

Forty Millenniums of Cultivation

Chapter 8: Repairing a Crystal Processor

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“You’re late by 55 minutes,” said the beauty coldy, like a frozen mountain.

“Sorry, this place was kind of hard to find. Did you bring the goods?” Li Yao criticized implicitly as he extended his dirty claw.

Si Jiaxue willow-like eyebrows wrinkled slightly as she judged Li Yao’s appearance. She felt that it appeared she had chosen the location without much thought. She hesitated for a short while but, nevertheless, fished out a crystal processing unit from her school bag.

“It’s this CPU. It’s super unstable after bootup. It crashes every time if you let it run over three minutes. I already went to dozens of repair shops and they all say that the architecture is way too archaic, that there’s a lot of components inside that are no longer produced, and that it’s impossible to repair. I’ve heard you are a veteran crystal processor enthusiast and also a complete expert on repairing them. If you can fix this, name whatever price you want. Money is not a problem. Of course, if you can’t fix this... Please don’t break any of the countless components within.”

“Let’s discuss this after I take a look.”

Repairing crystal processors required a broad and profound set of skills. Li Yao did not dare to give a guarantee. He pulled out a pair of dust-repelling gloves and put them on. Only then did he solemnly take the CPU.

When the CPU was pressed into his hand, he felt fully the firmness of a true crystal processor classic. This was an antique CPU with at least over a hundred years of history. Half of the architecture was still mechanical in nature. There was a triangular button on the ball-shaped exterior.

When Li Yao lightly pressed the button, the crystal processing unit made a humming sound and lightly vibrated as it awakened. It seemed that its mechanical architecture was operating at lightning speed. A few seconds passed and suddenly, it flew out of Li Yao’s palm to float in midair. Two beams of light shot out from the two openings on its top and bottom, condensing together to form a giant hologram. It morphed 49 glistening,

shining glyph characters into existence, which formed an elaborate virtual glyph keyboard.

“This is simply a work of art...” Li Yao’s eyes became filled with an incomparable tenderness.

He identified that this was the Heavenly Zither Sect’s Tube Type CPU, the Vast Tomb-7, developed over a hundred and forty years ago.

In the history of crystal processor development, the “Tube-Type CPU” was only in the arena for a mere dozen years before falling to the more advanced “Chip-Type CPU”. Moreover, the Heavenly Zither Sect was a small sect that only existed for 50 or so years. This small sect relied on the success of releasing generations of the “Vast Tomb” Crystal Processor architecture, but they never kept up with modern developments in technology. During the decade when Chip-Type CPUs were rampant, this sect decided to go all in. They poured all their resources into developing the Vast Tomb-7. Ultimately, their source of capital fractured and they had to declare bankruptcy.

Thus, the Vast Tomb-7 was known as the shining final glory of all Tube-Type Crystal Processors, setting its place as a masterpiece.

Li Yao’s pair of hands turned into a light breeze as they hopped around on the glowing, rippling glyph keyboard.

His typing speed wasn’t necessarily fast, but his movements were natural and flowing, rolling freely and easily. His appearance wasn’t that of tapping a keyboard but of strumming a priceless zither. Appearing on the hologram were rows and rows of glyph script instructions that followed his movements, dropping down like a torrential storm of rain. And the crystal processor followed as well through its interface by emitting an utterly weak beep that was incomprehensible to the ordinary person.

Li Yao leaned his ear closer, listening attentively. He had an expression of complete concentration. Each of his movements was incomparably precise.

After all, Tube-Type CPUs were artifacts created over a hundred years ago. Their architecture was simpler in comparison to the opposite mainstream Chip-Type Processor of the present. Two minutes later, Li Yao was able to make an initial verdict, “There should be something wrong with the heatsink, causing the internal temperatures of the crystal processor to become abnormally high during run-time. The functionalities of modern crystal processors are becoming more and more powerful, having to process greater amounts of telepathic data and information. As for the older type crystal processors of over a hundred years ago, the load becomes too heavy. It is the same as a 150 year old man who’ve had to bear over a thousand pounds of weight everyday, year in year out. It’s hard to avoid destroying the joints.”

“This crystal processor is a remnant left behind by a close relative of mine. To me, it’s an important memorial containing meaningful memories. As long as you can fix it, I am willing to pay any cost,” Si Jiaxue spoke seriously.

Li Yao thought and thought, and nodded his head, “A scraped heatsink is a common breakdown in crystal processors, technically it’s not a big issue. The reason why none of the repair shops you went to were unable to repair is primarily because this model number of crystal processors is way too rare. The technology utilized by this processor is also way too obsolete. The heat sink used inside has not been produced in the last hundred years, and modern heatsinks used in modern processors are fundamentally incompatible. Anyways, it doesn’t matter. I just happen to have some extremely precious antique heatsinks in my collection. All I need to do is give it a few tries, even if a few of them become scrapped, I should be able to mod one to fit as a heatsink for this processor.”

“No need to bullsh*t! Just name a price!” Si Jiaxue had read between the lines.

“Oh my. Isn’t it sad to be so urgent to discuss money matters between fellow students? Anyways, it’s not a big problem. Time is short, let me bring it home. I estimate all I need is one night to finish this. As for the dismantling fees, testing fees, repair fees, component costs, assembling, and installation fees, and adding my labor fees altogether... I’ll discount it down to 95% for you. I calculate it to be 98,500 credits. Do you want to pay in cash or do a transfer?”

“Hmm?”

Si Jiaxue squinted her eyes. A dangerous glow exuded from within the depths of her eyes. All of a sudden, the ambient temperature of the junk room seemed to drop by ten degrees.

“I may have money, but it doesn’t mean I’ll let other people treat me as an easy target to cheat. Do you understand?”

Li Yao swallowed some saliva with utter difficulty. He bore against the pressure explaining, “Its true. When compared to repairing an ordinary crystal processor, this price is a little bit high. With nearly 100,000 credits, one can buy a high-end crystal processor with ‘Computational Power’ comparable to a cultivator at the peak of the Refinement stage. However, your crystal processor unit has over a hundred years of history. It can already be considered an antique. Obviously, the price for repairing an antique is different! Lets not talk about the other costs, let’s just talk about the several heat sinks I will need to use on this crystal processor. They were all acquired through years of bloody effort. I had to spend tremendous utmost effort in order to acquire these rare collection pieces. All of them are simply priceless treasures! So believe me, this is an absolutely fair and reasonable price!”

Si Jiaxue did not speak a single word. Her serene eyes fixed onto him.

Her Spiritual Actualization Quotient exceeded 70%, bringing with it spiritual pressure that was unyielding. Li Yao's heart tightened and he was on the verge of collapsing. But when he thought of his own "objective", he still forced himself to speak, "If my fellow student Si Jiaxue feels it's too expensive, that's also not a problem. Let's just say that my inspection was free this one time. You can mail it to a few of the large repair shops in a different country. Let them slowly find the corresponding heat sink for your model. I think it will take at most 3-5 months in order to find one or two in stock. If you decide to go this way, the cost should be cut down to under 10,000 credits."

"Three to five months..."

Si Jiaxue groaned lightly. She knew that Li Yao spoke the truth since the technicians of several repair shops told her the same thing. From what they said, repairing the old CPU types wasn't difficult, but finding the appropriate components was very hard. They also gave an estimation of three-five months. However, if her luck was bad, it was possible that she would have to wait up to half a year.

Presumably, this little rascal also saw this point, thereby considering herself to be an easy target!

Forget it. She, herself, still needed to go cultivate. There's no need to get tangled up with these bastards of the Common Class. Si Jiaxue nodded her head, and with an expressionless face said, "Okay fellow student Li Yao, I can give you 100,000 credits, but business transactions require business contracts. Tomorrow at this time, I want to see the crystal processor looking completely brand new. Also, you will guarantee its operational stability into the future. If something goes wrong every now and then, I won't pay any follow up repair fees. Is there any problems?"

"There's absolutely no problems. After I replace its heatsink with a suitable one, it can resume normal operation for at least three years. During these three years, you can continue searching for the appropriate heatsink for this model. As long as you replace it at regular intervals, it will be fine," Li Yao responded at lightning speed, wearing a smile on his face.

"Then that's fine," Si Jiaxue nodded her head. She was unwilling to deal with this small rascal for even one more second, so she turned around to leave.

Li Yao sat down onto a box of junk, his head was covered with cold sweat. Only after much time had past did he feel the weight off his shoulders, letting out a whistle.

Success!

With 100,000 credits, he can go to the "Underground Ghost Market" to buy the illegally produced "Knock-Off Strengthening Drugs", giving him the chance to increase his Actualization Quotient by a huge percentage!

Knock-off strengthening drugs contained a great amount of impurities and their consumption causes extremely violent side effects. However, they are superior in terms of cost and sufficiency. 100,000 credits was enough to buy a three month's supply of dosage for consumption, giving him the opportunity to temper his spirit root within the "Hundred-day Sprint" timeframe — to be completely reborn!

"My desire is to test into the 'Nine Elite Universities'. This is my one and only chance. Even if you are the 'Second's School Goddess', I have no choice but to fiercely cheat you of your money. I am really sorry!" Li Yao shoved the "Vast Tomb-7" CPU into his school bag. He rubbed his somewhat swollen and aching temples for a bit. A glimpse of a smile appeared on his face as he strutted out the room of junk.

(TL Note: I translated the CPU types to be "tube type" and "chip type" because I feel that they are analogous to our vacuum tube and solid-state transistor technology. I decided to use "chip" over "wafer" because a "master chip" was stated in chapter 3, whereas wafers would refer to more so the silicon wafer upon which integrated circuits are created via the lithography process.)