Ravenlaude’s eyes sparkled.

To be honest, he was quite tempted.

Primal Esper Abilities in the Super High Risk Esper Ability List such as this one were extremely rare. If he could make it his, it would be more than enough to raise a powerful subordinate, or he could use sealing type spells to seal the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy onto special magic puppets to use its powers, which might make the puppet as strong as a Universal Treasure.

However, these greedy thoughts only existed for a few seconds in Ravenlaude’s mind before he completely extinguished them.

His organization was right in the Constellation Corridor, which was heavily affected by the dynasty. There was no need to go against the dynasty's will for just a Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy.

The dynasty told him about this information to let him help, but if he was tempted by it, it would definitely upset the dynasty. To him, there was more to lose than gain.

"But a Universal Treasure..."

Ravenlaude still found it tough to let go. It was not really because he did not even have the courage to let go of the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy, but after seeing Han Xiao's Spacetime Amber, he had felt a sense of emptiness in his heart, like he had missed something very important. Universal Treasures had become almost an impulse for him.

It was like a kid seeing the other kids with fun toys and also wanting one.

One word, jealous!

"Since the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy is as valuable as a Universal Treasure, it's the right time to negotiate terms with the dynasty."

Ravenlaude then gave his request to the dynasty—if they wanted his help, the dynasty had to grant him a Universal Treasure from their inventory.

Not long after his request, the dynasty's reply came, expressing their approval of Ravenlaude's request but with additional terms.

If the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy appeared in other areas, Ravenlaude would only receive some resources as a reward for his trouble.

But if the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy appeared in the Emerald Star Cluster and Ravenlaude obtained it, he would be allowed to pick one Universal Treasure from the dynasty's inventory.

A list was also attached with the reply with the Universal Treasures the dynasty allowed Ravenlaude to claim. Most of them were combat equipment; it was the same list given to Han Xiao in exchange for the Evolution Cube.

Ravenlaude browsed through carefully and nodded with satisfaction.

Han Xiao had no interest in these things, but they were very valuable to Ravenlaude. After all, Han Xiao already had the Evolution Cube and the Spacetime Amber, so ordinary Universal Treasures could not meet his standards.

With the reward promised, Ravenlaude became motivated about this mission. After carefully looking at the list of competitors that the dynasty had provided, he smiled with confidence.

How hard would it be to snatch something from a bunch of weaklings?

...

In an unexplored area of the Emerald Star Cluster, a fleet was moving in hyperdrive. Its exterior armor had no symbols.

Inside the main ship, a tall man wearing a purple robe stood before the command console, giving off a cold aura and silently looking at the star map. The red dots on it marked the coordinates where the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy might appear.

Beside him, a fishman-like creature who was restrained by magical ropes said with a shivering and nervous tone, "Your Excellency Secret Master, I swear this piece of intelligence is real. It's really EsGod's heritage, not fake news I made up!"

"It had better be, or you know the consequences," a cold and indifferent voice replied. The man turned around and glanced at him. All of the skin he was showing was covered in magnificent and complicated magical runes flickering with dim light, like he was a tattoo addict.

Just like 'Beast Ancestor' Gorutan, this man was also a protector of the Galactic Black Market. He was the famous Secret Master renowned in the magic society. He was an authority in Rune Studies, Alchemy Studies, and Secret Studies, especially in Secret Studies. The reason he had this nickname was because there was a rumor going around that he had mastered a type of spell that could control someone's 'luck', also that he was a master in fortune telling and foresight.

All the tattoos on his body were Forbidden Spell grade rune enchantments that provided powerful enhancements to his body. The organization that Secret Master was in specialized in extremely advanced rune technology, which could be seen from looking at his subordinates. All of them were wearing exquisite rune armor, and the skin they were showing was also covered in complex magical patterns.

Secret Master turned to the star map, and the cold look in his eyes rippled ever so slightly.

"The Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy..."

Not long ago, he had suddenly foreseen that a huge event would happen in the Emerald Star Cluster that might be beneficial to him, so he had used his power in the black market and investigated it. With his outstanding luck, he discovered a small organization that had fought for EsGod's heritage previously. They happened to have the coordinates of the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy. After they were captured and interrogated, Secret Master developed an interest for the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy.

He was someone who did not mind using all kinds of external agents to increase his strength, and all these runes over his body were proof of that. At the same time, he had plenty of high-quality magic items; his desire to collect rare items was almost at an OCD level. Therefore, he naturally wanted this extremely rare Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy as well.

Due to the distance, he had sent officers to the other coordinates while he headed personally to the Emerald Star Cluster as it had the highest possibility.

"I wonder what organizations will be part of this..."

This question appeared in his mind but was very soon forgotten. He had a lot of confidence.

No matter what organization comes, I'll just have to beat them up. How many of them will be able to stand up to a Beyond Grade A like me?

...

The stronghold of the Modo Civilization was situated in another area of the Emerald Star Cluster.

An elite team formed by Calamity Grade Supers gathered at a secret dock, and the commander of the Modo Civilization's Expedition Fleet Roddick and the inspector Lagos stood before them, examining the team.

"I'll leave the mission of the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy to you guys." Roddick nodded at everyone solemnly.

Some advanced civilizations had also received information from EsGod's heritage, among which the Modo Civilization was one of those who knew about the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy. The Modo Civilization had no reason to let go of something this valuable.

The other locations were given to others to take care of, while the Expedition Fleet led by Roddick was responsible for the coordinates in the Emerald Star Cluster.

Ever since the Expedition Fleet was last attacked by the 'mysterious force', pressured by the upper echelons, Roddick had become much more vigilant. He was very careful in resupplying the resources.

However, it did not turn out to be very useful. The reinforcements redeployed from the Shattered Star Ring were often attacked by 'unknown forces' on the way, which cost them a lot of time.

Luckily, after they arrived in the free competition zone, the Super Star Cluster allies had helped them slightly, which made the situation better for the Modo Civilization. Therefore, Roddick's team were not attacked again in the Emerald Star Cluster.

Hence, he had the time to gather an elite team, ready to complete the mission given by the upper echelons—capture the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy.

Super Star Cluster civilizations had vast territories and rich resources, as well as plenty of high level combatants. They had thousands of Calamity Grades, far more than those Star System civilizations that only had a few dozens.

The Modo Civilization had high hopes for the Expedition Fleet, so they had deployed around a hundred Calamity Grades. This elite team that would be heading to capture the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy included forty percent of the Expedition Fleet's Calamity Grade officers, which was about forty to fifty of them. This was a powerful armed force.

For this operation, the Modo Civilization did not notify the other allies of the Super Star Cluster alliance. After all, there was only one Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy; it could not be shared.

Maybe the other civilizations had this intelligence too, but the Modo Civilization clearly was not going to tell others about it.

Watching the fleet enter stealth mode and leave, Lagos came to Roddick and asked in a worried tone, "Isn't it too risky to send this many people? If something happens, we'll lose a large number of elites. Calamity Grades are difficult to raise..."

“I’ve told them to be careful. If any Beyond Grade As participate, they’ll act cautiously. If not, they can crush any and all competing organizations,” Roddick said with a deep voice.

“But now that we’ve sent them out, the defenses of our stronghold will be weak. Aren’t you worried that Blac... the mysterious force will attack us again?” Lagos asked.

Roddick snorted and said in a firm tone, “Humph, the strongholds of the Super Star Cluster alliance look over each other’s shoulders. We even hired some Beyond Grade As, who are all more reliable than Garoze. So what if Black Star’s forces are strong? He won’t dare come and touch us.”

They did not have to advance anymore. Back then, they had no help, so there was nothing they could do when they were attacked. Now, however, all their teammates had gathered, and the lines of defenses were stronger than ever. If Black Star caused trouble, he would have to face the entire Super Star Cluster alliance. He did not think Black Star would dare do that.

...

After the Flickering World opened, Psyker did not give up on the opportunity and also followed the Arcane Church in to develop his forces and built a stronghold in the free competition zone.

As the three Universal Civilizations were coexisting there, Psyker did not get targeted, so his days were quite peaceful. Looking at the exploration fleet doing better work every day, he was rather content.

“I shall see how things go first. If I can stabilize my territory in the Flickering World, I can migrate a portion of my people here and have them live here as a branch of the race.”

At the top of the base, Psyker looked up at the sky and thought about his migration plan.

At this time, an officer hastily walked over.

“Leader, the base’s radar has discovered two fleets closing in. They seem to be in combat. One side only has three battleships left, and they cannot hang on much longer. According to the direction they’re heading, their battle will very soon reach our stronghold. What should we do?”

Psyker used his seven eyes to look at the radar images and ordered, “Chase them away. Tell them to not fight around my territory.”

As the order was given, the subordinates quickly executed it. However, after some time, this officer ran back hastily again.

“Leader, they have already been chased away, but that group of people we saved aren’t willing to leave. One of them is a Calamity Grade Super. He thinks that you saved them, so he wants to join us with his team.”

“Join us?” Psyker was a little stunned. He felt a complicated emotion in his heart.

He suddenly remembered that ever since he was targeted by Black Star, it had been a very long time since anyone came to join his forces. He had almost forgotten what it was like to be a Beyond Grade A.

This long-lost feeling... was so comforting.

“Invite him here. I want to see him.” Psyker was glad, and his attitude became much friendlier. Psyker decided to see him personally to show him that he took him seriously.

After some time, this Calamity Grade was brought before Psyker. He had many wounds on his body, and it was clear he had just come from a tough battle.

“Your Excellency Star Pupil.” This person’s face was filled with appreciation. He ignored the pain in his body and bowed with admiration. “You saved my life. I’m willing to join your forces and work for you.”

“Hmm, it’s a small matter.” Psyker looked calmed on the surface, but he actually liked this a lot. The respectful attitude from this person made him remember what it was like to be a Beyond Grade A again.

“To repay you, I would like to give you a gift. It’s a piece of valuable intelligence.”

“What intelligence?” Psyker asked.

“A clue about that legendary Super High Risk Esper Ability, the Primal Chaos Mysterious Energy!”

Psyker paused for a second, and interest flashed through his seven eyes at the same time.

...

In Black Star Palace...

“What, he invited me over, but he went out?”

Ames narrowed her eyes. The temperature in the room seemed to decrease by a hundred degrees in an instant. A powerful force field roared like tides. The floor and the walls made of high strength alloys vibrated nonstop while making squeaking noises, and cracks appeared very quickly.

Aurora’s legs were going soft. She lowered her head with a sense of guilt.

My teacher is... so scary when she’s angry.

She could feel Ames’ anger just from this powerful force field.

She had accepted the invitation with excitement, travelled all that way, only to discover that Han Xiao was not even there. Anyone would be angry because of that...

No, it was even worse. Han Xiao was not home, yet he had called her over. It was almost like a deliberate prank.

Even someone as carefree as Ames felt that she had been toyed with.

“Teacher, why not stay here for some time? Uncle will come back,” Aurora said cautiously.

Ames glanced at her and rebutted subconsciously, “You think I’m that free?”

Then, both of them fell silent.

Aurora wanted to say something but did not.

Don’t you know exactly whether you’re very free or not?

The two of them looked into each other’s eyes, and the atmosphere gradually turned awkward.

After looking at each other for a few moments, Ames suddenly retracted the roaring force field. Without changing her expression, she purposely used a tone that sounded like she did not care and said, "I'll stay for some time then. I'm mainly here for you anyway. Whether Black Star is here or not, I don't care. In fact, it bothers me to see his face. It's best that he's not here.

Aurora remained silent. Sure, I believe you.