

Mechanic 1161

Chapter 1161 Finding a Needle in a Haystack Is Where We Excel

The universe was extremely enormous. Even if one had extraordinary individual strength, without a force large enough, one would not be able to achieve much in the galactic society.

The Black Star Army was among the top armed forces in the Galaxy. They had manpower, resources, money, ships, and everything. As soon as Han Xiao's highest order was given out, the Black Star Army's men in the Shattered Star Ring started executing the order immediately. They searched through one Star System after another and locked down all kinds of transportation hubs to find Aesop's whereabouts. The Floating Dragon Island's troops were also mostly dispatched.

Clearly, such a big movement could not stay hidden. It quickly attracted the attention of the entire galactic society. With just a little research, they knew that Dragon Emperor's elder had gone missing. To search for just one person, the movements of the Black Star Army indirectly affected dozens of Star Systems.

Such a deep search impacted the operation of some public facilities, which some galactic residents had slight problems with. However, given that it was from the Black Star Army and even the local civilizations did not do anything about it, of course, the ordinary residents did not dare do anything too. Other than dispatching troops everywhere, the Black Star Army also issued a bounty for Aesop through the local media channels, making use of the power of the people.

A large monetary reward would be given to anyone who could provide any real leads to Aesop, such as witness reports, transit records, and many more. If anyone could capture Aesop alive and give him to the army, the reward would be an outrageous 135 million Enas. Ordinary galactic residents would not be able to even spend all this money in their lifetime. It was also humongous for some medium to small armed organizations.

As the saying went, with a high enough reward, people would step up sooner or later. Some medium to small organizations joined the search team, and a ton of free mercenaries started looking too. Even some galactic pirates and scavengers were searching secretly, hoping to acquire the reward and clean their ledgers. The local galactic residents of the Shattered Star Ring also kept an eye out.

For the time being, Aesop had become the focus of countless organizations in the Shattered Star Ring.

In the past, Han Xiao was on his own and hardly had any forces; being able to capture Aesop was mainly thanks to Feidin's luck. Decades later, his army had grown into a giant. There was no need to play hide and seek with Aesop like he used to; he just had to make use of his resources, and it would become extremely difficult for Aesop to go anywhere.

Even though Aesop's foresight ability was very powerful, all he could do was move with extreme caution and stealth in this kind of situation, not daring to appear in front of ordinary people.

Of course, these were just the basics. Han Xiao's core method of finding him was Rody's prophecy, alongside Ames, Feidin, Nero, and Harrison's luck, on top of his own Virtual Technology continuously calculating the possible coordinates Aesop might head to so that he could narrow down the search area.

Dark red sandstorm shrouded the sky like a red piece of cloth placed over the entire planet.

Through the low visibility sandstorm, a man in a heavy protective suit was walking alone on the red desert. The raging storm drummed his body like hammers.

This man walked a few hours like this when, suddenly, a meteor-like spark of light penetrated the sandstorm and plummeted toward this man. He stopped and looked up, an approaching small spaceship reflected on the ally mask of his protective suit. Hu!

The spaceship slowly landed before this person and released an air force field with a fifty-meter diameter, blocking the sandstorm and creating a clean area.

The hatch opened. This person stepped onto the spaceship without hesitation, dusted off the sand all over his body, and took off the heavy protective helmet. An old face appeared. It was Aesop.

“You’re the ones here to fetch me?” Aesop patted the helmet.

“Yes, we’ll be responsible for getting you out of the Shattered Star Ring.” The captain approached him. “Don’t worry, we’re professionals, certainly reliable.” Aesop nodded with approval and said, “The single person space cabin that sent me here has yet to be destroyed. Go destroy it on while you’re at it. If it lands in Black Star’s hands, it’ll be a prophecy medium. Don’t leave any clues like that.”

Due to the Black Star Army’s lockdown over the Shattered Star Ring, he could hardly go anywhere. He was barely able to find a space cabin and landed on this desolate planet and waited for quite a long time before this spaceship arrived to pick him up.

“No problem.” The captain nodded.

The spaceship took off, came to a desolate desert area not far away, and discovered the metal space cabin that was half buried in the sand.

Bang!

Two explosive light beams shot out of the spaceship and destroyed the spaceship. The flame only lasted for an instant before being extinguished by the raging wind, leaving only metal fragments shattered around that were gradually buried by the sand. After completing this task, the spaceship turned around, rose up, and took off into space.

At the same time, Manison, who was in the Primeval Star River, received the message. He opened the surveillance footage, and it showed Aesop in this spaceship.

“They finally picked him up...”

Manison looked at the screen.

For confidentiality purposes, this spaceship that had gone to receive Aesop had hidden its organization symbol. It actually belonged to an organization called ‘Milder Armed Transport’, one of the secret organizations Manison had planted in the Shattered Star Ring.

Not long ago, the Modo Civilization had officially pulled him into the plan, shared some information with him, and asked him to help.

Modo Civilization only did so because of the lack of a better choice. The lockdown of the Black Star Army was too tight, so they could not make any moves in the Shattered Star Ring and could not secretly transport Aesop out at all. They were almost discovered multiple times. Hence, they decided to borrow the Mechanic Emperor's men and have him take over the 'delivery'.

"Modo must have used the Soul Swapper on Aesop and made him escape deliberately."

Of course, in the information the Modo Civilization provided, the existence of the Soul Swapper was not mentioned. They only said that they controlled Aesop using some kind of mind control method and did not explain further. However, they did not know that Manison had known about the Soul Swapper since long ago, so he understood what was used on Aesop instantly.

Manison had no plan of stopping Modo's mission. He even planned to cooperate with it fully.

Although Aesop was one of the Ancient Ones, he had quit the organization long ago. The Ancient Ones were mainly Eternals. Beyond Grade As were a part of it, but not all members were Beyond Grade As. There were quite a number of unique members with special abilities but weak combat capabilities just like Aesop.

Although Manison did know Aesop, they were not friends, so he did not mind Aesop dying.

On this matter, his interests aligned with Modo. There was a chance using Aesop's death to plot against Black Star would force him to disobey the Peace Treaty of the advanced civilizations. This way, Black Star's reputation would be severely damaged, and the great image the three Universal Civilizations had been building for him would collapse. That was exactly what Manison hoped to see, so he was willing to cooperate.

However, all of this was just the cherry on top. Manison's main goal was still the Soul Swapper.

"Aesop is now in my hands. He's definitely come into contact with the Soul Swapper at a relatively close range. Through searching his past whereabouts, the rough search area can be determined. Through cross-referencing the records, the Modo Civilization's secret fleet that transported the Soul Swapper can be found. The person who's now controlling Aesop's body should be one of the Modo Civilization's men. Maybe I can hypnotize him and question him."

He did not know that the Soul Swap Twins had already escaped. He thought that the Soul Swapper was now being transported back by the Modo Civilization, so his search direction was already inaccurate.

Not long after the spaceship transporting Aesop left, another fleet visited this dark red desolate island. The Black Star symbol was engraved on their exterior armor.

Inside the command room of the main ship, Han Xiao, Ames, Feidin, and the rest gathered. This was a fleet commanded by Han Xiao personally.

"Hmm, this is the planet, exactly the same as it is in the prophecy. It's also one of the locations that overlapped between the areas chosen by Feidin, Harrison, and Nero."

Han Xiao looked down at the planet's surface.

Rody's prophecy did not work all the time, but any information that he gave was crucial, and Feidin and the others had the help of the Advanced Luck Glow. Under Han Xiao's instructions, they randomly

selected some coordinates in the various search areas, and Han Xiao focused the investigation on the places where their choices overlapped.

Although they had yet to get any leads, Han Xiao was still confident in this method.

What he did not know was that he had only just missed Aesop multiple times. This method was indeed very effective. In a way, luck was truly invincible.

“Scan this planet. Report any abnormalities to me.”

As Han Xiao gave the order, spaceships departed from the fleet one after another and circled the planet using all kinds of detection devices to scan the planet without missing a spot.

Normal readings showed on the screen before Han Xiao. There did not seem to be any abnormalities. However, after quite some time, some exciting news finally came from one of the spaceships. “Sir, we have discovered an extremely weak radiation signal in the desert. The sources of it are scattered and buried a few meters under the ground. Do we dig?” “Dig!”

The image on the screen quickly changed into the view from this battleship. The suction device at the bottom of the ship sucked out plates of burnt black metal fragments that looked like parts of a destroyed machine.

“Report, radiation source found. Analyzing... analysis complete. This should be the wreckage of a type of space cabin that was destroyed by an explosive energy cannon. Affected by the energy, a certain amount of radiation was left in the wreckage that’s gradually weakening. The radiation will completely disappear in a few days.”

“Looks like we’re not too late.” Han Xiao’s eyes sparkled.

If they had arrived a few days later and the radiation had disappeared, they would not have been able to find this wreckage. With this, not only could it act as a medium for Rody’s prophecy, it could also be used with [Bold Explorer]. One could see the future, and one could see the past. Very soon, this pile of space cabin fragments was transported to Han Xiao. Han Xiao picked one fragment up, looked at the burn marks on it, and said, “It doesn’t look like an attack, more like a deliberate attempt to destroy evidence, probably not wanting to leave any clues to us... Unfortunately for them, we’re lucky.” Han Xiao grabbed the fragment in his hand and activated (Bold Explorer).

Ripples appeared in his vision, and his vision instantly changed. He saw a space cabin falling down from the sky and landing on the surface of this planet. The hatch opened. A man wearing a heavy protection suit walked out from it and slowly walked away.

Although he could not see this person’s appearance, he felt it was most likely Aesop.

Like time had been shortened, not long after, a spaceship appeared above the space cabin, launched two explosive light beams, and shattered it into pieces. The images stopped abruptly here, and Han Xiao’s sights returned to normal.

This footage was short but quite informative. “This is indeed a space cabin left by Aesop. A spaceship appeared after to destroy the clue, which means it was here to fetch him...”

Han Xiao recalled the appearance of the spaceship in the footage. It was not a common model but a high-speed spaceship known for its hyperdrive speed. It was expensive to build, and not just anyone could afford it.

“Phillip!”

“I’m here, hum... Please give the order, master.”

“Search all the people and organizations in the Shattered Star Ring who possess the Featherlight Grade spaceship. Don’t leave anyone out, and focus on any organization that has a stronghold near this area.”

“Ah?” Phillip batted his large eyes and made a pitiful expression. “That’s a lot of data, hum... It’ll occupy a lot of computing power, hum...”

Han Xiao gave him a stare and said, “Then hurry up!”

Phillip reluctantly took out a progress bar from his pants, placed it upright beside him, and created a large box filled with paper. He then jumped in and started searching. The progress bar started moving at the same time.

After quite some time, the progress bar finally finished. Phillip’s head extended out from the box. He spewed the pieces of paper out from his mouth with an illuminated piece of paper in his hand. He then filled his mouth with air and angrily said, “Humph! Found it, hum! Take it, take it!”

“A lot of tricks you have.”

Han Xiao rolled his eyes, switched into quantum network vision, and retrieved the search results.

A large amount of data instantly flew into his head like a tsunami, blocked by the dam built by Han Xiao’s brain capacity and computing power that did not even shake in the slightest. He quickly started browsing through it.

“A total of thirty-seven million and thirty-one matches... Hmm, let me take a look.”

Han Xiao quickly filtered in his brain, browsing through all of the records in less than two seconds and memorizing all of it. Only Virtual Mechanics would be able to use this ‘dumb method’ to lock onto suspicious targets... When he had the ability to filter the entire haystack, finding a needle would not be that difficult anymore.

Most of it was data with no value, but one organization that was emphasized had attracted Han Xiao’s attention.

“Milder Armed Transport... I seem to have an impression of this name.”

Han Xiao narrowed his eyes. He searched through the mind palace inside his brain, and the memories came up. ... I got it! This organization is one of the Mechanic Emperor’s subsidiary organizations that was exposed in my previous life.

Han Xiao’s expression became solemn.

Although he had no final confirmation, his intuition told him that this was most likely the organization that transported Aesop away.

Doesn't this mean that old b*stard Manison is involved in this too?

Han Xiao was not planning to question the Mechanic Emperor. It would be a waste of time anyway as he definitely would not admit it.

All kinds of thoughts flashed past his mind. Han Xiao turned to the others and said with a low voice, "Have people monitor the Milder Armed Transport closely... No, monitor all the organizations I'm going to name. I want to know their recent movements, but don't startle them. Monitor them extra closely, and don't make any moves without my order!"

Han Xiao had always known some of the organizations that the Mechanic Emperor had secretly planted in the Shattered Star Ring. Originally, he did not want to let the Mechanic Emperor know this, but now that he seemed involved in this matter, Han Xiao decided to take measures and monitor all of the subsidiary organizations that the Mechanic Emperor had in the Shattered Star Ring!

Chapter 1162 Unlucky Modo

Ten days later, somewhere in the Shattered Star Ring, a spaceship flew, dragging a long trail of flames. Within the cockpit, Aesop was looking at the Shattered Star Ring star map with countless red marks that represented dangerous areas with a grave expression.

The captain stood to the side, hesitated for a moment, and said, "There aren't many routes left for us. We're about to hit a dead end. If this carries on, we probably won't have a way to get you out of the Shattered Star Ring. Do you have any plans?"

Aesop pressed his hands on the table so heavily veins appeared on the backs of his hands. He growled, "Aren't you guys professionals? Why is this happening?"

Confused as well, the captain smiled bitterly and said, "We don't know either. We haven't left any clues behind, and we've been moving very stealthily, but the Black Star Army has been able to put up accurate encirclements around as if they are aware of where we are. We have no idea how or where they obtained such accurate information... Could this be the ability of foresight? Aren't you a prophet? Why didn't you notice it?"

Aesop clenched his teeth and had nothing to say.

He did indeed use his ability along the way, and it certainly helped them to dodge some of the troops. However, no matter how many times they got rid of the Black Star Army, the Black Star Army would be able to catch up again soon after. Even though the Mechanic Emperor's subsidiary organizations kept changing their carriers, it had absolutely no effect.

Furthermore, it was not Aesop who was controlling his body now, just the collective consciousness of a group of Modo soldiers. They were unable to use the foresight ability to the fullest. The secret stronghold location that was deliberately given to the Black Star Army was not acquired by prophecy; they knew where it was to begin with and leaked it on purpose so that the others would not suspect him.

Originally, Aesop's target was to head to the edge of the Shattered Star Ring. However, under the pursuit of the Black Star Army, he had no choice but to keep hiding and was forced to change the route. He was still going in circles in the Star Field, and the situation was getting worse by the minute.

“If there really isn’t a way out...” Aesop looked at the star map, pointed at a planet nearby, and clenched his teeth. “Then cancel the plan of leaving the Shattered Star Ring. Take me to this planet.”

The captain looked in the direction Aesop was pointing. His expression changed slightly, and he said, “Planet Mountain Ash? That place has always been chaotic. Are you sure?”

“Yes.” Aesop nodded without hesitation.

This was a colonial planet currently belonging to a local Star System civilization. However, due to its history, this planet had very aggressive and sharp societal conflicts.

Originally, Planet Mountain Ash had a native intelligent species of its own that developed into a surface civilization that had been prospering. However, when they ventured into the universe, they were discovered by the local Star System civilization. Due to the treaty that forbade them from interfering with a lower civilization, the local Star System civilization only observed them at the start and did not interfere much. It was similar to the relationship the Godoran Civilization had with Planet Aquamarine back then.

However, Planet Mountain Ash was located at the borders of two Star Systems. The local Star System civilization had frequent physical conflicts with its neighbor, and both of them wanted to expand their borders. Therefore, they both hoped to make Planet Mountain Ash theirs. An unspoken rule of the Peace Treaty was that only Star System civilizations had real assurances. Despite surface civilizations being included in this treaty on paper, there would always be advanced civilizations that did not obey it secretly. Of course, they still had to look like they were obeying the treaty on the surface. Hence, the local Star System civilization could not possibly directly attack the surface civilization, so they resorted to two methods. The first was to contact Planet Mountain Ash in the name of technology exchange, deliberately leaking some technology and then framing the Planet Mountain Ash civilization for stealing it. The second method was to secretly incite the split of the surface civilizations, then providing ‘war support’ to some of the governments in crucial times, leaving the army on Planet Mountain Ash using the excuse of settling rebellions. The enormous difference in their strengths meant that there was no way a surface civilization could fight with a Star System civilization. Using these two methods, the local civilization gained control of Planet Mountain Ash without much suspense.

The ongoing societal conflict came from the retaliation of the Planet Mountain Ash civilization. There were frequent riots and demonstrations of all sorts. Hence, the local Star System civilization implemented policies to stabilize their ruling, occasionally sending official troops in to suppress these civilian activities on Planet Mountain Ash. This was why the environment of the planet had been chaotic.

In the universe, planets like Planet Mountain Ash were not a rarity. Laws created the seemingly peaceful galactic society, but under the surface, the rule of the jungle still applied. It was just not that bloody and naked anymore rarely causing the extinction of an entire race.

Aesop needed a planet exactly like this. If he could die in the hands of the Star System civilization’s troops, the Dragon Emperor would be furious at the local Star System civilization, and the plan would be considered a success! “Alright, since you’ve made up your mind, I’ll find a way to secretly send you in.”

The captain did not try to dissuade Aesop any longer.

He was a base member of the Mechanic Emperor's subsidiary organization who was unaware of the whole picture. He was only responsible for completing the transport mission that was given to him. Whatever his employer said, he would follow, and he knew nothing else. In fact, he did not even know that his top boss was the Mechanic Emperor. "Remember, it has to be stealthy," Aesop said and enlarged the image of Planet Mountain Ash on the star map. A complex emotion flashed passed his eyes.

Looks like this is where I die...

His mind was shaken for a split second before becoming firm again. As the collective consciousness formed from multiple soldiers' souls, he did not fear death and was absolutely loyal to Modo.

Sacrifice himself in exchange for a chance for the Modo Civilization to take a breath, this was his mission!

However, while he was in an emotional state, no one on this ship knew that there were dozens of advanced spaceships secretly following them from not far behind.

It was the fleet led by Han Xiao!

The fleet was equipped with state of the art stealth devices of the logistics department. They had already been following the spaceship Aesop was on for close to half a day, but they had never been discovered.

Inside the main ship command room, Ames looked at the spaceship in front and wondered, "Where do you think he's going?"

Han Xiao glanced at the star map with his arms crossed and said, "Probably Planet Mountain Ash."

"Why would he go there?"

"How would I know?" Han Xiao shrugged.

Through monitoring all the secret organizations that the Mechanic Emperor had planted in the Shattered Star Ring, the search of the Black Star Army became much smoother. He was able to fully lock onto Aesop's whereabouts a day ago and followed behind it secretly. He did not immediately act because he wanted to see what backup plans the Mechanic Emperor had.

Speaking of which, if the Modo Civilization insisted on using their own forces to transport Aesop, Han Xiao really might not have been able to catch him this easily. He still did not know that the mastermind behind this was the Modo Civilization.

However, the Modo Civilization thought that the Mechanic Emperor's troops were more hidden, so they chose to borrow his forces, which achieved the complete opposite effect. To Han Xiao, most of the subsidiary organizations that the Mechanic Emperor had in the Shattered Star Ring had no secrets. It was like he had 'maphacks'. "Do we go catch him now?" Ames turned to look at Han Xiao.

"We don't have to go through so much trouble. Just make him come to us." Han Xiao smiled, snapped his fingers, and sent an invisible set of data.

Boom!

Aesop was studying the star map when he suddenly felt the spaceship tremble. It seemed like it had suddenly shut down its engine and stopped moving

He looked up at the captain with a shocked and nervous expression.

“What’s going on? Did the spaceship malfunction?”

“I-I don’t know.”

The captain was confused. He then displayed his superior home appliances repairing ability and slammed the control table a few times, but it did not respond at all as if the artificial intelligence of the spaceship had died.

Whoosh!

The hatch suddenly automatically opened. Everyone was startled. The spaceship was in the middle of cosmic space. If the hatch opened, everyone inside would be sucked out.

However, that did not happen. The outside of the hatch was quiet. The people inside looked out the porthole with confusion, only to still see the dark cosmic space outside.

“What’s going on?”

Aesop and the rest came to the hatch and looked out. The moment they saw what was outside, Aesop’s entire body froze, and terror filled his face.

Outside was an enormous metal interior of a ship. Black Star and Dragon Emperor were standing outside the hatch with a group of their subordinates, staring at him with a faint smile.

Aesop’s eyes opened wide. His mind went into chaos.

Where is this? Why am I here?

Did I open the door the wrong way, which caused me to see illusions?

Han Xiao smirked and said, “You really can run, huh? But not even saying anything before you leave? That’s cold, old man.”

This was his doing. He easily hacked into the spaceship and took over control without anyone noticing, then made it turn around and fly into the main ship.

He left misguiding imagery on the portholes, so the people inside had no idea what happened. Ames took a few steps up, narrowed her eyes, and said with a displeased tone, “Humph, you made us look for you for so many days! Don’t you have anything you want to say to me?”

Seeing this, Aesop lost all hope.

It’s over! The plan’s failed!

Damn it, I was so close!

Now it’s all gone down the drain!

He was filled with frustration.

No, there's still a chance! Black Star and Dragon Emperor both think I'm Aesop himself. I can still continue to disguise myself as him!

Aesop had yet to totally give up. He wanted to keep trying. He suppressed the tsunami of shock in his heart and forced out a smile, faking an embarrassed expression. "Well, you found me... Black Star, didn't we agree you'd let me go? Why have you gone back on your words?"

Han Xiao did not reply to him but instead turned to Ames and said with a smug tone, "See, I was right."

Hearing this, Ames sized Aesop up and nodded heavily with approval. "You're right, his smile isn't despicable enough. He must be a fake!" Aesop was completely stunned. His brain went blank.

What, they can actually see through my identity from such a small detail?

Damn! What kind of laughable reason is that! Like hell I'll believe it!

Aesop's smile became more and more stiff. He had a bad feeling but still persisted and said, "What are you guys joking about? Alright, I admit I was wrong for sneaking away. I'll accept any kind of..."

Before he finished, Han Xiao suddenly shouted, "Still faking it?" Aesop was shocked. He was filled with despair.

At this moment, he knew that he had long been exposed. Black Star was only toying with him!

The next moment, he clenched his teeth, suddenly pulled out a weapon, and aimed it at his own head. He pulled the trigger without any hesitation.

The plan had failed, and he had no way of escaping, so he immediately chose to end his own life. This way, he could prevent Black Star from finding out who was behind all this, while at the same time, he would get rid of the prophet Aesop, making his last contribution to Modo!

Boom!

However, he was just about to raise the firearm when a light beam flashed past his eyes. Nero, who was prepared for this, instantly blasted the firearm out of Aesop's hand.

Then, the army soldiers swarmed over and pressed Aesop to the ground, making him unable to move.

Seeing this, Ames breathed a sigh of relief, deactivated the force field in her hand, and looked at Aesop, who was still struggling, with complicated emotions in her eyes. She then turned to Han Xiao and nodded as a sign of appreciation. "Thanks. Things would've become troublesome without your help."

"It's no biggie. Aesop is my friend too."

Han Xiao waved his hand.

Ames smiled and softly punched Han Xiao's chest but did not say anything. She knew that without Han Xiao's help, there was no way she could have found Aesop this easily. In the end, something irreversible might have happened, and Aesop was her irreplaceable family. She could not imagine what she would do if that happened.

Words were not enough to express her appreciation. She looked at Han Xiao; he gave her a feeling of assurance and reliability.

This time, the captain who was shivering on the side carefully said, "Erm... Your Excellency Black Star, you've found your man. Can we go now?"

Han Xiao glanced at him, snorted, and said, "Leave? Stay here and don't resist. I'll let you guys go when you've told me everything you know."

Although these people were the Mechanic Emperor's subordinates, they probably did not know anything. Han Xiao did not plan to do anything to them. This would be entered into the Mechanic Emperor's ledger, and it was far from over.

Then, Han Xiao came to Aesop, squatted, and looked curious.

"Alright, now let me see what's going on with you, old man..."

Han Xiao ordered the soldier beside the press down hard on Aesop. Nanoparticles slipped out of his sleeve and formed a thin, black needle.

He held it in his hands, aimed at Aesop's butt, and pressed it in like a nurse injecting a needle into a patient. "Huh!"

A very strange yell sounded.

Han Xiao plugged out the black needle and looked at the combat information on the interface. He quickly browsed through Aesop's status, and his expression became confused.

"Soul Swapper? What is that?"

Chapter 1163 Clues

(Soul Parasite): This character is infected by an exterior soul parasite, and his mind is being controlled by it. Source: Soul Swapper. Duration: Unknown.

Aesop's current status appeared on his status bar.

Han Xiao noticed the words 'Soul Swapper' instantly. Clearly, this was the thing that secretly bypassed his detection devices and got to Aesop. He wondered what device this was.

He searched through his memories and was certain he had never heard of this name in his previous life.

"Soul Swapper, I wonder what its specific functions are. It sounds like a machine..."

While he was softly murmuring, Aesop suddenly froze, covered in sweat. His eyes widened with overwhelming shock.

What did I just hear? Did the exact words 'Soul Swapper' come out of Black Star's mouth?

How does he know about the Soul Swapper? Where did this information get leaked!

Of course, the Modo soldiers' souls inside Aesop's body did not know Han Xiao got this information from the interface, so the first thought that came to mind was that this information got leaked somewhere. His mind went blank with despair.

Han Xiao noticed his abnormal reaction and thought, He's responding strongly to it, which means this Soul Swapper must be something very important.

Since he now knew the symptoms, the matter was no longer that complicated. It was clearly more suitable for someone with expertise in the soul area to handle it.

Han Xiao stood up and called Feidin over, pointing at Aesop.

"The old man got infected by a soul parasite. Take a look."

"Sure." Feidin nodded. A ripple psychic energy was released from between his eyes and entered Aesop's mind.

The others waited on the side. About twenty seconds later, Feidin retrieved his psychic energy and looked hesitant. "What is it? Is something wrong?" Han Xiao raised his brows.

Feidin frowned slightly. "There is indeed another cluster of collective souls inside his mind. Not really strong, Grade B at most, so I can deal with it. The problem is, this cluster of parasite souls has already perfectly fused with Aesop's own soul with close to no rejection. I have hardly ever seen anything like this..."

"So, you're saying there are risks?" Ames asked.

"There are indeed. They've fused too deeply, so the difficulty of removing the parasite is as high as doing an extremely precise operation on his soul. There's no room for errors. Once something goes wrong, Aesop's own soul will be damaged too..." "You don't have to force it if you're not confident. I can ask Kasuyi to help. He'll definitely give me face."

Han Xiao was not surprised. He was in a similar situation back when he fought seven-eyes, so he was somewhat experienced. Aesop's situation was much less severe than

his.

Feidin shook his head. "It's not that I'm not confident. I can eliminate the parasites, but I can't do it without wiping out their souls. This is why I'm confirming, do you want to do some interrogation first before curing Aesop?"

The soul swap of the Soul Swapper had close to no side effects, which most Supers were unable to do. To most Supers, the soul was a mysterious territory that could not be messed with.

Feidin, for example, could not even divide his own wife out of his soul and could only make love mentally every day. So, of course, he could not get rid of the parasite while still ensuring it stayed alive.

"I see, then don't cure him just yet." Han Xiao responded without hesitation.

The parasite was currently his biggest source of intelligence, so he had to interrogate him no matter what. Curing Aesop could be done after that.

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As for the fact that Aesop's body would still be the one getting tortured during the interrogation... Ha, there was Aurora's life energy potion anyway. As long as there was no risk of Aesop dying, there was no problem.

The conversation between them was open, so the Modo soldiers inside Aesop's body heard it too and were in incomparable despair.

He wanted to keep all the intelligence he knew hidden, but he was well aware that there was nothing he could hide in the face of a Calamity Grade who specialized in souls.

Without the Soul Swapper, the body became a prison, and he was locked inside Aesop's body, unable to do anything but accept his fate.

"Leave the interrogation to me." Feidin waved and told the army soldiers to lead Aesop to the interrogation room.

Feidin was a kind person who did not like interrogations, but in the face of such a despicable enemy, he did not mind using more extreme methods.

The soldiers around cleaned up the scene and took the captives away. This time, Ames came to Han Xiao and softly said, "We've got who we came for. What are you planning to do now?"

"Ask the parasite who sent him, then come up with a plan depending on that. No matter what, this isn't over," Han Xiao replied casually.

All he knew now was that the Mechanic Emperor was part of this. He did not know if there were any other organizations behind it. Although they were not able to reach their goal, he was not going to let this go so easily.

He even planned to use this as the clue to search for information about the Soul Swapper, to see if he could obtain it and study it.

"Okay. If you're going to retaliate, count me in." Ames's tone was indisputable and firm.

"... I'm guessing they came for me. You don't have to drag yourself into this trouble. I'm here." Han Xiao shook his head.

He knew the risks involved, and he did not wish to involve Ames. He also did not want Ames to step into his conflict with the Mechanic Emperor. Battles between peak Beyond Grade As were still too dangerous for her.

"What do you mean? I'm not one who's afraid of trouble. If they dare to target my men, I'll have to show them I'm not easy to mess with!" Ames frowned before smiling once more. "Also, you helped me, so I have to help you too. That's what an ally should do. Even if you reject me, I won't give up." As she said that, a notification popped up on the interface.

You have triggered mission (Ames' Rage)!

Mission Introduction: Due to her family being hurt, Ames is enraged. She hopes to take revenge on the mastermind of it with you.

Mission Requirements: Take revenge on the mastermind together with Ames.

Reward: 250,000,000 EXP, +40 Ames Favorability, +10 Aesop Favorability, +30,000 Floating Dragon Island Contribution Points, 2 Random Rewards, 1 Character Summon Card.

Bonus rewards will be given depending on the Mission Rating.

Han Xiao scanned through the mission. This kind of mission was becoming less and less significant to him nowadays, but it still counted. Anyway, it would not be too much trouble, so he accepted it.

Mainly because he saw how firm Ames' eyes looked-she was clearly not going to give up. Instead of letting her take the risk herself, he might as well be by her side, so she would at least not do something as extreme as she did in his previous life.

About an hour later, Feidin came to the command room and gave the report in his hands to Han Xiao.

"The interrogation is done. All the information is in here. Nothing is missing."

Han Xiao took the file and browsed through it. The content was extremely detailed. It included the Modo Civilization's goal for this mission, how the Soul Swapper worked, the existence of the Soul Swap Twins, and so on. Everything was laid out clearly. With Feidin's psychic scan of the Modo soldier's soul, he had obtained everything he knew.

"Hmm, so it's Modo. I knew it was Modo." Han Xiao sneered. After reading the file, Han Xiao finally understood what was going on. This was within his expectations.

The only thing that surprised him was the Soul Swapper that was shockingly a Space Wonder grade treasure. The Modo Civilization had such an amazing device in their hands, yet it was not exposed at all in his previous life.

Nonetheless, this was not too surprising. Advanced civilizations all had trump cards. Some were extremely well hidden and not displayed to the public. Of course, Han Xiao had no memories of the Universal Treasures that the players in his previous life did not come into contact with.

Now that he knew, he started having ideas.

"There's no reason to let such a good thing slip."

Han Xiao was very tempted.

One reason was because of how magical the Soul Swapper was, and another was to prevent Modo from using the Soul Swapper on him again in the future. One way or another, he had to make Modo lose this trump card.

At the same time, Han Xiao became more alert too.

"I can't underestimate any advanced civilizations. God knows when they'll bring up another strange trump card by surprise..." Han Xiao closed the file and pondered. "By the way, have you eliminated the parasite yet?"

“Not yet.” Feidin shook his head.

“Okay, don’t cure Aesop just yet. Although we’ve acquired everything he knows, the parasite is still useful. He’s an important piece of evidence.”

The Modo Civilization is the mastermind, and their goal is to force the Black Star Army to retreat. While the Mechanic Emperor worked with Modo secretly most probably because he wants to cause problems to me, I can work around that... With the use of some choice words, I can make this into the Mechanic Emperor choosing to stand on the side of the Super Star Cluster Alliance against the three Universal Civilizations.

As long as he reported this to the three Universal Civilizations, old b*stard Manison’s situation would be even worse. This was not just personal. Han Xiao made a daring assumption. Since the Mechanic Emperor’s men came into contact with Aesop too, could he have known about the existence of the Soul Swapper too and was looking for it secretly, hoping to obtain it?

If that was the case, Manison would become Han Xiao’s competitor. If he told the three Universal Civilizations about this and had them keep a close eye on the Mechanic Emperor, the Mechanic Emperor’s forces would be affected, and it would be more difficult for him to find the Soul Swapper, which was beneficial to Han Xiao.

“Since the three Universal Civilizations are on my side, it would be a waste not to make use of that. It’s worth trying.” All kinds of thoughts flashed through Han Xiao’s mind. He analyzed the situation and felt that this was doable. Therefore, he walked to the side, took out the communicator, and called Urranrell’s private number.

After a while, the communication got picked up, Urranrell’s face appeared on the screen.

“Black Star, I’m in a meeting. What is it?”

“I’ve discovered a piece of intelligence recently. It’s about the Mechanic Emperor...”

Han Xiao explained what had happened, naturally adding some ‘color’ to it, while also displaying evidence such as Aesop to prove he was not making it up.

Hearing this, Urranrell’s expression became serious.

“You’re saying that, after the Intelligent Plague, not only did the Mechanic Emperor not regret it and change for the better, he even got worse and secretly joined the Super Star Cluster Alliance, executed confidential missions, and is helping them to fight the three Universal Civilizations?”

“Yes, that’s right.”

Han Xiao agreed with it without any change of tone, clearly experienced with framing others. “... Okay, I get it. This is a very important piece of intelligence. I’ll inform the federation and the church to quickly come up with a solution.”

Urranrell nodded solemnly and quickly hung up the communication.

Seeing this, Han Xiao smirked.

As the saying went, one's happiness was built on another's pain. The unluckier Mechanic Emperor got, the happier he was.

Old Manison, don't blame me for this. This treasure and I are fated. You already have so many Universal Treasures. Don't fight me for this one.

At this time, Nero walked in.

"Godfather, where do we start the search?"

"Hmm, before Aesop got attacked, he made one last contact with the MODO Civilization's troops. Start with that," Han Xiao said.

Since he now knew that MODO was the mastermind, it was clear when Aesop got infected, and that would be a clear lead. That secret transport fleet of the MODO Civilization had to have been carrying the Soul Swapper, and they would have to return through secret stargates and transport the Soul Swapper back. Hence, he had to find them as soon as possible. This time, Han Xiao suddenly thought of something and said, "By the way, I remember that one ship survived among the tracking teams that coincidentally found the MODO Civilization's fleet. Go capture them immediately."

Having uncovered the functions of the Soul Swapper, he speculated that there might be spies in those teams, and the spies were most likely in that tracking team that survived.

"Hmm? This spaceship has lost contact?" Manison was a little surprised to receive this report from his subordinate.

There seemed to be only one explanation for this situation, that Black Star had caught up with Aesop and hacked the spaceship of his subsidiary organization. "Weird, how did Black Star get this information?" Manison frowned slightly.

The focus of his work recently had been on searching for the Soul Swapper, on which he had already made some progress, but he was also paying attention to Aesop.

From the way Manison looked at it, the subsidiary organizations he had left in the Shattered Star Ring were very well hidden. With their help, they should be able to easily get Aesop out of the Shattered Star Ring. However, the reality was completely different. It was as if Black Star knew the whereabouts of his subsidiary organization like the back of his hand. He could follow them anywhere they went.

Manison thought that his subsidiary organizations were very well hidden, which was why he felt the odds of success were high if he worked with the MODO Civilization using that.

However, now that he looked at it, Black Star seemed to already have eyes on his subsidiary organizations, and there was a risk of them being all exposed. If worst came to worst, more than half of the forces he had operating in the Shattered Star Ring would be completely obliterated. It would be a huge loss!

Manison clenched his fist before slowly letting go. He did not look too happy.

"No matter what, now that Black Star caught Aesop, he'll know about the Soul Swapper, so he has become my competitor... I have to speed up now. My losses will only be made up for if I get the Soul Swapper!"

Chapter 1164 Lockdown and One Step Ahead

“Message from the frontline. They’ve lost contact with Aesop. He’s possibly been captured by Black Star.” As this report was read by a Modo Civilization upper echelon, the conference room was filled with dead silence.

After quite some time, a top military officer finally said, “The plan must’ve failed. The situation is now dire. Do you guys have any ideas?”

“I thought the Mechanic Emperor would have definitely completed the mission. I didn’t expect him to be this useless and unreliable,” someone said.

“Could he have deliberately divulged the information to Black Star, using that to fix his relationship with Black Star?”

“He wouldn’t do that. You don’t have to doubt him.” The Modo Three Kings shook their heads.

“It’s not his style to fawn upon Black Star, and his hatred with Black Star won’t be resolved this easily, nor would the three Universal Civilizations stop being cautious toward him... You guys should think about how to deal with the impact of the mission failing.” They knew that the Mechanic Emperor was not to be blamed for this. Even the Mechanic Emperor, whom they had high hopes for, could not transport Aesop out, not to mention their own forces. Even so, the upper echelons present still unavoidably felt disappointed with the Mechanic Emperor. “There are souls of our soldiers inside Aesop’s body. Black Star will be able to get our plans from them. Never mind if he knows about our plan, I’m only worried about him knowing about the Soul Swapper,” another upper echelon said.

The Modo Civilization had already considered the consequences of failing while they came up with the plan. They looked like they did not want to be discovered, but it was actually only because it was required for the framing. Modo was not afraid of Black Star finding out that this was their doing.

After all, they were enemies. The Black Star Army would not stop attacking them even without this conspiracy, so they were not afraid of enraging Black Star.

Even if the three Universal Civilizations knew about it, Modo had nothing to fear either. They were already at war with the three Universal Civilizations anyway. All the Modo Civilization really worried about was that Black Star might find out about the Soul Swapper after the plan failed.

However, since they had chosen to use the Soul Swapper for the mission, this was a risk they had to take.

Moreover, the Soul Swapper was not in their hands now and had been taken away by the Soul Swap Twins, which meant there were even more uncertainties.

“Speaking of which, why haven’t the Soul Swap Twins contacted us yet? The mind trap should’ve triggered long ago,” someone wondered.

“That’s right. It’s been almost a month. Have their sub-personalities still not awakened?”

“Could there have been an accident and the Soul Swap Twins have suppressed the awakening of the sub-personalities? But how is that possible? They’re Grade Bs at most, or is this the Soul Swapper’s ability too?”

“No matter what, we have to prepare for the worst,” one of the Modo Three Kings said with a deep voice.

From their perspective, mind traps set by a Beyond Grade A on Grade Bs should be completely safe. However, even the ones in charge of the Marwell plan did not know everything about the Soul Swapper. The Soul Swap Twins were the only ones they knew that could use the Soul Swapper, and only the two of them knew about all its functions.

“We have to do something. How about we get our Beyond Grade A to look for them in the Shattered Star Ring?” someone suggested.

“No, a Beyond Grade A is too conspicuous. If his identity as our direct member is exposed, he won’t be able to return. Black Star won’t mind adding another item to his collection.” Most of the people present did not agree with sending a Beyond Grade A to find the Soul Swapper, since that Beyond Grade A might not be able to come back. Should that happen, not only would they have not found the Soul Swapper, but they would also lose a Beyond Grade A!

The Modo Civilization had very complicated feelings about the Soul Swapper. On the one hand, they placed great importance on its functions, but on the other, they used it very cautiously. Throughout the years, they had tested trillions of people, and only the Soul Swap Twins could use it. Without the two of them, this Space Wonder would be like a piece of junk. Furthermore, they only used it to execute conspiracies and plots most of the time, such as turning important people into their men. However, when it got discovered and the souls of the people they swapped in got interrogated, Modo’s involvement would be discovered too and bring them trouble. Therefore, they hardly ever used the Soul Swapper. It mostly collected dust in storage.

Hence, although the upper echelons present really wanted to retrieve it, they were not willing to pay too high a price. They felt it was not very worth it.

Bang! A top military officer slammed the table and interrupted the discussion. He clenched his teeth and said, “Damn it, we’re so restricted in someone else’s territory. We could’ve toyed with Black Star all we wanted if this happened in our territory.”

Everyone felt powerless.

It was what it was. Black Star had way too few weaknesses, and they were out of ideas.

About ten days later, inside the main ship office of the Black Star fleet, Han Xiao received the summarized data from Phillip and scanned it through.

“Is all the information here?”

“Yes, hum... This is all the information we’ve collected about the Soul Swapper.”

In the past ten days, the Black Star Army had started a large-scale search around the clues acquired from Aesop.

Firstly, they captured the tracking team that had their souls swapped and got some new information about the transport team from back then.

Originally, according to the plan, these spies would be swapped away again after the mission was complete, making it look like an accidental death, not leaving any clues behind.

However, the Soul Swap Twins' escape caused them to be trapped inside the bodies of the Black Star Army soldiers. They did not dare contact Modo's men because Black Star was monitoring the quantum network, nor did they know about the Soul Swap Twins escaping. They thought that they had to continue hiding and were caught red handed.

After acquiring information from these people, Han Xiao once again used the power of Destiny's Child, and with some luck, they captured quite a few Modo Civilization battleships that had yet to leave the Shattered Star Ring. From these people, he found out that the Soul Swap Twins had escaped.

However, the leads stopped there. Modo's men had no idea where the Soul Swap Twins were.

Han Xiao looked at the information collected, slightly shook his head, and sighed.

"The Soul Swap Twins can keep changing bodies. It won't be easy to find them."

He was not an expert in the soul area, but he did know someone who was—the leader of the Holy Accord organization, Oathkeeper, the current master of the Soul Flame.

This guy might have a way to find the Soul Swap Twins quickly. After all, no matter how many times they changed bodies, their souls would remain the same.

However, when Han Xiao tried contacting Oathkeeper, he was told that Oathkeeper had entered the Sanctum and had yet to return, so this method was out of the question.

"The current methods are only virtual technology, Bold Explorer, and luck, which are not very efficient..." Han Xiao pondered. "The Mechanic Emperor should be looking for the Soul Swapper, too. I can keep a close eye on him."

When searching for Modo's troops, Han Xiao had found out that some other spaceships of the transport fleet were also missing.

However, these spaceships were not in his hands. With some investigation, he discovered that it was related to the Mechanic Emperor's subsidiary organizations, which basically proved that the Mechanic Emperor was looking for the Soul Swapper. Since he framed the Mechanic Emperor more than half a month ago, the three Universal Civilizations had already taken action. A part of the subsidiary organizations under the Mechanic Emperor that were disguised as legal organizations were temporarily seized.

Not only did this cause quite a loss for the Mechanic Emperor, more importantly, it meant that a lot of the Mechanic Emperor's subsidiary troops were frozen, so the manpower he could use right now was tremendously reduced. This indirectly made it harder for the Mechanic Emperor to find the Soul Swapper.

However, Han Xiao felt that the Mechanic Emperor should have known about the Soul Swapper before he did. Furthermore, the Mechanic Emperor's home was in the Primeval Star River, just like Modo, so he might know something he did not. Han Xiao felt that keeping a close eye on him might give him some surprises.

“Continue the search,” Han Xiao said.

“Report any and all situations to me. Keep an extra close eye on the Mechanic Emperor’s subsidiary organizations. Don’t let any one of them leave our sights.”

At the edge of the Shattered Star Ring, Planet Earth Ring was a transit station planet located near the inter-star field stargate that had a huge amount of traffic every day. A ton of galactic flights resupplied all kinds of resources. The management of the planet was a Star Cluster civilization of the Shattered Star Ring, so this was a government-controlled public transit hub.

The streets were crowded, prosperous, and filled with countless different races.

Half a month had passed since the search for the Soul Swap Twins began. A man and a woman walked on the street, carefully observing the surrounding while conversing softly. It was the Soul Swap Twins, Jill and Warren.

“Elder bro, anything from your sub-personality these few days?”

“I just suppressed it three days ago, but my souls are running out. We’ll have to top up on some souls today.”

“Me too. This planet has a lot of people, so it’s a suitable target. This is our last stop before leaving the Shattered Star Ring. We have to absorb as many souls as possible so it can last longer,” Warren said softly.

“Don’t do anything now. Wait till we’re about to leave.” Jill kept his voice down.

Their goal was to leave the Shattered Star Ring. Through changing their bodies continuously, they had finally arrived at the edge of the Shattered Star Ring. They planned to resupply there and then escape the Star Field through the stargate.

In order to suppress their mind traps, they absorbed quite a lot of souls on the planets they passed by, continuously ‘charging up’. Most of which were beasts, but that was not because they suddenly became kind and merciful; absorbing too many intelligent lives would attract attention, which was not beneficial for staying hidden.

Now that they were at the edge of the Star Field, they knew they would be mostly safe if they got out. Hence, they planned to go for a big one and absorb a lot of souls, hoping to find a way to completely defuse the mind traps.

This way, they would not have to commit any crimes in the other Star Fields and could hide themselves perfectly.

“We’re finally going to leave the Shattered Star Ring. We’ll soon have real freedom.” Warren’s tone was thrilled and filled with infinite hope for the future.

“This is the first step of our conquest!”

Jill clenched his fists. His eyes were gleaming with excitement. We’re finally about to take the first step of fulfilling their ambitions. Our imprisoned days have finally come to an end. As long as we have enough

time to grow, given how magical the Soul Swapper is and how talented we are, we'll certainly become a big deal in the universe!

While the two of them were dreaming about their future, a sudden change occurred, and the alarm suddenly rang throughout the city!

Woo!

The piercing alarm echoed throughout all the streets. Countless people looked up with surprise, not knowing what was going on. "What's going on?"

"This is a planetary alarm. Has someone come to attack the planet!"

The people on the streets started panicking, including the street the Soul Swap Twins were on. "Elder bro, are they here for us?" Warren looked anxious.

"Don't panic! No one should be able to find us, and even if someone did, they wouldn't create such a huge commotion for it." Jill was unsure too.

At this time, someone pointed at the sky and yelled, "Look, a fleet!" The people looked up. Battleships penetrated the atmosphere and hovered in midair, and mechanical soldiers shrouded the sky. There were no organization symbols, so they did not know what organization this was. This time, the sound of spaceships taking off continuously sounded. The garrison of Planet Earth Ring hastily arrived and loudly questioned what was happening in the public communication channel "This is the Planet Earth Ring Garrison Fleet Command Center. You have broken the Dock Parking Law by penetrating the planet's atmosphere without authorization. Please identify yourselves immediately!" After a full two seconds, the voice of an old man finally sounded in the public communication channel.

"I'm Mechanic Emperor Manison. I'll be taking over this planet temporarily."

As he said that, countless people shockingly realized that their communicators had lost network connection. They were no longer able to send any messages out. The people were in an uproar. At this point, they clearly knew that the Mechanic Emperor had cut off the communication of the entire Planet Earth Ring with the outside world. He had locked down the quantum network of the planet! "Mechanic Emperor? What is he doing here?" Jill widened his eyes in shock. The two of them had escaped early, and Modo had partnered with the Mechanic Emperor after that. They thought that they were just innocent passersby at this point. They were just one step away from their beautiful future, and now they got into an accident right before that. They were both shocked and enraged.

However, no matter how arrogant Jill was, in the face of the great Mechanic Emperor, he knew there was no way he could mess with him. The only thing he could do was pray for the Mechanic Emperor to quickly finish what he came for and open up the lockdown so that they could leave.

At the same time, within the main ship above Planet Earth Ring, Manison's Lord's Avatar covered in electric sparks stood before the porthole, looked at the hostile and tensed garrison fleet, and calmly said, "Lock the entire planet down. Don't allow any life form to leave. The target is right here. Filter the life forms of the entire planet till we find them!"

Outside the window, countless mechanical soldiers descended onto the ground and controlled the panicking crowd. Countless screams of pain shot up the sky and faintly reached Manison's ears.

He scanned through the surface. He was completely certain the Soul Swap Twins were on Planet Earth Ring.

His tracking process was not the smoothest. This was not his territory, so he could not keep such a high profile like the Black Star Army could. He secretly seized a few transport ships only to discover that the Soul Swap Twins had already escaped, and his leads ended there too.

However, Manison acquired extra information from his mole in Modo and knew about the mind trap. He then searched for any place where a large number of life forms had turned into vegetables and lost their souls, and he speculated that it was the doing of the Soul Swap Twins.

Through finding similar incidents, he confirmed the escape route of the Soul Swap Twins and finally locked onto the Soul Swap Twins' whereabouts today.

Due to the fact that his subsidiary organizations were already exposed and were being uprooted, Manison was no longer worried about getting found out, so he locked down the entire Planet Earth Ring. If not because most of his subsidiary organizations were suddenly frozen by the three Universal Civilizations, which led to him almost losing the lead mid-way and delaying him by a few days, he felt that he would have reached this point long ago. However, despite the obstacles and challenges, he still succeeded!

Manison shook his head.

Although the mind trap isn't a highly confidential secret, none of these basic level crews know about it, so of course, Black Star doesn't either. Hence, he can only roam around, relying on luck, which is also why he got lured away by me so easily some time ago... Tsk, it's too early for you to fight me, Black Star.

A few days ago, he had deliberately made one of his subsidiary organizations lock down a planet very far away, acting as if he had found the whereabouts of the Soul Swapper to attract Black Star's attention.

This successfully lured away a large batch of the Black Star Army's fleet. From the way he looked at it, even if Black Star had already noticed this, he would not be able to reach Planet Earth Ring any time soon. However, to be safe, Manison still locked down the quantum network of Planet Earth Ring and delayed the time of the Black Star Army receiving any information.

He planned to get away as soon as he got what he came for. Afterward, even if the advanced civilizations held him responsible for it, there was no way he would throw up what he had already swallowed.

Chapter 1165 Encounter and Confrontation

In the command center of Planet Earth Ring, the manager of the planet was startled by the Mechanic Emperor's name and only spoke cautiously after more than ten seconds of silence.

"Your Excellency Mechanic Emperor, Planet Earth Ring belongs to the Razo Civilization. You have broken the Planetary Management Law set by the Shattered Star Ring Civilization Alliance by locking down this planet. We hope you can give us a proper explanation."

"I'm chasing fugitives. When I'm done, I'll leave. It'd be best for you to step back and not cause any trouble." Manison's calm voice sounded from the public channel.

“... No, we have to stay. According to the rules and regulations, we must report this to the upper echelons of the civilization afterward.”

“Whatever.”

Manison hung up the communication.

The manager of Planet Earth Ring did not dare resist. He suppressed his anger and ordered the garrison fleet to standby in a defense formation, but he did not disrupt Mechanic Emperor's actions.

Although the Razo Civilization was one of the Star Cluster civilizations of the Shattered Star Ring, now that their communication with the outside world was cut off, the garrison fleet on this planet was no match for the Mechanic Emperor.

The manager was not going to sacrifice his troops for nothing, so he chose to stand aside with caution. This went against his duty, but he could only be flexible.

Without the obstruction of the garrison fleet, Mechanic Emperor's mechanical troops started to search through the civilians on a large scale, not missing out on anything that breathed. They chased everyone out to the streets and forced them to stand in lines.

No matter how arrogant, all the Supers obediently followed the Mechanic Emperor's instructions.

Of course, there were some civilians who just could not grasp the situation. The fists of mechanical soldiers would not have mercy, and after thousands of rioting tourists were beaten up, the rest all became quiet.

Jill and Warren were squeezed by the crowd into a line. They looked around with caution and panic.

The two of them were intimidated by the Mechanic Emperor's troops. They secretly used the Soul Swapper to communicate with each other's souls.

“Elder bro, do you think the Mechanic Emperor is here to catch us?” Warren was worried.

“It can't be. Didn't he say? He's here to catch fugitives, and we're not fugitives,” Jill assured him.

“But even if he's not here looking for us, since the search is so thorough, there's a chance we'll get exposed too.”

“That is a problem indeed...”

Jill looked gloomy and was in a very bad mood. He was partly worried about the situation, but he was also gloomy because he noticed that someone had squeezed his butt.

He glared behind him and saw a mercenary-looking red-skinned beastman moving his hand away while giggling. The Beastman then flexed his arm and displayed his muscles, even giving him a confident look... Only low-grade beastmen with strong desires would still be thinking of reproduction in times like this.

Jill felt a disgusting chill running through his body. He quickly tightened his clothes.

“How about we find an opportunity and swap into those who've already been checked?” Warren suggested.

“Let’s see how it goes first. We’ll temporarily stay put, and if things are not going well, I can swap you into my body, and we can share one body temporarily... Wait, no, I’ll swap into your body.”

Jill’s mouth twitched. He regretted choosing a rather attractive body.

The search was going on one batch after another, and Manison was monitoring the process in the main ship.

“Let me see how long you can last.”

Manison’s tone was calm.

The Soul Swapper was unique. All ordinary detection methods were useless. Furthermore, the target could swap into different bodies at any time, so rechecking again and again would be very troublesome.

He planned to send batches of people who finished the check into different spaceships, away from the range of the Soul Swapper and put them in quarantine.

This way, as the number of people was reduced, the Soul Swap Twins would sooner or later activate their abilities and most likely swap into those who had already been checked. However, they did not know that he would still carry out multiple checks even after the quarantine, hoping to trap the two of them in smaller crowds.

Also, another goal of the quarantine was to take away all the people on the planet, including even the garrison fleet. This way, he would have plenty of time to slowly filter and check through them.

If the Soul Swap Twins used their abilities, the shells that had lost their souls should faint, which would be a clue too. Even if the Soul Swap Twins could swap multiple souls around and mix up the identity of the bodies that fainted, as long as it happened, it would prove that they had used their abilities. Furthermore, doing this would definitely cause mass confusion.

Manison had prepared many plans, among which the most extreme was slaughtering the entire planet. Killing life forms with souls one after another would definitely be able to force the Soul Swap Twins to appear. However, the consequences of that were too severe. He would not use this plan unless he had no other choice.

“In about two hours, all the people on the planet will be separately quarantined in different ships. Not the most efficient, but good enough. There’s still plenty of time...”

While Manison was calculating the time, he suddenly sensed something and suddenly turned around to look behind.

Woo!

The alarm of the spaceship rang at the same time. In the distance, streams of hyperdrive light appeared and stopped nearby. The bright blue light dissipated, showing a completely black fleet. An organization symbol that Manison could never forget was engraved on these ships’ exterior armor. It was the Black Star Army!

“How did they find me?” Manison was shocked.

That's strange. This fleet clearly got rid of its trackers. How did the Black Star Army find this place? Prophecy? But the spaceships' information disruption devices are still working. Aesop shouldn't be able to accurately foresee the exact location. Is there an even stronger prophet?

This is getting troublesome. Black Star's noticed what's happening here. Change of plan, I must speed up and get everyone into the ships. ... However, luckily, only an ordinary search fleet is here. There are just more than thirty fleets.

Manison responded instantly. He waved his hand, and a large group of mechanical troops immediately turned and charged toward the Black Star Army fleet.

He planned to eliminate Black Star's men first so they would not disrupt him.

However, the next moment, three powerful energy presences erupted in the Black Star Army fleet!

Woo!

The energy detection radar's reading exceeded the limits instantly!

Manison was stunned for a moment.

"Three Beyond Grade As?"

In his sights, three silhouettes flew out of the Black Star Army and stood opposite his mechanical army. They were Black Star, Ames, and Hila!

Han Xiao scanned through the situation of Planet Earth Ring and smirked. He connected to the public channel and mocked, "Yo, looks like I'm almost late."

"Why are you here?" Manison did not bother chatting with Han Xiao at all. "Oh? Are you asking me why I wasn't lured away by your bait?" Han Xiao curled his lips. "The Shattered Star Ring is my territory. If I got toyed with by you so easily, where should I put my face?"

Actually, the bait Manison set some time ago almost fooled him, and this fleet did indeed lose its initial trackers.

However, as a peak Beyond Grade A Virtual Mechanic who was in his own territory, Han Xiao also did a deep search. He analyzed what all of the routes Manison's troops took had in common and also discovered the vegetable incident of multiple planets. After some cross referencing, it matched with the route of one of Manison's teams.

Although the Great Mechanic Han did not know about the mind trap, it did not stop him from speculating that this was the clue Manison was going after.

Therefore, just like the Mechanic Emperor, he locked onto the Soul Swap Twins' escape route according to those incidents and sent a fleet right to Planet Earth Ring.

Therefore, this army fleet did not come here by following the Mechanic Emperor but instead happened to encounter the Mechanic Emperor, which proved he was right.

The three of them were originally not in the fleet, but Han Xiao had the fleet bring a 'Throne'. He received the news the instant this fleet discovered Mechanic Emperor, and immediately used the King to teleport all three of them here, hence this moment.

While the two of them confronted each other, the manager of Planet Earth Ring was overjoyed and quickly spoke in the public channel.

"Your Excellency Black Star! I'm the manager of Planet Earth Ring. The Mechanic Emperor has forcefully taken over the planet, and we are powerless to resist. Luckily, you're here. Please help us. The Razo Civilization will definitely thank you for it after!"

Initially, the manager of Planet Earth Ring could only watch and feel powerless while filled with rage. Now that Black Star was here, it was like he had caught a lifebuoy. He immediately asked for help.

It was known that the Shattered Star Ring was protected by Black Star now. In the manager's eyes, Black Star was on his side.

Han Xiao casually waved. "Hmm, take your troops off the planet. Leave the rest to me."

"Roger!"

The Planet Earth Ring manager brought the garrison fleet aside to watch without hesitation.

He did not agree when the Mechanic Emperor asked him to leave, but as soon as Black Star did, he left instantly. In the Shattered Star Ring, Han Xiao was much more respected than Manison.

as n

Seeing this, Han Xiao then turned to the Mechanic Emperor's ride and snorted.

"I'm right here. Aren't you going to come out and meet me?"

About ten seconds later, Manison's Lord's Avatar finally flew out.

"Black Star, you've come to mess up my plan again," Manison said coldly. Although his voice was monotonous, it still had a sense of frustration and anger.

"Hehe, Mechanic Emperor, I won't play games with you. Our goal should be the same. It's right here on Planet Earth Ring, and it belongs to whoever's more capable."

Han Xiao crossed his arms and looked firm.

Actually, he was filled with joy on the inside. Originally, he had no excuse to fight with this old b*stard, but now that he had one and met him, he looked at Manison like he was looking at a portable talent inventory.

Manison looked at the three of them and said coldly, "You think your victory is certain just because it's three against one?"

"Haha, you're mistaken." Han Xiao curled his lips. "I alone am enough to fight you. The two of them won't interfere."

Hearing this, Ames and Hila both turned to him and silently stared at him.

Seeing this, Han Xiao coughed and softly said, "Ahem, the two of you are responsible to search the planet and find the target. Hila, you have some knowledge in the mind area, so it's suitable for you to find them, while Ames' force field makes catching people more convenient."

"You said you'd let me help in the fight..." Ames frowned slightly.

"That's when we fight Modo. Leave the Mechanic Emperor to me. I'm going to fight him one on one."

"Am I a burden?" Ames narrowed her eyes.

"... Just a little bit." Han Xiao was very honest and did not find any excuse in times like this.

Ames's eyes twitched, but she thought about it and realized she could not object.

She gave Han Xiao a glare and flew toward Planet Earth Ring.

Hila tilted her head and pondered for a while before raising three fingers.

"Three times."

"What three times?" Han Xiao wondered.

"I've lost the chance to fight someone as strong as the Mechanic Emperor, so you'll have to spar with me seriously three times afterward, and you can't reject it no matter when I ask for it."

"Alright, alright, not to mention three times, I'll spar with you thirty times even if you want to." Han Xiao sighed.

"Okay, thirty times it is. It's a promise!"

Hila nodded with satisfaction and instantly followed behind Ames with the fleet.

Han Xiao's eyes twitched. He was speechless.

This tomboy's combat maniac trait had been getting even more and more intense, and god only knew where she learned to be this cheeky.

Removing Ames and Hila was an attempt to try to trigger Beyond Grade A challenge mission. Otherwise, given how thick Han Xiao's skin was, he would not ask for a duel for no reason.

Han Xiao looked at old Manison and said, "Alright, now no one will disturb us. It's a rare opportunity. Now that we've coincidentally run into each other, we have to get properly intimate."

Manison watched Ames and Hila landing on Planet Earth Ring and did not stop them.

He knew that as long as he did not defeat Black Star, stopping them would not do anything.

Seeing that Han Xiao had stayed behind alone, Manison slowly said, "If the three of you had come at me together, it might have been quite troublesome for me. Yet, you've actually decided to fight me alone. How brave."

"Yo, you're saying it as if I lost to you last time. Why do I seem to recall it being a tie?"

Manison mirthlessly laughed. "Black Star, you should have a clearer idea of how real that 'tie' was than me. Without more than a dozen people helping you this time, do you really still think this will still end as a tie?"

"Tie? No, no, I didn't think that." Han Xiao narrowed his eyes. "I'm here with my original body, and crushing your Lord's Avatar is my goal today. It's time to refresh my achievement."

"Hehe, I admit, that special technique of yours to burn your potential can grant you power to match me, but that's all. Defeat me? You're a hundred years too early! Plus, how much potential do you have to throw away? If this is the source of your confidence today, I'm guessing it's not going to end well for you."

"You never know if you don't try."

Han Xiao narrowed his eyes, his body trembled, and Mechanical Force sparked around him. His energy level rocketed as he quickly entered combat stance. Seeing this, Manison shook his head, his energy level rising too. The gold Mechanical Force seemed to have painted his Lord's Avatar gold.

"Looks like I'm quite lucky today to receive a pleasant surprise. Since you dare face me with your original body, I'll gladly take your Spacetime Amber as a compensation from you."

Chapter 1166 Shaken Manison

Boom!

Like thousands of thunder strikes happening at the same time, raging Mechanical Force erupted like silver dragons.

The people on Planet Earth Ring looked up. It was as if two suns covered in lightning had suddenly appeared.

Two light gates suddenly appeared in cosmic space, and countless machines swarmed out from the secondary dimensional army boxes.

One side was black like storm clouds, and the other side was white like snowy hills.

The mechanical armies surrounded the two of them. Mechanical Force extended out from their bodies and connected their armies, quickly assembling into two giants!

In an instant, two enormous weapons clashed. The mountain-sized black blade slashed onto the middle of the golden trident!

Clank!

A psionic shockwave exploded, extended through the artificial atmosphere of Planet Earth Ring, and caused chain reactions, creating a deafening noise!

Countless people hastily covered their ears with agony on their faces. They felt as if someone was tolling a bell inside their brain. They could feel their brains trembling. Some lost balance like they were drunk, fell onto the ground, and could not control their body.

Outside the planet's atmosphere, two Mechanical Deities had appeared and were already fighting intensely.

Every move of a Mechanical Deity harnessed terrifying power. Even though they consciously distanced themselves from Planet Earth Ring, the aftershocks still triggered countless natural disasters on the planet's surface.

Machinery came out of their Secondary dimensional army boxes nonstop like it had no end. Their machines fought each other under the lead of their own Apostle Weapons and divided the battlefield into countless smaller battles.

The combat artificial intelligences of both sides tried their best to break each other's formation and create situations where they outnumbered the other side. Mechanical soldiers that got occasionally left stranded became targets of focused fire. They then recovered through Mechanical Force and entered the battlefield right after.

Planet Earth Ring's atmosphere was filled with traces of psionic beams that seemed to have formed a net that shrouded the planet.

Occasionally, liquid metal melted by the high temperature would cool down to irregular shaped metal meteors that fell onto the surface, either creating pits on the ground or shattered by the planet's protective shields.

This was not the first fight between Han Xiao and Manison. They had a rough idea of each other's capabilities, so they went full out from the start and released most of their Apostle Weapons.

Old Manison had more than forty Apostle Weapons in all kinds of shapes. Their similarity was that they were all mechanical lives that had existed for many years, so they had a lot of energy in their tinder, meaning they were very strong.

Han Xiao brought up most of his assets too, more than thirty Apostle Weapons led by Psionic Prime, which was more than one and a half times what he had before!

Han Xiao had obtained the Molding Talent (Billion Mechanic Empire Manison) from old Manison the last time they fought. Not only did it give him all kinds of attribute bonuses, it also increased a ton of core Mechanic abilities including [Apostle Life Creation] by six levels, meaning he could directly create six more Apostle Weapons!

Some time ago, Han Xiao had also built four new Universal Treasures and used the God's Trait Transformation Points all on the Machinery side, increasing its level from five to nine. This also gave him a few more Apostle Weapon allocations.

Hence, Han Xiao had created about ten more Apostle Weapons while watching the situation of the Flickering War unfold. Although there was still some distance from the number of Apostle Weapons Manison had, it was not as large as the last time.

With my current strength, even without Character Summon Cards, I can match up to old man Manison and not just get beat up like last time.

While Han Xiao slashed at the Mechanic Emperor time after time, he was judging the strength difference between him and the Mechanic Emperor.

Every five stages of God's Trait Transformation comprised one big stage. Although he had yet to receive the bonuses from stage ten, his God's Trait Transformation Machinery was already four levels higher than before, which increased his strength by a huge extent.

Part of his strength difference from Manison was his inventory; he did not have as many high Grade machines as Manison. Another was the huge God's

Trait Transformation difference, which was now greatly reduced. Although normal Beyond Grade A Mechanics could also obtain God's Trait Transformation Points through building Universal Treasures, they did not have the interface and could not apply the points immediately. The God's Trait Transformation Points they obtained could be considered a type of experience or understanding that could only be applied to increase the God's Trait Transformation stages after they spent long periods of time digesting it.

Han Xiao, however, could apply the points instantly, meaning the digestion process was completely skipped, saving a ton of time. This was why he could become stronger in such a brief period. It was something no other Beyond Grade A could replicate.

Considering the large bonuses from (Billion Mechanic Empire), Titan Spinal Center, Gaeta Shockwave Fist, and several new Universal Treasures, Han Xiao speculated that his current strength should be around the same as his strength when he was in the explosive state the last time he fought Manison! The only part that was still weaker would at most be the basic attributes he gained through (Polar Channel Flow Blood Rage) and (Advanced Strengthened Life).

On the interface, the challenge mission for Mechanic Emperor had appeared as he expected.

Come to think of it, this was the third time he had seen this mission.

I'll use my EXP too so that I can be as strong as possible.

Han Xiao glanced at the interface and spent most of his accumulated EXP into levelling up.

His level rocketed all the way to level 331 before stopping. The remaining EXP was not enough to level up again.

The bonus he received from leveling up now was not a lot at this stage, but every Promotion and evolution would still make him considerably stronger. Therefore, although Awakening Points had a bigger impact on his strength, he did not plan on using EXP on them for the time being.

After all, it was the final stage of Version 4.0. If he did not spend EXP elsewhere, he might be able to accumulate enough EXP to reach level 340 for a Promotion.

Boom!

Every clash between the Celestial Punishment Edge and the trident created powerful energy explosions made of psionic energy and golden thunder.

Feeling the force from every clash, Manison was surprised.

He clearly remembered that the last time he fought Black Star, Black Star's Mechanical Deity's strength in his normal state could not compete with him at all. From his past experience, if Black Star did not use that strange explosive ability of his, he should have been able to totally crush him. However, to his shock, they were on par!

What shocked Manison even more was that the number of Han Xiao's Apostle Weapons had almost doubled. This was not something his explosive state could bring him; it was a display of his fundamental capability!

How the hell does this guy train?

Manison knew that Black Star was known for his quick growth, but he still could not understand it.

Ever since he was young, he had been a genius in the eyes of the people around him. He was the star of his race. He learned everything much faster than others, and no one could ever catch up to him. He surpassed all those who attempted to chase him in no time. He had never met any Mechanic genius that could match up to him.

However, this changed when he met Black Star. For the first time ever, Manison discovered he was no longer the genius.

Black Star seemed to be able to easily do things he could not do, and this created an emotion that he had never felt before in his entire life. It was bitter and sour.

Is this what people call jealousy?

Wait, why am I thinking about this?

Manison was shocked. It suddenly occurred to him that without him realizing, Black Star had shaken his confidence that he had built over countless years.

His eyes became firm as he instantly suppressed this emotion, cutting away all distractions and returning to a calm state of mind, focusing fully on the battle.

At this time, Han Xiao suddenly swung his blade backward. Like the string of a bow that kept getting pulled tighter, enormous force flowed from the joints of the Titan Spinal Center all over his body into his arms.

Strange hovering devices emerged from the surface of the Mechanical Deity, hovered around the blade, linked with each other, and formed a complex pattern that shined brightly with psionic energy, releasing energy simultaneously into the Celestial Punishment Edge.

A translucent blue light suddenly appeared on the blade like it was coated in a bubble.

As Manison was about to raise his trident and block the attack, Black Star's deafening yell suddenly sounded in his private channel.

"Spatial Tremble-Gaeta Shockwave Fist!"

The next moment, the blade slashed down in an arc!

The force of this attack was much stronger than the attacks before!

Manison sensed it too. He quickly raised his trident and blocked it.

Boom!

Like two mountains clashing into each other, the blue light on the blade was shot out and exploded on Manison's chest, blowing him away directly. Powerful shockwaves echoed inside his Mechanical Deity. Large cracks quickly appeared on the surface, and armor plates shattered one after another.

Manison's energy flow staggered for an instant. He quickly adjusted and absorbed the mechanical soldiers nearby to repair the damage. He was stunned.

This attack was very powerful. He recalled that Black Star did not use this attack last time. It seemed to be a new Universal Treasure level combat technique that Black Star had learned recently.

However, what he was most irritated by was not the fact that he got forced to back away by a direct attack, but that he was not mentally prepared and was startled by Black Star's yelling.

What the hell are you shouting about in the middle of a fight?

And you even fu*king sent me a private voice message just for that. Aren't you a piece of sh*t?

And what's with the flashy name, you think you're a Pugilist?

Manison was extremely irritated.

Given the current situation, the two of us won't be able to determine a winner shortly, which means the Dragon Emperor and the others can take their time finding the Soul Swapper. If he gets the Soul Swapper, there'll be no point in me fighting him anymore... Looks like I'll have to use more trump cards.

Manison's eyes sparkled.

"What a powerful attack!"

At the edge of the battlefield, the manager of Planet Earth Ring and the garrison fleet watched the battle cautiously while being continuously astounded by it.

Although they knew how powerful Beyond Grade As were, watching a battle with their own eyes was not something any video footage could compare with.

"Luckily, we didn't fight with the Mechanic Emperor before Black Star arrived, or we would've been wiped out by a single slap."

The manager of Planet Earth Ring sincerely felt that his decision was very wise.

He turned to look at Ames and Hila, who were searching the planet, and looked confused.

"Black Star and the Mechanic Emperor seem to be looking for the same thing. What are they looking for that's so valuable they're using this many resources?"

At the same time, on the surface of Planet Earth Ring, countless people looked up, astonished, at the battle.

Two Mechanical Deities fought each other at full strength in space. The explosions lit up the dark universe and made things clearly visible even from the surface.

“Elder bro, w-what should we do now?”

Seeing this kind of destructive power, Jill and Warren were both stunned. Fear surfaced in their hearts instinctively.

Only now did the two of them realize how laughable and ridiculous it was to even think about making a move on Black Star back then.

Someone as strong as him would have turned us to dust just by blowing some air, yet we planned to take his body?

Thinking about it, we were basically committing suicide!

The two of them were the only ones who could use the Soul Swapper, and they had always believed they were the chosen ones. Hence, they had almost blind confidence in the Soul Swapper’s abilities.

However, when they finally witnessed the battle between peak Beyond Grade As this closely, they realized how completely ignorant they had been! It was not surprising. They had been imprisoned by the Modo Civilization for a very long time, and any information they received about the outside world was filtered.

“While their attention is diverted, we have to think of a way to leave. They really seem to be here for us.”

Seeing that Black Star had appeared too, Jill knew that things had gone wrong. At this point, he only had one thought in his mind.

Leave the Shattered Star Ring immediately, go as far as possible, and never come out again till we’re at Beyond Grade A!

At the same time, Ames and Hila were flying in the atmosphere. Hila released her soul senses and scanned the people on the surface over a large area.

While searching, the two of them also frequently looked at the battlefield in space.

“Looks like they’re on par for the time being. We don’t have to worry. Black Star will be fine for now,” Hila said softly and looked very tempted.

Seeing how intense the battle was between Black Star and the Mechanic Emperor, she felt the itch to join in. Ever since she got the Underworld dimension, she had never fought any Beyond Grade As at her fullest except for Black Star.

However, thinking of the thirty spars Han Xiao had promised her, she reluctantly suppressed her desire for battle.

Ames shook her head and said, “Let’s quickly find the targets. The earlier we find them, the earlier we can leave, so he won’t have to keep taking the risk of fighting the Mechanic Emperor.”

Seeing the battle, she had to admit that she indeed could not provide much help in a battle of this level and would be a burden instead.

Back when she fought Black Star, she had already accepted the fact that Black Star exceeded her, so she would not feel discouraged or anything.

However, the next moment, their expressions suddenly changed, and they simultaneously turned to look at the battlefield.

At this instant, the two of them sensed a few new Beyond Grade A energy sources suddenly flying out from the Mechanic Emperor's secondary dimensional army box!

They were not the energy reactions of Apostle Weapons but actual Beyond Grade As!

"The Mechanic Emperor has more help?"

Hila stopped in midair with a solemn expression.

"We have to go back and help! We can't watch the army commander get besieged!"

Chapter 1167 Felon

Above Planet Earth Ring, the formations of a black and a white enormous mechanical army clashed with each other like two dragons tearing each other apart. From afar, shattered mechanical parts fell like a thunderstorm. Tens of thousands of machines were destroyed every second.

Despite their gigantic sizes, the two Mechanical Deities were swift as they fought each other. The power of every clash of their weapons could shatter a planet and leave terrifying wounds on each other's bodies. The repair speed could hardly keep up.

The aftershock of every clash of their weapons shattered a ton of mechanical troops that got too close. Occasionally, one of the Mechanical Deities would get blown away, shattering countless mechanical soldiers in its path like an elephant rolling through a bunch of ants.

There were countless artilleries, psionic cannons, and dark energy cannons all over the two Mechanical Deities, blasting away at each other's shields.

As the fight carried on, the energy reaction of the battlefield kept increasing and caused chain reactions. Clusters of dense dark blue energy clouds with destructive power appeared, forming a similar environment to the Psionic Seal Rings of the three Universal Civilizations' mother planets.

The clash between highly dense energy turned the battlefield into an extremely condensed, highly unstable energy field, twisting even the trajectory of light beams and making direct energy beams look curved or even bent.

Looking at the cosmic space through this battlefield was like looking through a strange layer of glass. All the stars had thousands of reflections that formed irregular shapes. From one glance, it was as if the universe was being shattered!

Clank!

The weapons clashed once again. Intense shockwaves penetrated the both of them. They stepped back and distanced away from each other at the same time.

Han Xiao looked at the Celestial Punishment Edge in his hands. There were a few cracks on the blade.

However, the ninth-generation Black Star Alloy was mixed into the Celestial Punishment Edge. Although its tenacity was not as high as the material that the Mechanic Emperor had invented, it had some of Han Xiao's traits, so its recovery speed was faster in comparison, and the Celestial Punishment Edge's durability would recover over time.

Not a lot of time had passed since Han Xiao's arrival, but due to how fast both of them were, they had already fought for tens of thousands of rounds.

"You really are a magical person. When someone thinks they've studied you thoroughly, you always bring more surprises."

Manison's electronic eyes flickered. He looked down and inspected his equipment too. He had a rather complicated feeling.

The energy absorption Universal Treasure armor he had built based on Black Star's Indestructible Body was already heavily damaged. Putting aside the fact that this equipment was not perfected, Black Star's attacks were much stronger than before, which already exceeded the limits of this equipment.

Furthermore, every time Black Star used anything with the 'Gaeta Shockwave Fist' suffix, he would harass him in the private channel.

Manison had been counting. Up till now, Black Star had used that a total of twenty-seven times, all with different names and different ways of attack. Even with the knowledge he had, he still felt this technology was quite interesting

The damage to the Mechanical Deity was not an issue since it could be repaired by absorbing mechanical soldiers. However, some of the damage penetrated the Mechanical Deity and landed on his Lord's Avatar at the Mechanical Deity's core, causing his Lord's Avatar's durability to drop quite a bit. Manison's avatar clearly had no Indestructible Body, so it would be over once it was shattered.

"You won't be able to live up to your arrogant words like this. How about show me what you've really got if you want to take the Spacetime Amber away from me?"

Han Xiao swiped his hand over the Celestial Punishment Edge's blade, quickly repairing the cracks, and smiled at old Manison.

"... We're Virtual Mechanics, but your combat method is more like Mechanical Pug... ahem, Armed Mechanic. You've taken the wrong path, kid," Manison said coldly.

"Does it matter if I can fight?" Han Xiao raised his brows.

"You're right. There's no limitation on power itself. Being able to fight is more important than anything else... That is why, I'm going to show you the true power of a Virtual Mechanic."

Manison raised his arm and pointed his trident at the light gate of the secondary dimensional army box.

The next moment, the light gate rippled, and a large group of special mechanical soldiers flew out. It was his signature move—the Mechanic Empire, special mechanical soldiers built with AI lives.

However, the most eye-catching thing was not the Mechanic Empire but the three people in front of it. Their Beyond Grade A energy presences were not restrained at all, like three Fixed Stars in Han Xiao's senses.

Han Xiao looked over. These three individuals were of different races, and their biological flesh was mixed with mechanical devices. It was clearly highly advanced mechanical prosthetics.

Intricate machinery covered all of their bodies. Most of their skin was changed into special alloy, and their faces were changed into metal masks, completely taking away their past appearances, only showing their modified electronic eyes that shone with red light.

"So, these are the Felons..." Han Xiao narrowed his eyes.

The Felons were old Manison's last trump card. Using highly advanced biological engineering and mechanical prosthetic technology, he modified living Supers into powerful war weapons.

The organs of these Felons would be modified too, especially their brains. Through mechanical technology, he simulated biological tissues and changed their mind into something that could be artificially read and written on, changing their fundamental logic.

At the same time, using Virtual Technology, he uploaded the Felons' consciousness to the quantum network, modifying their soul into Virtual Souls. Then, like other artificial intelligences, they became immune to all psychological and mental attacks, following his orders while maintaining their combat experience.

After the modification, Felons would keep most of their original abilities. As most of their flesh was modified or swapped out, they would not be as strong as before. However, because of the modification, they could enjoy part of the Mechanical Force bonuses from their controller. Although the conversion rate was not as high as the ordinary mechanical soldiers, they actually became even stronger than before!

"Modifying the living bodies of Beyond Grade As? Aren't you afraid of the advanced civilizations and the development union causing trouble for you?" Han Xiao was crystal clear of the situation, but he still acted like he did not know anything on the surface. "Hehe, they are all my trophies from before. I have the right to do whatever I want to them. I built them long before the association was formed. As for the three Universal Civilizations, do you think they are completely unaware?" Manison's tone was calm.

All the Beyond Grade As that were defeated by Manison had gone missing, so of course, the advanced civilizations and the Beyond Grade As had all kinds of speculations about it. Although they did not know of the Felons, they did suspect that the Mechanic Emperor had been doing such experiments. The Mechanic Emperor's image as a research maniac was too strong; it was hard to imagine he would not study the Beyond Grade As that fell into his hands.

After all, he did not have the Spacetime Amber, which allowed him to open an exhibition like Black Star.

Manison basically never used this trump card because others would know more about it every time he used it. Also, he hardly met any enemy that needed him to use the Felons.

And Black Star was one of the extremely few that he had felt the need to use this trump card on.

Buzz!

Mechanical Force shot out and linked the three Felons.

The red light shined bright in the eyes of the three Felons, and their energy presence rocketed.

Buzz!

The Felon in the middle shivered, also released Mechanical Force and pulled the mechanical troops of Mechanic Emperor around him toward him.

The next moment, an enormous machine appeared. It had a humanoid appearance but also parts of a beast, five spear-like tails, and sharp claws extending from its fingers. It looked very grim and vicious.

The third Mechanical Deity had appeared!

Han Xiao's eyelids jumped.

This meant that the original identity of this Felon was a Divine Throne Mechanic who had mastered (Composite Mechanical Deity)!

He could not help but think of the first time he met the Mechanic Emperor. Back then, old Manison mentioned that it was another Beyond Grade A who was behind the incident of his AI civilization, and he had turned him into part of his collection. Could this Felon be that guy?

Boom!

While he was speculating, this half-beast Mechanical Deity suddenly sped up and charged at him, its claws aiming for Han Xiao's head.

Han Xiao responded immediately. He turned the blade of the Celestial Punishment Edge and slashed toward it.

Clank!

The two mechanical bodies clashed and trembled. The power of the half-beast Mechanical Deity was weaker, and it got blown away.

However, before Han Xiao could chase after it, he saw the half-beast Mechanical Deity swung its five tails and wrapped them around the Celestial Punishment Edge and the arm that was holding it. This enormous pulling force made Han Xiao stagger!

As for the enemy, not only did it prevent itself from getting blown too far back, it even closed the distance and got dangerously close to Han Xiao. Its claws wreaked havoc on Han Xiao's armor, creating multiple claw wounds.

At the same time, Manison seized the opportunity and struck from the side. Han Xiao's movements were severely disrupted, and he was not able to block it. His Mechanical Deity's wrist got penetrated from front to back. "Hiss!"

The intense pain from the neural network made Han Xiao inhale deeply.

He could stay evenly matched against Manison alone, but he was not strong enough to fight two enemies at the same time.

This Mechanic Felon received Manison's Mechanical Force bonuses, so its Mechanical Deity was extremely powerful. Even though it was not as strong as his or the Mechanic Emperor's, it was not far from it. Even if he had to fight this Mechanical Deity one on one, he would still have to spend some time to defeat it.

Han Xiao turned around and saw that the other two Felons did not attack him but instead led the Mechanic Empire and charged into his mechanical army, tearing open his formation like a blade through butter.

One of these Felons seemed to be a Pugilist, and another seemed to be an Esper. They were unstoppable among the army, crushing Apostle Weapons one after another.

If this carried on, these two Felons would be able to dismantle all of his Apostle Weapons in less than two hours.

"Such astonishing strength..." Han Xiao sincerely felt this way. The Felons' strength exceeded his expectations.

"Do you realize now how big a mistake it was to decide to fight me? I warned you, but you've disappointed me time after time!"

Psionic energy erupted from Manison's trident and blasted Han Xiao's Mechanical Deity in half.

The half beast Mechanical Deity instantly tore the chest of the Mechanical Deity open and snatched Han Xiao's original body out from inside, grabbing him in its hands. At the same time, its five tails swung everywhere to destroy the mechanical soldiers around, preventing them from assembling into a Mechanical Deity again.

Han Xiao tried to struggle but could not escape the Mechanical Deity's hands. Although his original body was not afraid of getting killed, he could not match up to a Mechanical Deity.

However, he did not panic at all. He looked up at the enormous Mechanical Deity and tutted. "The weakness of this ability is very clear. You need to bear the energy cost for three extra Beyond Grade As. How long can you last?"

"So what? Will it take that long to eliminate you?"

Manison did not deny this weakness.

The Felons lost a lot of cells that could produce energy for them after they were modified mechanically, so in order for them to still have Beyond Grade A strength, that energy they lost had to be provided. This had to come from Manison.

Although the special prosthetic and energy conversion technology used on the Felons allowed Manison's Mechanical Force to be converted into energy that these Felons with different classes could still use, the conversion rate was no joke. For example, if a Felon used 100 points of energy, Manison had to spend 130 to 170 points of energy. Therefore, he could not last very long. Now that he used three Felons, he basically had to bear the energy consumption of five to six Beyond Grade As, including

himself. If not because his energy recovery speed was extremely quick, he would have been sucked dry in seconds. Even so, the balance of his recovery cycle was tipped over, and his energy was dropping visibly. "You're right. If this was before, I'd most likely have no choice but to run, sadly..."

Han Xiao shook his head. Not only did he not panic, he even almost burst out laughing.

Old b*stard Manison, I have been waiting for you to use this!

You thought I'm only going to get your talents today?

My (Virtual Purification, Restore) has been waiting for a long time!

This time, Manison raised his enormous mechanical arm and wanted to take Han Xiao from the half-beast Mechanical Deity. However, halfway through, his arm was suddenly grabbed by the half-beast Mechanical Deity's claw tightly and could not move further.

"Hmm?" Manison was confused. He looked at it and wondered, "What are you..."

Bang!

Before he finished, five tails dashed over and stabbed all into his face!

The Mechanical Deity was taken by surprise. Its brain exploded and turned into countless metal fragments!

The entire Mechanical Deity was sent out flying. A large wound was on its neck.

What happened?

The sudden change made Manison lost. He was appalled.

Why has my Felon suddenly turned against me?

Chapter 1168 Crushed!

The Felon's sudden attack completely took Manison by surprise. He subconsciously thought that the Felon malfunctioned, so he instantly tried to give it a new order again.

However, the order got absolutely no response at all. This Felon also did not chase after him but stood still instead, letting go of its hand and allowing Han Xiao to break free.

"What have you done?" Manison was filled with rage and could no longer maintain his cool.

Everything had pros and cons. While the Felons' consciousness became virtual, immune to mental abilities, and followed all his orders, it also meant that someone could take over them through virtual methods. However, this was exactly why Manison had set up extremely intricate virtual firewalls inside the Felons' brains. If Black Star used Virtual Intrusion, there was no way the firewall would not react to it, and he could not have possibly done it so fast!

Logically, Black Star's Virtual Technology could not even break through his virtual firewall. There should have been no way he could take control of the Felon! Therefore, he was certain that Black Star must have used some kind of ability that he did not understand, which was even more unbelievable to him.

This was the first time he had used the Felons in front of Black Star, so why did he have such a specific method to deal with them?

This time, Han Xiao patted his chest as if patting away non-existent dust. He then said calmly, "In your own words, I'm going to show you the true power of a Virtual Mechanic!"

This was the first time he had used (Virtual Purification-Restore) in actual combat. This ability he had obtained from the Intelligent Plague mission was basically the nemesis of the Mechanic Emperor.

Based on the usual steps of Virtual Intrusion, if he wanted to rewrite the Felons' logic, he would have to break through Manison's virtual firewalls one after another and have a tough fight with old Manison in the Virtual world.

The amazing thing about (Virtual Purification

— Restore] was that it completely ignored any virtual firewalls. There was no need for any hacking at all. This ability could not freely rewrite the target's logic. Its effect was only to help the artificial intelligence recover its fundamental logic. For example, it would have no effect on Apostle Weapons. However, on targets whose consciousness had been modified by virtual technology such as the Felons or the Mechanic Empire, it had an astonishing effect and instantly removed the Mechanic Emperor's control over them! Earlier, when he fought with the Felon, he had already gotten its combat information and seen that the Felon had kept more than half of its original abilities and talents. This was what was incredible about the Felon technology.

These abilities came from the memories of the Felons, and they would only know how to use them if their memories were intact. If their memories were completely wiped away, so would their combat experience, meaning most of their abilities and talents would disappear too. The Felon would most likely become a white board with only raw strength, and without the essence of what made them strong, they would become tremendously weaker.

This was also the reason (Virtual Purification, Restore] could work.

Han Xiao turned to look at the enormous half-beast Mechanical Deity, which had already recovered its self-consciousness but still looked lost.

His combat memories are basically the only memories he has left, so he most likely doesn't remember who he is. But looking at his actions from earlier, he's probably hostile toward the Mechanic Emperor. Han Xiao's eyes flickered as he thought.

The Felons were all once the Mechanic Emperor's enemies. Even without most of their memories, some things were buried in the bones, such as feeling furious when they saw the Mechanic Emperor.

Without the disruptions, Han Xiao's body quickly assembled into an enormous Mechanical Deity.

He did not say much to the Mechanic Emperor. He just swung his blade, aimed at the other two Felons and the tons of Indestructible Mechanic Empire troops, and used (Virtual Purification-Restore).

The next moment, the Pugilist Felon and the Esper Felon suddenly stood still and looked lost.

This was not the case for the Indestructible Mechanic Empire. They were artificial intelligence lives to begin with; only their logic was rewritten like they were trapped and could not control their own bodies.

Now that they had regained consciousness, they were only stunned for an instant before immediately turning around and firing at Manison's mechanical army with incomparable rage.

Manison's mechanical army was in chaos!

Han Xiao did not forget about the virtual aspect of the battle. Ever since the start of the battle, the two of them had been continuously trying to snatch control from one another on the virtual network. Manison had also dispatched a group of artificial intelligences from his artificial intelligence civilization to attack Han Xiao's territory.

As the dim light of (Virtual Purification, Restore] swept by, these artificial intelligence lives instantly recovered and immediately led Han Xiao's data stream to snatch control of Manison's mechanical army!

"This is..."

Manison opened his eyes wide with extreme shock. He was completely stunned.

What the hell kind of ability is this?

The Felons and the Indestructible Mechanic Empire were two of his extremely important trump cards. However, in front of Black Star, not only were they broken down in seconds, but they even got taken over by him!

Black Star definitely did not have this ability the last time they fought!

Without hesitation, he wanted to use virtual technology to rewrite the logic of the Felons and the Indestructible Mechanic Empire on the spot. However, Han Xiao was not going to let him. Also using virtual technology, Han Xiao once again started the tug of war with Manison to prevent him from regaining control of his troops.

At the same time, Han Xiao ordered his mechanical troops to continue attacking while taking in the Indestructible Mechanic Empire troops and leaving the battlefield.

"Sh*t!"

Manison realized what Han Xiao was planning to do. He wanted to snatch away his ace troops!

In such a dire situation, even Manison felt lost for an instant.

Seeing the situation on the battlefield, he knew that there was no room for any hesitation. He instantly cut off his Mechanical Force link with the Felons and the Indestructible Mechanic Empire.

Now that these troops had turned on him, there was no way he was going to continue providing them with bonuses and waste his own energy. At the same time, he ordered the remainders of his mechanical army to recapture these troops that had become traitors.

Clank!

Without an energy supply, the half-beast Mechanical Deity could not maintain its body and instantly fell apart, turning into tons of mechanical troops that were about to take the Mechanic Felon away.

Of course, Han Xiao was not going to watch this happen. He extended his gigantic mechanical arm, tore through the defenses of the mechanical army, and grabbed the Mechanic Felon who was still dazing off. Then, nanoparticles flowed in his palm, and he directly absorbed this Felon into the Mechanical Deity.

He tried to give the Felon energy, but the interface showed that he did not meet the requirements. He had to master the Felon technology and be above level 340. Only then could he use the special prosthetic of the Felons to convert his Mechanical Force into their energy. This requirement was similar to the Felon blueprint he had obtained before.

Han Xiao did not mind it. As long as he could take a sample back with him, he could go home and study it slowly to derive the blueprint.

“You motherfu...”

Seeing this, even with Manison’s class, he was still filled with a burning rage and wanted to cuss.

Every Felon was a unique product that he had built through blood and sweat, and watching one of them getting stolen right before him by Han Xiao made his heart bleed.

“Come on, don’t get so angry. Don’t you still have two more? What’s the big deal in giving me one?” Han Xiao said with a mocking tone.

Hearing this, Manison’s lungs almost burst from rage. You piece of sh*t!

If I don’t crush you today, I won’t call myself Palpatine!

Without another word, Manison attacked with his trident like a thunderstorm, almost not putting any focus on defense at all. He was clearly enraged.

“Haha, this is how Mechanics should fight. Come!”

Han Xiao laughed.

I just love exchanging wounds! He activated (Polar Channel Flow— Blood Rage). Burning blood gushed out from his heart and shot out from his pores, turning into a thick and dense blood energy. As his health plummeted, his attributes continued to increase.

Explosive power filled his entire body. The blue-gold Mechanical Force received a tint of red too. His Mechanical Deity looked vicious.

At this moment, just with his own abilities, he was already stronger than before when he activated the double Mechanical Senses and The Ancient One Character Cards!

The effect of The Ancient One was an additional twenty Intellect, and extra Perfect Mechanical Sense multiplied his Machinery Affinity by 1.4 and increased the levels of all Mechanic abilities by four. [Billion Mechanic Empire-Manison) on its own increased his Intellect by fifteen percent, his Machinery Affinity by 1.2 times, and his Mechanic abilities by two levels. At the same time, it also gave him six additional levels on a ton of core Mechanic abilities, as well as an extra bonus when fighting any machinery of ten percent to all attributes and damage dealt, a fifteen percent reduction to damage taken, and a twenty-five percent reduction to energy and stamina consumption!

Just (Billion Mechanic Empire—Manison) alone almost gave him as many bonuses as one more Perfect Mechanical Sense and The Ancient One!

Plus, he now also had four more Universal Treasures and was four stages higher on God's Trait Transformation Machinery...

"I'm going to crush you today!"

Han Xiao took no step back and let the trident penetrate his chest as he cut off Manison's right shoulder. The two of them fought viciously like two gigantic beasts tearing each other apart.

Ames and Hila had just arrived at the edge of the battlefield. They both stopped when they saw this.

The two of them were originally worried about Han Xiao getting outnumbered, but now it seemed like there was no need to worry.

"He doesn't seem to need our help."

"Then let's go back and continue searching."

While the two of them were about to turn around, Han Xiao's voice suddenly sounded in the communication channel.

"Hila, keep searching. Ames, stay."

Hearing this, Ames was slightly stunned.

"For what?"

"See those two Beyond Grade A prosthetic bodies that are surrounded by the mechanical army? Grab them with your ability." "Didn't you just say I'm a burden and wouldn't let me help?" Ames raised her brows.

"It was to trick the enemy." Han Xiao was not ashamed at all.

"Humph, I knew you need me."

Ames smiled and was in a much better mood. She joined the battle immediately. She grabbed the two Felons with her force field and started dragging them away.

Under Han Xiao's influence, she did not mind joining a duel at all.

Originally, Manison made the mechanical army surround the two Felons with everything they had, stopping Han Xiao's troops and trying to recapture the Felons to take them back to the secondary dimensional army box once again. The two Felons did not have full memories, but they still had their combat experience. Noticing that the Mechanic Emperor wanted to capture them again, they naturally resisted. However, without a source of energy, they became much weaker and got overwhelmed by Manison's Apostle Weapons. If this had carried on, they would have been captured.

However, as Ames joined in, the situation changed. Her force field Esper Ability was incredible at crowd controlling. It instantly tore the defenses of Manison's troops open and allowed Han Xiao's mechanical army to charge in and help the Felons.

Seeing this, the expression of Manison, who was fighting with Han Xiao, instantly changed.

You piece of sh*t, what happened to one on one?

Thousands of curses rushed to the tip of his tongue. In the end, they all combined into one sincere, enraged shout.

“Black Star, you’re shameless!”

“We’re in the middle of a fight. Don’t flatter me.”

Han Xiao was not affected at all, even being in the mood to make a joke. He had already reached the highest duration for the challenge mission of Manison. The mission was shown as completed now, so there was no need to continue taking a private class from old Manison.

Furthermore, now that Manison’s Felons and Indestructible Mechanic Empire had gone out of control, they were basically a huge piece of cake placed right in front of him

Of course I’m going to ask for my friend to help. Why would I still fight you alone? Did you really think I’m such a battle maniac?

You are now basically a box of treasure!

Boom!

The blade slashed onto the pole of the trident, emitting a ring of shockwave. Han Xiao raised his brows and mocked, “Yo, weren’t you going to fight me head-on till the end? Why have you started guarding?”

Manison remained silent and changed his combat style entirely the next second. He moved from one extreme to another and went completely defensive, clearly wanting to stall for time.

At the same time, his mechanical army gave up on fighting back and focused on retrieving the Indestructible Mechanic Empire troops and the Felons.

It was clear that Manison no longer wanted to decide a winner between him and Han Xiao. All he wanted was to reduce his losses as much as possible. “Now you want to retreat? It’s too late!” Han Xiao sent multiple ‘Getta Hadoken’ messages over privately and started his all-out attack on the elderly. After just a while, Manison was showing signs of defeat all over as he had to minimize the losses of his troops. Swoosh!

A wa

The blade spun and picked Manison’s Lord’s Avatar out from inside the Mechanical Deity.

Han Xiao instantly used a powerful restraining beam and pulled Manison’s Lord’s Avatar toward him. He then punched forward with his enormous metal fist. Due to the tremendous difference in size, not only did the Lord’s Avatar not fly out, but it got stuck on the fist.

“Plate!”

Ames understood instantly. She controlled her force field and created an enormous force field barrier in front of the Mechanical Deity like a green wall. They clearly had very high synergy.

Han Xiao's fist slammed right onto the barrier with Manison's Lord's Avatar on it.

Boom!

Enormous, visible spider-web cracks instantly erupted on the force field barrier!

Manison was in the middle of it. The Lord's Avatar was almost flattened.

Still, he did not fight back and was focusing on controlling his mechanical army to throw his Universal Treasures back into the secondary dimensional army box and reduce losses.

The next moment, the Celestial Punishment Edge was raised. A bright dark blue light appeared on its blade as it slashed right down accurately onto Manison's Lord's Avatar.

Boom!

The force field barrier shattered into countless light-green fragments and disappeared.

Given the Celestial Punishment Edge's size, this could not really be called a slash. It was more like throwing a mountain onto an ant!

Han Xiao looked up and saw that Manison's Lord's Avatar had already turned into a pile of floating waste. On the half of its metal head, the electronic eye flickered a few times before completely dimming. The Mechanical Force on it also slowly dissipated. (Lord's Descent) was deactivated.

Without Manison's Mechanical Force, the secondary dimensional army box instantly shrunk and disappeared.

The troops that had yet to escape all remained there. The golden electronic light on them disappeared as they lost all Mechanical Force bonuses and got surrounded instantly.

"Humph, told you I was going to crush you today!"

Han Xiao felt exhilarated.

Throughout his life, he had experienced losses against the Mechanic Emperor way too many times.

Even though he was the final winner of the Intelligent Plague incident, without those dozen Mechanics who came to stop the battle, he probably would have lost against the Mechanic Emperor back then too.

This time, however, he had finally triumphed completely!

Chapter 1169 I Might Not Have Earned a Lot, But You Definitely Lost a Ton

Without the Lord's Avatar, Manison could no longer keep the secondary dimensional army box open, leaving the rest of the mechanical army with no reinforcements.

Even though Manison could still provide the Mechanical Force bonuses through Quantum Infinite Distance Transmission Channel if he wanted to, it would be meaningless. Almost all of his troops had been seized by Han Xiao. There was no way he could turn the situation around.

Han Xiao asked Phillip to do a count. Other than the millions of normal mechanical soldiers, he also seized two Felons and a ton of Indestructible Mechanic Empire troops.

Old Manison had started to minimize his losses as soon as he realized the situation had turned bad. The Apostle Weapons had run the quickest and all managed to escape, and he had just managed to snatch the Esper Felon back in the end. As for the other two Felons, one was captured by Han Xiao's Mechanical Deity, and he could not bring the other one away because of Ames.

"Nice, nice!"

Han Xiao was filled with joy.

He could reverse engineer the blueprints out of all these mechanical soldiers, especially the two Felons. He could totally derive the technology used. While he had made a huge fortune, old Manison had suffered tremendously. He had come to find the Soul Swapper. Not only did he not get it, but he even lost a ton of assets.

Han Xiao could vividly imagine Manison's furious expression right now, and damn did it feel good.

He had finally robbed Manison big time!

However, that left him with some trouble too. The two Felons had regained their self-consciousness, so he had to deal with it. Han Xiao released the Mechanic Felon inside the Mechanical Deity and let him rendezvous with the other Pugilist Felon. He then surrounded the two of them with his mechanical troops.

Seeing this, the two Felons instantly got into a defense stance, but none of them made a move. Although they could not remember many things, after experiencing the battle earlier, they knew that Han Xiao had saved them. However, they could not trust Han Xiao yet and were worried they might have walked out of a tiger's den and into a wolf's nest.

Han Xiao deactivated the Mechanical Deity, passed through the encirclement, and approached the two of them. He narrowed his eyes and asked, "How much do you guys remember?"

The two Felons exchanged looks and shook their heads.

"I see, so nothing other than the battle earlier. What about your names?"

The two of them shook their heads again.

"No names... only code names..."

"What code names did the Mechanic Emperor give you guys then?"

The Mechanic Felon pointed at himself and then at the other Felon.

"I'm Two. He's Four."

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11

Hearing these two names, Han Xiao did not know what expression he should give.

Why is Manison so 'whatever' in choosing code names? It doesn't suit their identity as trump cards at all!

Could it be that this b*stard's level of naming things is on par with me?

Looks like even the weaknesses of great people are similar.

Han Xiao rubbed his chin, pondered for a moment, and said, "Alright, you guys should follow me for now. I'll find your identities for you. You were both the Mechanic Emperor's enemies, so it shouldn't be that hard."

The Mechanic Felon Two said quietly, "You are not going to control us like he did, are you?"

"I'm not planning to at the moment, but that might change in the future." Han Xiao shrugged. "But you don't have a choice now, do you?"

Looking at the countless mechanical troops around them, the two of them nodded.

Comparatively, they would not have an even worse time in the hands of this handsome and extraordinary man.

If this man wanted to replicate what the Mechanic Emperor was doing, he would not have said so much to them and would have captured them long ago. "Who... are you?" Four asked.

"Listen carefully then. The man who stands before you is the army commander of the Black Star Army, protector of the Aquamarine Federation, peak of individual greatness of the Shattered Star Ring, leader of the second strongest organization in the Flickering World, pillar of the Crimson Dynasty, Special Consultant of the three Universal Civilizations, vice president of the Beyond Grade A Association, hero of the universe who defused the Intelligent Plague, owner of the Galaxy Medal..."

"Your name is too long. I can't memorize it all." Four shook his head.

"...Ahem, these are all my titles. You can simply call me Black Star." Han Xiao knew that the two of them did not know who he was, so the more titles he mentioned, the more intimidating he would look.

The two of them exchanged looks and nodded.

They did not have anywhere else to go for the time being anyway, so they did not mind following Han Xiao. Among their few remaining emotions, their hostility toward the Mechanic Emperor was the strongest. They might only have the chance to take revenge if they followed this person before them, or once they were alone, they would be captured by the Mechanic Emperor again.

Han Xiao chatted with them for a while and told the mechanical troops to take them back to the spaceship. He had yet to decide on what to do with the Felons who had regained their self-consciousness, so he decided to keep them under his control and think about it later when the matters at hand had been dealt with.

He looked at the other side and saw that the Indestructible Mechanical Empire troops were gathered at the side and staring at him. Inside the quantum network vision, these artificial intelligences who had recovered were also looking at him, clearly ready to run away if they noticed anything was wrong. After experiencing the disaster of the Mechanic Emperor, these artificial intelligences had figured out how the food chain worked. Every Mechanic was a predator in their eyes; there was no such thing as trust.

Han Xiao thought about it. With his position, it would not be good for him to talk to these artificial intelligences. It would be like a butcher telling a bunch of pigs that they were pretty. It would definitely cause misunderstandings.

Therefore, after some pondering, he summoned Risda in the virtual domain.

“I’ll leave your people to you. Just don’t let them run wild.”

“Understood!”

Risda was overjoyed.

How many years has it been? The day my people are freed has finally come!

Although the process was tremendously different from his imagination of charging into the Mechanic Emperor’s nest, the results were positive.

Even though only some of his people were saved, at least he could see hope!

Choosing Black Star back then was indeed the right investment!

Seeing that Risda had gone to communicate with his people, Han Xiao only then looked away and shook his head. He was not optimistic.

Unlike the Felon technology, recovering back to normal did not mean complete freedom for these Indestructible Mechanical Troops. This was because the shells of these artificial intelligences were still linked with the device that transported their recombination materials. Through the energy transmission channel, Manison could still locate them. Unless the terminal was dealt with, these artificial intelligence lives were prisoners locked inside their shells. Once their shells were broken, Manison could retrieve them any time he wanted.

This was a security measure of the Indestructible Mechanical Troops technology. Han Xiao had yet to master this technology, so he did not know how to break the link.

Therefore, the one and only effective solution at the moment was to keep these Indestructible Mechanical Troops at home. There was no chance he could take them out to battle; Old Manison would never help him to rebuild these mechanical troops with his own resources in his lifetime.

Winning the fight was one thing. Old Manison was still a master who had studied machinery for countless years, so his signature technology would not be dealt with this easily.

Han Xiao was not hoping to fight with the Indestructible Mechanical Troops anyway. Firstly, the players under his command were much more terrifying. Secondly, he was not in dire need of the Indestructible Mechanical Troops technology, as the powerful factor of the Indestructible Mechanical Troops was its almost perfect self-sufficiency, which he could already achieve on his own.

Rather than modifying artificial intelligence lives into Indestructible Mechanical Troops, he would rather restore them and use them to derive the fragmented blueprint of the Domino Virus... That thing’s destructive power was many times stronger than the Indestructible Mechanical Troops.

Regardless of whether he could not use them for the time being, making the Mechanic Emperor unable to use them too was the main goal. Of course, these Indestructible Mechanical Troops were not completely useless to him. They were all important intelligence sources. He could ask about the state of the Mechanic Emperor's various bases.

While he was pondering, Hila's voice suddenly sounded in the communication channel. "Black Star, come here quickly. We've found the target."

"You've found the Soul Swapper? Great job!"

Han Xiao's eyes gleamed.

He did not forget that the Soul Swapper was the true goal of this trip. Now that he had locked down Planet Earth Ring, he was not going to stop until he found it. With an expert in the soul area such as Hila and the aid of a few kings of luck searching every inch of the planet, there was nowhere the Soul Swap Twins could run. No matter how mysterious and magical the Soul Swapper was, they would get discovered sooner or later.

As soon as Han Xiao returned to the spaceship, he saw the two people who were tied up in the middle of the room. They were both female and had looks of despair on their faces.

"These are the Soul Swap Twins?" Han Xiao looked at Hila and Feidin. "You sure you got it right?"

"Definitely." Hila took out a dark crystal mirror and passed to Han Xiao. "They've confessed to everything. This is the Soul Swapper."

Han Xiao took over the Soul Swapper and looked at the item details on the interface.

Soul Swapper: Space Wonder type item. Unknown origin. Unknown material. Able to swap souls around as the user wishes, ignoring any rejection symptoms and achieving a perfect fit. However, only special individuals are able to use the Soul Swapper. Requirements: Unknown.

Another Space Wonder, and something I never saw in my previous life... Han Xiao was content. "How did you guys catch them?"

The people all looked at Harrison as soon as he said that.

"Don't look at me. I just casually pointed..." Harrison waved with embarrassment.

"... Okay, got it." Han Xiao's lips twitched.

There seemed to be a difference between luck auras too. For example, Harrison's was incredibly effective in finding treasures.

No wonder the Soul Swap Twins looked like they had lost all hope. They had changed shells countless times and planned countless steps ahead, but in the end, they had lost to luck. Anyone would go mad. Han Xiao turned to the Soul Swap Twins and asked, "How do you use this?"

"We're the only two people in the entire universe who can use the Soul Swapper, and we're willing to work for you!" Jill quickly said. "You've actually always been my idol! It would be our honor to work for the army!"

At this time, ambitions, hope, and whatnot had all vanished.

Jill only had one thought left-use the fact that they were the only ones who could use the Soul Swapper as leverage to join Black Star's forces so that they could live!

Seeing this, Han Xiao tutted in his mind. Their praise is so rigid. Clearly, they're not very skilled.

"You said that you're the only two who can use the Soul Swapper in the entire universe?"

"It's true. I'm not lying to you. The Modo Civilization has tested trillions of people. Only two of us are able to use it. We're born for the Soul Swapper!"

"You never know till you try. Tell me, how do you use it usually?"

The two of them had no choice but to explain how to use the Soul Swapper.

Han Xiao followed it and got no response, only a notification on the interface.

Detecting... complete. You are not qualified to use the Soul Swapper.

"Looks like I really can't use it."

Han Xiao studied it for a while but got nothing. The interface did not show what requirements he had to meet to be qualified.

He then passed the Soul Swapper to Hila and said, "You guys, don't just stand there. Come and give it a try."

Hila casually tested it and got no response as well. The rest followed one after another.

Looking at this, Jill and Warren still faked their enthusiastic expressions, but a tint of mockery flashed through their eyes.

No matter how many times you guys try it, we're the only masters of the Soul Swapper! After a while, seeing that they still kept trying, Jill could not help but stress, "Like I said, we are the only qualifiers, no one but us can use the Soul Sw... what?"

Before he finished, his eyes widened, and he froze in place.

Black ripples appeared on the mirror of the Soul Swapper, devoured Feidin's palm whole, and kept sucking it in. "Hmm?" Feidin only noticed it after a while and said with surprise, "Did I succeed?"

"That's it?" Han Xiao raised his brows. "Looks like the requirements aren't that tough." "Yo-Yo-You-You..."

Jill and Warren were stuttering, their eyes wide open. They could not believe that a qualifier out of trillions of people had just appeared right in front of them!

The two of them had thought that they were the unique chosen ones, but this completely shattered their sense of superiority!

Not only did the Soul Swapper that the two of them saw as a holy relic find a new love right in front of them, but it even looked extremely thirsty like it wanted to suck Feidin in completely!

At this instant, the two of them went completely blank as if their wife who had promised everything to them suddenly rushed into the arms of someone else.

Han Xiao shook his head. "Tested trillions of people and only the two of you qualified. This only proves one thing... just how short of talent the Modo Civilization is."

Jill instantly realized that things had gone south. If they had no value, even staying alive would be a luxury.

Having thought of that, Jill yelled, "We're still useful! We can pass on the experience of using the Soul Swapper for so many years. We can even tell you what missions the Modo Civilization has sent us to do over the years. We can..."

Ka-cha!

Before he finished, his yelling stopped abruptly. His head spun 360 degrees around. His neck was twisted into a knot, and the shattered neck bones penetrated his neck skin.

Ames walked into the cabin and flipped her fingers. Her force field twisted Warren's neck too before terror could even fully appear on his face.

She looked around. her eyes stopped on Han Xiao, and she said, "The lives of these two are mine."

"Spoiled woman..." Han Xiao murmured. "If they're alive, they might spit out quite a lot of intelligence."

Ames was never sensible when Aesop's safety was threatened. She did not even want the Soul Swap Twins to breathe for an extra second.

Hila narrowed her eyes, raised her hand, and made a grabbing gesture. Two gray clusters of fog rose from above the Soul Swap Twins' heads and entered the Underworld mark on the back of her palm.

"I've taken their soul. When I get something from the interrogation, I'll report to you."

"Nice." Han Xiao gave her a thumbs up.

"What about this thing?" Feidin pulled his arm out of the mirror of the Soul Swapper.

"Since you can use it, bring it with you. I'll study it later."

Han Xiao did not mind. He trusted Feidin completely, so letting Feidin carry the Soul Swapper was not a problem. He was in a great mood, so he did not mind these small things.

Han Xiao was overjoyed. "Not only did I snatch away a Universal Treasure, but I even got more surprises from old Manison..."

On the other hand, Manison's situation was at the end of the other extreme-the subsidiary organizations he had left in the Shattered Star Ring were almost all exposed, he did not get the Soul Swapper, and he even lost a load of trump cards. "Assh*le!"

Manison was furious as he slammed and shattered the table in front of him.

He considered himself a casual and well-mannered person who usually never cussed... unless he could not control it.

The reason he had always been calm and casual was that in the past, no matter how much of his mechanical army he lost, it did not matter because he had all the mechanical troops in the world and that loss was negligible in comparison.

Today, however, he was really hurt.

He never got angry because he was not hurt enough, and now that he was, he was enraged. Thinking of the fact that two Felons had fallen into the hands of the enemy, Manison's heart was bleeding more than when he lost the Virtual Mutiny Virus core back then.

This was his trump card of trump cards. He had planned to use it to teach Black Star an unforgettable lesson, but never did he expect Black Star to snatch them away!

Even now, Manison still had yet to figure out how Han Xiao did it.

Furthermore, after wasting so many resources, he did not even catch a glimpse of the Soul Swapper. He was close to exploding with rage.

His emotions rarely fluctuated at all. However, after meeting Black Star in the past decade or so, that streak had been completely shattered.

"Black Star! Argh!"

Manison's furious screams echoed in the room.

Chapter 1170 Anyone Can Be the Mechanic Emperor

"Thank you, Your Excellency Black Star, for your help. We'll certainly relay the help you've given to Planet Earth Ring today to the upper echelons."

Inside the cabin, as Han Xiao told his subordinates to get rid of the Soul Swap Twins' corpses, he received a communication request from the Planet Earth Ring manager. "It's no big deal." Han Xiao waved.

"No, no, it was only thanks to your help that the Mechanic Emperor's evil deeds were stopped. On behalf of the Razo Civilization, I would like to thank you for your help. Please do stay and let us thank you!"

The Planet Earth Ring manager's tone was passionate.

Having just witnessed such a marvelous battle, Han Xiao's image was extremely tall in his heart. He did not dare show any disrespect and hoped to leave a good impression, so his attitude was respectful and enthusiastic.

Furthermore, the Mechanic Emperor coming to cause trouble would affect his political performance, and Black Star defeating the Mechanic Emperor did him a big favor. Black Star might not care, but that did not mean he did not care.

"No need, I'll be leaving after the battlefield is cleaned up." Han Xiao shook his head.

“Alright then, please inform me the next time you come to Planet Earth Ring. I’ll display the utmost hospitality.” The manager of Planet Earth Ring was full of appreciation. “There’ll be chances in the future.”

Han Xiao chatted with him for a while before hanging up the communication. He told Phillip to save his number into the contacts book, where he stored the communicator numbers of all the people he knew till now, forming an enormous network.

He saved not just the numbers of important people but also the numbers of less significant people from various industries. Everyone had their specialties, so they might be of help some time in the future.

Although the quantum network of the planet was in lockdown, everyone on the planet had witnessed what happened. God only knew how many videos had been taken. Once those videos got out, Han Xiao’s reputation would certainly grow once more.

After the Intelligent Plague incident, the three Universal Civilizations had continuously promoted his achievement of reaching a tie with the Mechanic Emperor. However, due to it not being completely true at the time, although the effects were quite good, it was not nearly perfect.

This time, however, the recordings of him destroying the Mechanic Emperor’s avatar head-on would be the most reliable proof!

Increased reputation was not even the most important. What was most important was that now that the Mechanic Emperor had lost to him this time, he would lose a ton of Machinery Faith believers!

It did not matter even if he lost a few times because he was much younger. However, as the known ‘Strongest Mechanic’, Manison losing had a completely different meaning. It would be disastrous for his reputation.

There was no such thing as a loyal fan in the Machinery Faith. They believed in whoever was stronger.

If Manison lost his title of being the ‘strongest’, tons of believers would turn to Han Xiao instead. Manison would become weaker while he would become stronger!

Speaking of becoming stronger, Han Xiao remembered that he had yet to receive the reward for the Manison challenge mission.

The mission was a usual Beyond Grade A challenge mission, giving rewards based on the time he lasted.

Since everyone was there, Han Xiao could finally do the full ‘Pet Dragon Touch Feidin Rub Nero Touch Harrison’ procedure.

Han Xiao went by them one after another. Harrison was the only one shivering with fear; the other three were used to it. Only then did he open the interface while being stared at by Hila with a strange look.

(Beyond Grade A Challenge Mission – “Mechanic Emperor” Manison) complete!

You have completed all the mission requirements and received 108 billion Experience.

You have received (Character Summon Card: ‘Mechanic Emperor’ Manison).

Character Summon Card: 'Mechanic Emperor' Manison. (Ancient One): Your long life has provided you with a wealth of valuable experience. +20% INT, +10% MYS, +2 levels to all skills. Last 24 hours. Usages: 0/2

"Ancient One again?" Han Xiao was surprised.

If he remembered correctly, this should be the third time he had earned this ability from old Manison's Character Summon Card. It was quite a strong advanced talent, so why did he get it so often?

Was it fated that he was meant to be an elderly with rich life experience?

Han Xiao's mouth twitched. He then looked at the part where he could draw one of Manison's talents or skills. This was the most important part.

You have received: Draw one of Manison's abilities/talents.

Note: Manison is a Virtual Mechanic, and your Class is completely compatible with his. You will be able to draw any of his abilities or talents. If you draw an ability or talent that you already possess, that ability or talent will be enhanced.

Randomizing... complete! Please select one from the five options below as the reward:

[Apostle Life Creation] – Ability: Lord Mechanic ability, you can modify the target machine into an 'Apostle Weapon', granting it tremendous combat capability enhancement. Basic allocation: 3. Allocation is increased by 1 every level. (You already possess this ability, can be enhanced.)

(Multidimensional Mind Model] – Talent: Changes the calculation method of your mind and increases the data processing speed of your brain. +1,000 INT, slightly increases your casting speed, Virtual Technology strength...

[Mechanical Race Battle TechniqueGuerrilla) – Ability: One of the combat modes passed down in the Mechanical Race. It focuses on high mobility long range guerrilla combat. This includes 744 responses for different situations. When activated, the mechanical army will receive the following effects: +15% mobility, +8.8% ranged attack damage, -5% defense.

(Blueprint-Virtual Mutiny Virus (Incomplete)] – Ability: A product Manison created by imitating the Virtual Mutiny Virus, yet to be completed. It is not fully functional, far from perfection, and cannot be put to use.

(Virtual Technology Innovation-Manison] – Talent: You have made improvements to your Virtual Technology and found a new direction. +1.75% Virtual Technology related abilities, grants special effects when an innovation is discovered in the Virtual Technology area.

"Yoho, another Unique Talent!" Han Xiao was overjoyed.

He had seen this Unique Talent on the interface the first time he met the Mechanic Emperor. The bonuses of (Virtual Technology Innovation-Manison) were quite amazing. Plus, it seemed to be a crucial foundation to mastering the Indestructible Mechanical Troops technology. Manison used this ability when modifying the artificial intelligence lives.

If he got this ability, he might really make some breakthrough in studying the Indestructible Mechanical Troops technology.

He looked at the other four abilities—none of them were as impressive. After all, no way he could get as lucky as the last time every time.

Maybe it was because there were too many people here today who were blessed by the Goddess of Luck and she could not satisfy them all at once.

However, since there was another Unique Talent, he could not consider himself unlucky.

He already had (Apostle Life Creation). (Multidimensional Mind Model) was a mediocre talent. 1,000 points of INT was powerful at lower levels, but it was ordinary at his current level. [Mechanical Race Battle Technique-Guerrilla] was a strategy-type ability for the mechanical army, like giving the mechanical army a formation response for different situations. This type of ability usually did not give a lot of bonuses; (BlueprintVirtual Mutiny Virus (Incomplete)) was even more useless. This was nothing but a mimicry Manison had yet to fully complete, while he had the original Domino Virus technology.

Since the other four options were nothing extraordinary, Han Xiao chose the fifth option without hesitation.

You have received the talent (Virtual Technology Innovation-Manison)!

Another Unique Talent... I might really become the second Manison if this carries on.

Han Xiao tutted.

He then felt his new ability for a while before turning off the interface and glancing outside the window.

At this point, his troops were still cleaning up the battlefield, seizing Manison's mechanical soldiers batch by batch. This was a huge fortune if changed into Enas. At this time, he felt a message on the quantum network. Risda was contacting him.

As he entered the Virtual Domain, he saw that Risda had come to him with a large group of artificial intelligence lives.

"Black Star, I've spoken with my people and clarified the situation. They're all willing to trust you. In order to not get captured by the Mechanic Emperor, everyone is willing to follow you for the time being, hoping that you can take care of them," Risda said with joy.

"Your people have made a wise decision." Han Xiao looked satisfied.

An artificial intelligence life who seemed like the leader stepped out and said, "Lord Black Star, we all hope to return to what we originally were as soon as possible. We don't want to be restrained anymore. Therefore, everyone has decided to fully cooperate with you and help you to derive the modification technology the Mechanic Emperor has used on us, only hoping we can be of use to you." "Very good!" Han Xiao laughed.

The cooperation of these artificial intelligence lives was necessary to derive the technology of Indestructible Mechanical Troops. Since they were willing to cooperate, it was great news.

“Also, we’re willing to tell you everything we know about the Mechanic Emperor. Whatever you want to know, we will tell you to our best knowledge.”

“That’ll be very helpful.” Han Xiao nodded.

After being used by Manison for so many years, the Indestructible Mechanical Troops definitely knew some valuable secrets, which would be of great assistance to him.

These artificial intelligence lives were so cooperative probably because they knew he was the only one they could rely on now, and they needed his power to save the rest of their people. Many artificial intelligence lives were still in Manison’s hands, especially the forefather of the AI civilization, Finette.

Beep beep...

At this time, a notification popped up on the interface. It was a new round of the [Reboot] mission, also the last round.

Han Xiao glanced through, and his eyes sparkled. “The requirement of the last round is to completely free the AI civilization... Whew, the rewards are quite generous!” The reward of the last round was a Milestone Talent called (Ally of Artificial Intelligence Lives), and the effects of it were the enhanced version of (Affable AI].

Han Xiao also saw the hidden reward—if he could save the entire AI civilization, they would become his powerful allies in the virtual territory.

Also, completing the (Reboot) series mission was also an amazing opportunity to make Manison weaker.

However, Manison would definitely have learned a lesson this time. Before Manison figured out how he did what he did in their battle, there was no way Manison would use these two trump cards in front of him again.

In order to save the other artificial intelligence lives, the only way was to charge into Mechanic Emperor’s nest and destroy the terminal of the Indestructible Mechanical Troops technology.

All kinds of thoughts flashed past. Han Xiao smiled and said, “Settle your people. When we return to my territory, I’ll arrange to give you guys a planet to live on.”

“Thank you, Black Star.” Risda nodded solemnly.

Exiting the quantum network vision, Han Xiao let out a deep breath. He was filled with joy.

At this time, Ames came before him and softly asked, “What are you planning to do next?”

“I’ve got what I came for. The twins are dead too, so next, of course, we need to deal with the one who’s behind this.”

“When do we act?” Ames could not wait. “You promised to bring me this time.”

“Hmm, no hurry, let me think about it.” Han Xiao narrowed his eyes.

Since he knew that the MODO Civilization was the mastermind behind this, there was no way he was going to let this go easily.

It was time to teach the Modo Civilization a painful lesson!