

## Paradise 1531

### Chapter 1531: Elevating To Seventh-Rank

Given that his scheduled appointment with Virtuoso to go into the Abyss was happening soon, Lin Huang accepted twenty missions to kill fourth-rank Heavenly Gods for the time being.

“He disappeared for over two months, and now as soon as he’s back on the radar, he takes up twenty missions to kill fourth-rank Heavenly Gods... It looks like either his combat level’s made a breakthrough again, or he was previously holding back his abilities...”

As soon as Lin Huang accepted the missions, the Death Sickle upper echelons were already noticing his movements.

Given his genius level, it would indeed be strange if he were not noticed.

Lin Huang was also aware that he would certainly draw attention to himself, so he only chose hunting targets that were fourth-rank.

He planned his route according to distance. The first hunting target he chose was a Lightning Fox.

The mission was to capture this Lightning Fox alive, and the reward was two fifth-rank God Territory Shell Remnants.

Meanwhile, the Lightning Fox referred to in the mission was located in some battlefield ruins not far away from the Devil Hunter Star Zone.

Although its combat level was merely fourth-rank, this Lightning Fox had mastered the Lightning Sequence and possessed astounding speed and explosive power.

In reality, many Gold Sickle members from Death Sickle had attempted this mission, but all of them had failed.

After all, such a reward was not enough to attract high-level Gold Sickle members to attempt such a task. Meanwhile, this fourth-rank Lightning Fox possessed a speed that was on par with most sixth-rank Heavenly Gods.

Lin Huang was confident he could capture it, not because he was just as fast as the creature itself, but because he felt that this Lightning Fox could not possibly be swifter than his own Divine Telekinesis.

Upon entering the rarely-visited battlefield ruins, he spread his Divine Telekinesis and began searching for the Lightning Fox.

Within two minutes, he had located his target.

“I’ve found you, little creature!”

As soon as the Lightning Fox sensed that it was being scanned by Divine Telekinesis, it turned into a lightning arc and tried to flee.

The next second, an invisible telekinetic thread twined around its rear right leg and stopped it from running away entirely.

The Lightning Fox let out a yelp of surprise. Just as it was about to unleash its might and struggle free, another telekinetic thread looped around its neck the next instant.

It immediately settled down, as it knew that if it continued to struggle, Lin Huang could easily cut off its head.

Noticing that the Lightning Fox had stopped struggling, Lin Huang did not hesitate.

A snap of his fingers and several telekinetic threads wrapped around the Lightning Fox, turning it into a cocoon, which was then dragged back to Lin Huang's side.

It was a mission that was practically impossible for anyone else, but when Lin Huang took it up, including his time on the road, he spent less than five minutes to complete it.

"Not bad. It went more smoothly than I expected." Lin Huang patted the Divine Telekinesis cocoon and put it away in the God Territory within him, inside the foothold where his Sword Servants were.

After advising his Sword Servants, he proceeded to check out the next mission.

To maximize his efficiency in completing his missions, Lin Huang had prepared to finish off all twenty missions at once and then submit them as soon as he was done.

The second mission was located in a neighboring star zone next to the Devil Hunter Star Zone.

The target of the mission was a third-rank heavenly god-level pure blood Protoss.

The reward was five fourth-rank God Territory Shell Remnants.

The mission reward exceeded the target's combat level considerably because this pure blood Protoss had a small clan backing him. The clan's master was a high-level eighth-rank Heavenly God.

The target was the master's grandchild.

Others might have taken the clan into consideration, but Lin Huang did not bother about this.

He noticed that the mission was a private commission. The commission documents had detailed evidence that this pure blood Protoss had humiliated and abused many female Protoss.

Lin Huang took merely ten minutes and arrived at the nearby Siri Star Zone through a dimensional portal.

When he arrived close to the planet where his target was, he soon locked onto his prey with Divine Telekinesis.

This was a young man who looked like he was in his early 20s—tall, with shoulder-length blond hair.

He was currently lying in a bathhouse, embracing two female Protoss with amazing bodies, one on each side of him.

Suddenly, a barely perceptible blood-red ray sparked like an electric arc, piercing right through the middle of the man's brows.

A red dot only appeared a moment later between the man's brows. Thin trickles of blood seeped out and dripped off his face into the bathhouse.

Only then did the two ladies notice something was wrong and cried out in alarm.

A brawny man was guarding the door outside the bathhouse. However, he did not notice anything unusual.

He ignored the ladies screaming and knocking on the door. He had seen far too many scenarios like this, and the best way of handling them was not to meddle in anything.

Despite having successfully killed the target of the mission, Lin Huang was not very happy.

Having killed the target at such a distance, he was unable to retrieve the God Territory within the target's body.

After spending less than twenty minutes to complete this second mission, Lin Huang did not stop at all. He checked out the third mission immediately...

He spent less than two days to complete all twenty missions.

After locating a Death Sickle branch to submit the missions, he obtained his mission rewards—forty-six fourth-rank and seven fifth-rank God Territory Shell Remnants.

Including the God Territories that he had extracted from the targets' bodies, he had accumulated almost 1.8 million Rule Bending Powers.

As soon as he submitted the twenty missions, Lin Huang accepted a further one hundred and fifty missions all at once, swiftly entering a second round of hunting.

This time, he merely spent eighteen days to complete all one hundred and fifty missions.

The mission rewards were four hundred and thirteen fourth-rank and thirty-four fifth-rank God Territory Shell Remnants.

Including the God Territories he had extracted from the targets' bodies, he had accumulated almost 15 million Rule Bending Powers.

Realizing that it was merely a few days away from his appointment with Virtuoso, Lin Huang did not accept any more missions. Instead, he set an alarm and began closed-door cultivation to refine the God Territory Shell Remnants that he had obtained.

When he was in closed-door cultivation, the Death Sickle upper echelons held another meeting.

All seven Blood Sickle members were present in the meeting room. Apart from that, there were a few top-tier Heavenly Gods in attendance, including Buried Heaven.

These dozen-over people had gathered mainly to discuss final matters before entering the Abyss.

When all of the agendas had been discussed and the meeting was coming to an end, a Blood Sickle member suddenly spoke up, "I noticed something interesting recently..."

"That little fellow named Xiu Mu's taken up over a hundred missions to hunt fourth-rank Heavenly Gods since being given Gold Sickle authorization. Not only that, he's completed all of them..."

"I've noticed his unusual movements too," another Blood Sickle member next to him commented while smiling, "Moreover, the strange thing is that all the missions he selected had God Territory Shell Remnants as rewards. I can't figure why this little guy is so persistent in strengthening his God Territory."

"A possibility is that his cultivation method has something to do with his God Territory," another Blood Sickle member could not help speaking up at this point.

The meeting room fell silent for a moment. Prying into the roots of a person's cultivation was a taboo in the cultivation world.

However, that particular Blood Sickle member's comment could not help but cause everyone to speculate on how this powerful Xiu Mu fellow cultivated exactly.

Noticing that the atmosphere was off, Buried Heaven spoke up to change the subject, "Xiu Mu has great potential. No matter which universe he's in, he'd be in the outstanding elite among Protoss! I have a feeling that in the future, he'll grow into a compelling man that I would definitely admire..."

## **Chapter 1532: The Team Gathers**

In a flash, several days had passed again.

Soon, the day of Lin Huang and Virtuoso's appointment arrived.

At 8.50 in the morning, Lin Huang arrived at the agreed location after breakfast—a cafe by the beach, located quite far from Shelter No. 3.

It was mid-June at the moment; in this region where the café was located, it was already the beginning of summer.

A glance showed swimsuit-clad men and ladies everywhere at the beach. Lin Huang, who was in a black robe, looked out of place among them. He even received judgmental glances directed at him every now and then.

Lin Huang ignored the stares from those people. He found himself a table in the alfresco area and took a seat. He then ordered a cup of coffee and waited patiently for Virtuoso to show up.

Very soon, his coffee was served by a young female attendant in a short serving maid outfit.

Lin Huang lifted the cup and took a sip. He could not help frowning slightly, putting down the cup.

He thought there were probably two words that could best describe this cup of coffee – utterly undrinkable.

It was not an exaggeration to say that this was the worst cup of coffee he had ever tasted since he traveled to this world.

He even had some suspicions as to how this café had survived until now.

‘Don’t tell me those pretty girls in maid attire are the only appeal?!’

At 9 a.m. sharp, none of the several team members that Virtuoso mentioned to him had arrived.

“Did that fellow blow me off?” Lin Huang raised his brows. However, after some careful consideration, he felt that he had nothing to lose since he had already obtained a Sword seal fragment.

After thinking about it, he figured he would send Virtuoso a message. “Where are you? We agreed to meet at 9, where’s everyone?!”

“We’re on the way. Wait for a few more minutes,” Virtuoso replied almost immediately.

Lin Huang could only continue to wait patiently. After all, he had accepted the deposit. There was no need for him to rage-quit just because they were a few minutes late.

What he thought strange was that not only was Virtuoso absent, but the rest had yet to arrive as well.

Right after he turned off his communication page, Lin Huang sensed a dimensional wave coming from not far away.

A black whirlpool opened up, and two figures walked out of it.

One of them was a burly, bald man who was over two meters tall. He had a face full of stubble and was clad in golden armor.

Meanwhile, the other figure was a thin, small lady in a blue robe, whose height did not even reach 1.4 meters. She looked a little like an adolescent girl.

Lin Huang had a rough idea of their identities.

The two newcomers noticed Lin Huang sitting outside the cafe as soon as they teleported in. They walked directly over to him.

“I suppose you’re Xiu Mu? I’m Tu Tong,” the burly man in golden armor extended his hand immediately.

Lin Huang stretched out his own hand as well and gave Tu Tong a handshake.

The lady in the blue robe seemed to be a little timid. Her gaze at Lin Huang was somewhat fugitive.

“This is Lan Ling.” Noticing what was going on, the man in golden armor immediately introduced his companion.

“Hello,” Lin Huang greeted with a smile.

“I heard that you’re a sword cultivator?” Tu Tong seemed to be rather interested in Lin Huang’s status as a sword cultivator.

“Yes, that’s right,” Lin Huang nodded in acknowledgment.

Although Xiu Mu's status in Death Sickle was only that of a psychic, Virtuoso had seen through him completely. Therefore, there was no need for him to hide his sword cultivator status in front of the duo.

"I'm a combat cultivator. Let's spar when we have the chance. Sparring with sword cultivators and saber cultivators is what I like best." Tu Tong looked eager to try this.

If not for the unsuitable time and location, he might just have sparred with Lin Huang right away.

In comparison with Tu Tong, Lan Ling, who had remained on the sidelines, was quiet throughout.

She had been listening to their conversation, but she did not show any signs of wishing to contribute at all.

As Lin Huang and Tu Tong were chatting, another dimensional wave suddenly came out of nowhere.

The three of them looked toward the source of the dimensional wave at almost the same time.

A figure in a green robe slowly walked out of the black whirlpool.

Lin Huang did not even need to think about it to know that the third team member had arrived.

This was because he sensed an overwhelming saber intent within the man's body. It was at least as powerful as his own sword intent—perhaps even more powerful.

"Sword cultivator?" The man in the green robe raised his eyes and looked at Lin Huang as soon as he stepped out of the whirlpool.

The next second, he took a stride forward and appeared before the three of them.

"Senior Saber." Tu Tong and Lan Ling stood up almost at the same time.

"Just call me Saber9, that will do." Only then did the man in the green robe shift his gaze from Lin Huang to look at the pair in front of him.

Clearly, the three of them knew each other.

Noticing this, Lin Huang stood up immediately and took the initiative to introduce himself, "This humble one is Xiu Mu."

"I know you—Virtuoso has mentioned you before." Saber9 nodded slightly.

He appeared to be in his early 30s but was the kind who looked young. If he were to say that he was 27 or 28, people would still believe him. However, his aura was coldly arrogant and extremely elegant.

"Isn't he here yet?" Saber9 glanced around and asked Tu Tong and Lan Ling.

"I don't think so..." Tu Tong answered immediately, but he secretly wondered, 'Why ask me when I wasn't the first one who arrived here?'

"I've messaged him already to prompt him," Lin Huang spoke up as well, "Why don't all of you order something to drink first? Not coffee though—this cafe's coffee tastes like crap."

The three ordered one after the other, then all four of them sat together at a table and waited patiently for Virtuoso.

When the drinks were served, the three of them merely took a sip, then put down their cups.

“Are they terrible too?” Lin Huang could not help asking when he noticed this.

“Just like you said, it tastes like crap,” Saber9 gave the same comment.

Beside him, Tu Tong and Lan Ling nodded immediately.

None of the three had ordered coffee; they had even ordered three different drinks.

The fact that the cafe had managed to make four different drinks that were equally terrible made Lin Huang feel a slight trace of dubious admiration.

He was even more doubtful now. ‘How in the world has this cafe survived?!’

The four of them waited until 9.15 a.m. but there was still no sign of Virtuoso.

Lin Huang did not mind, but Saber9 had on a long face the entire time. Tu Tong and Lan Ling stole glances at him every now and again; they were clearly anxious.

“Let me hurry him up one more time.” Seeing this, Lin Huang called Virtuoso again. They picked up almost immediately.

“Could you hurry up a little? The four of us have arrived; we’re all waiting for you.”

“Right away! Right away!” Virtuoso ended the call immediately after saying that.

Virtuoso said that they would be there right away, but the four of them still waited for over ten minutes more.

At 9:30 a.m., the white-robed Virtuoso finally arrived.

“My apologies, everyone. I’m late.” Although he said that, Virtuoso’s expression did not seem to indicate he was sorry.

“Of all the good qualities you could have learned, you had to pick up on your Primordium’s bad habit of being late,” Saber9 said, angrily.

“Ah Jiu, don’t be angry.” Lin Huang had goosebumps when he heard how Virtuoso addressed Saber9.

However, the odd thing was that Saber9 merely registered his protests with his eyes instead of verbally correcting the term of address.

“Ahh, Tutu, and Lanlan, it’s been a while!” Virtuoso greeted Tu Tong and Lan Ling in a sappy manner.

The pair looked helpless, but neither did they correct the endearments.

At that moment, Virtuoso looked at Lin Huang.

Before they could speak, Lin Huang spoke up first, “We’re not that close, don’t you dare do that to me.”

Only then did Virtuoso drop the matter rather sulkily.

**Chapter 1533: Going Into The Abyss**

As the five stepped out of the Dimensional Whirlpool, they soon arrived in an expanse of nothingness.

Lin Huang saw a gigantic black hole in the void before them, like a massive eyeball hovering in the air. He could not help but feel a trace of awe and admiration rising within him.

It was his first time seeing the real Abyss.

Prior to this, he had seen pictures and video documentations before and had even imagined a great deal. However, now that he had seen it in person, the sense of awe still remained.

What was strange was that he had the vague illusion that he seemed to be watching an endless, massive living creature, even though the black abyss ahead was merely the entrance to the Abyss proper.

“Do all of you have this feeling that the entrance looks like an eyeball staring at us?” Lin Huang could not help asking.

He faintly recalled something that he used to always hear—if you gaze long into the abyss, the abyss will also gaze into you.

“Everyone has that feeling when they see the Abyss for the first time. It’s just an illusion,” Saber9 explained calmly from where he was off to the side, “You won’t have this feeling when you come again.”

“Why does such an illusion happen?” Lin Huang felt he did not quite understand.

“No idea, it’s the same for everyone.” Before Saber9 could speak, Virtuoso answered the question directly, “There’s no need to dwell further on this matter.”

At that moment, the small, skinny Lan Ling raised her arm weakly, “I-I know...”

Lin Huang and the rest looked at her.

Only then did Lan Ling murmur softly, “I-I’ve seen related research papers.

“To put it simply, in reality, the Abyss comes with an extremely subtle mental suppression, which causes fear in one’s subconscious mind. Therefore, our subconscious mind views it as a great threat, resulting in such an illusion the first time we see the Abyss.

“As to why this illusion only happens the first time, the explanation in the study was that our subconscious minds become accustomed to the mental suppression from the Abyss after the first visit. As the fear has been removed from the subconscious mind, we no longer see it as a threat.”

Although Lan Ling’s explanation sounded reasonable, Lin Huang still felt he was not convinced.

At that moment, Tu Tong could no longer contain himself and finally joined in the discussion.

“I’ve seen an explanation on the internet which garnered many likes. The thread said that the Abyss is a gigantic living creature that’s in deep sleep mode. Each entrance is actually one of the creature’s eyes. These eyes subconsciously examine everyone who enters its body. Therefore, we have the feeling that we’re being stared at.



“As to why we only experience this feeling the first time we see the Abyss, it’s because this scrutiny comes with a memory function—it only targets strangers. If the person were entering the Abyss for the second or third time, they would pass this scrutiny by default.”

After listening to this, Lin Huang felt Tu Tong’s explanation was more convincing to him. Just when he was about to agree, he heard Virtuoso’s straightforward, mocking voice from the sidelines.

“Only you would believe this nonsense, Tutu.”

“This explanation has certainly gone viral on the internet, but it’s false.” Off to one side, Lan Ling nodded and explained, “The biggest galaxy discovered throughout the history of the universe is merely the size of three star zones. That’s the size limit of a life form.

“Meanwhile, the Abyss occupied at least one-fourth of the universe, and this is only the part that’s within the universe. Its complete form might even be bigger than the entire universe itself. Based on size alone, it can’t possibly be a life form. Even if it’s an existence above lord-level, it would be impossible for it to control such a gigantic body.

“Also, judging by its mass, there’s no life structure that could bear such a massive body physical body without collapsing. Even a combat cultivator powerhouse above lord-level in the archaic epoch couldn’t maintain a functioning body of such mass.”

Lin Huang fell silent. Although Lan Ling’s explanation made a lot of sense, he felt that Tu Tong’s explanation might be possible as well.

“Alright, time is precious. Let’s go in.” Virtuoso did not bother to waste more time on this topic and directly interrupted the discussion to put an end to it.

However, they did not seem to realize that they were the last person who had the right to say that time was precious.

If they had not wasted everybody’s time and met up with them half an hour late, they might have hunted for a few rounds in the Abyss already.

Virtuoso extended their hand to Lin Huang as soon as they were done speaking.

Lin Huang was startled for a moment but immediately responded. The conditions for entering the Abyss might involve randomly teleporting the individuals who entered.

Under such circumstances, all of them had to maintain bodily contact to be teleported as a unit, so that they would not be separated.

Once he considered this, Lin Huang extended his hand, grasping Virtuoso’s right hand.

He then stretched out his right hand to hold Saber9’s left hand on the other side.

“Don’t think of anything once we enter. Just keep flying ahead,” Virtuoso’s voice came through very soon.

They said this mainly for Lin Huang’s benefit since the rest had been to the Abyss before.

Hand-in-hand, the five of them headed together into the black abyss of the entrance.

Lin Huang could only feel that they were getting closer and closer to the black abyss. In front of him, everything was pitch-black. When they finally entered the darkness, they were unable to see anything at all.

However, he followed Virtuoso's reminder before, which was to follow his feelings and keep flying forward.

Lin Huang secretly calculated the time—almost over a minute later, they finally saw a ray of light appearing not far away.

The five of them flew towards the source of the light at once. As they got closer, the light became brighter as well.

Eventually, they exited the darkness completely.

Lin Huang cast his gaze over where they were. The sky was dark, and in front of them was an expanse of black earth. He had no way of determining his location.

Right as he was going to spread his Divine Telekinesis, he suddenly heard a voice transmission from Virtuoso.

"Hide your aura, don't release your Divine Telekinesis for now."

Although Lin Huang had no idea what happened, he heard the seriousness in Virtuoso's tone, so he did as they said.

At that moment, he finally became aware that the rest had somewhat unhappy expressions on their faces.

"What happened?" Lin Huang hastily enquired through voice transmission.

"The normal entry time of each Abyss entrance should be ten seconds," Saber9 replied calmly through voice transmission.

"Ten seconds?! But our entry this time took at least a minute, right?" Lin Huang could not help frowning. Although he had no idea what had caused this, he knew that something was definitely wrong.

"Perhaps someone did something while we were being teleported, or perhaps it's the after-effects of Lord powerhouses in combat. I personally hope it's the latter," Virtuoso explained very seriously, before adding, "If it's the former, there's a high possibility of the five of us dying here."

### **Chapter 1534: Demonic Bug Maze**

"So what do we do next?" Lin Huang asked immediately through voice transmission.

He was the only one going into the Abyss for the first time and had no experience at all handling something like this. It was best that he did not act rashly.

The others had been in the Abyss before. Even if they had never encountered such a thing, they should have at least heard of such a situation and perhaps had a way of dealing with it.

“Lan Ling, check out the situation nearby.” How Virtuoso addressed Lan Ling had changed; his attitude had clearly become serious now.

Lan Ling nodded slightly and rolled up her left sleeve, revealing a frail, skinny arm.

As her lips moved, her right hand swiftly formed a seal tactic. On her left arm, black incantations immediately appeared—they looked like they were formed from countless ants.

The complex, mysterious incantations seemed like tiny living snakes, writhing and slithering on her arm at incredible speed.

A moment later, she spread all five fingers and pressed her palm on the ground. The tiny snake-like incantations slid from her arm and squirmed underground at lightning speed.

After that, Lan Ling shut her eyes and sat down cross-legged.

This was Lin Huang’s first time seeing such a strange technique. However, he noticed something odd.

He did not sense any Divine Power waves from Lan Ling’s body at all throughout the whole process, nor did he sense any sort of waves on a psychic level.

He immediately realized what such a probing technique meant—it could not be sensed at all by ordinary measures.

Approximately two to three minutes later, sigils began to appear again on half of Lan Ling’s exposed arm. Only then did she slowly open her eyes.

She pulled her sleeve down to cover her arm once more and stood up.

“I didn’t sense any lord-level or more powerful auras within range...”

To Lin Huang, that sounded like good news. However, the adjacent Saber9 and Tu Tong did not relax their tense expressions at all.

Although he could not see the expression on Virtuoso’s face because of their mask, Lin Huang could sense from their aura that Virtuoso was still very much on their guard.

“However, we’ve certainly been sent to a slightly more problematic area...” Lan Ling paused before giving the name of their whereabouts, “A Demonic Bug Maze!”

Everyone had a slight change of expression upon hearing the name.

Lin Huang was no exception.

Although he had never been to the Abyss, he had spent some time doing some homework before coming, so he knew some basic things about it.

The Demonic Bug Maze was a special type of area in the Abyss.

This type of area was usually formed by massive gatherings of Demonic Bug Tribes.

The multitudes of Demonic Bug Tribes would gather into groups under the Bug Queen or Queen Mother’s command, forming a gigantic structure similar to a hive. They would then live in it.

This special structure would even come with some of the hive's characteristics; the structure itself, however, was even more complex.

A normal hive had tens of thousands of tunnels. In a Demonic Bug Maze of the same size, there would be even more tunnels that were more winding, mysterious and unfathomable.

If anyone was to intrude accidentally, there was a very high chance that they would be lost inside. This was because the Demonic Bug Maze would block most probing techniques, and one would not know which tunnel would lead to the exit. A wrong turn might make one lose their chance of escaping entirely.

Lin Huang raised a doubt in his mind as he recalled all of the information about Demonic Bug Mazes.

"Are you sure this is really a Demonic Bug Maze? Why can we still see the sky?"

"This is an illusion the Bewilderment Bug groups created," Virtuoso explained calmly, "Ignore this illusion. It relies on the hive walls to exist; it doesn't really affect us. Moreover, nobody below lord-level can dispel it."

Lin Huang only realized at this point that nothing was mentioned about this matter in the information that he had looked up.

"Did you sense any Bug Queens or Queen Mothers?" Saber9 asked.

"No," Lan Ling shook her head. "This Demonic Bug Maze has a very complex structure. I'm worried that there might be special sensing bug groups around, so I didn't dare to probe too far in.

"However, judging by the complexity of the bug group's' structure alone, the leader of this Maze might be a Lord or a half-step lord-level powerhouse."

Lin Huang knew Saber9's objective in asking this question—he wanted to determine if the leader of the Maze was a Queen Mother or a Bug Queen.

If it was just a Bug Queen, it could not sense whether its underlings were dead or alive.

However, if it was a Queen Mother, it could sense the state of all its offspring's life cycles. This would mean that it would be even more difficult if they wanted to get out of the Maze.

"Although we can't be sure if the leader is a Queen Mother or not, it's best to be a bit more careful." Although Virtuoso sounded calm, the rest could hear the caution in their tone.

The few times that Lin Huang had come into contact with Virtuoso, he had never felt that Virtuoso did anything cautiously. Now, hearing Virtuoso say they had to be careful, he was even a little suspicious about whether or not the Virtuoso in front of him had been replaced by someone else.

"Do you have a solution?" Lin Huang had no clue at all.

To him, finding the exit of the Demonic Bug Maze was a great challenge.

There were just too many tunnels; they could not be sure which was the right one.

Not only that, the biggest problem was that these Bug Tribes were contaminated by Abyssal energy and possessed clouded minds. There was no way of reading any information from them.

Virtuoso glanced at Lin Huang but did not even nod. "Let's try first. We might not succeed though."

Including Lin Huang, none of the others objected to this.

After all, nobody had a better solution for now; they could only try out Virtuoso's idea.

Subsequently, Virtuoso began to explain their solution through voice transmission.

In reality, their plan was simple and very rough. It was to have everyone hide within a demonic bug's body and let Lan Ling use spells to control the bug's movement.

This way, they could avoid fighting with other Bug Tribes in the Maze as much as possible, to avoid causing this Bug Tribe to be wiped out.

This could also prevent the Bug Tribe Queen Mother from sensing their presence.

Although they were not sure whether or not the Demonic Bug Maze's leader was a Queen Mother, it was best to plan with the worst-case scenario in mind.

Although Virtuoso's plan was simple and rough to the point of being crude, everyone agreed to the plan as soon as they were done explaining it.

After all, this solution had a certain feasibility. Moreover, they could not think of anything better.

Once the plan was set, they began discussing the details in short order.

With all five of them brainstorming, the details were soon hammered out.

Almost immediately, Lan Ling formed an incantation seal with both hands. Around her, the incantation sigils slithered like snakes and disappeared underground.

Very soon, a huge, decaying bug beast crawled over quickly and prostrated itself before them.

Lin Huang and the rest frowned slightly. This was an entirely physiological reaction—the stench coming from the decaying bug beast was comparable to a biochemical weapon.

No, to be precise, it was a biochemical weapon.

In reality, there were all sorts of toxins and Abyssal energy particles hidden within the terrible stench.

Lin Huang and the rest were True Gods, and the Divine Fire in their bodies came with a cleansing function. Therefore, they were not affected by the noxious fumes.

However, cultivators below true god-level and even Virtual Gods might be infected by the toxins and Abyssal energy particles in the terrible stench.

Seeing that the rest made no move, Lin Huang leaped onto the huge, decaying bug beast's back. With the tip of his sword, he cut an opening close to its abdomen. He then enveloped his entire body with Telekinesis and wriggled in directly.

Virtuoso and the others did not stand on ceremony after that. They hopped onto the bug's back and crawled in one after the other, concealing their auras...

### **Chapter 1535: Scarlet Centipede**

Under Lan Ling's control, the giant decaying beetle headed toward the winding tunnels.

The five of them hid in the beetle's back. They hid their auras and stopped breathing as well as they patiently waited.

No matter what, there were only two possibilities in the end.

They would either be discovered, or they would pass through successfully.

The giant beetle they were hiding in was called a Tank Beetle in the Bug Tribe. These beetles were usually beginner-stage to intermediate-stage heavenly god-level. They were a type of bug with powerful defenses and incredible biting ability.

They were usually the vanguards of the Bug Tribe, the defensive formation that would attack the enemy.

Meanwhile, the one they were hiding in had clearly been contaminated with Abyssal energy to the point where it had become an undying species.

Its body was in advanced stages of decay, and an intense rotten stench wafted out from it. Even the odor particles it exuded contained definite concentrations of Abyssal energy.

However, it was the perfect cover for Lin Huang and the others who were hiding inside its body.

The Tank Beetle took the group through several intersections; everything went very smoothly. Even several demonic bugs contaminated with Abyssal energy that they encountered along the way did not sense anything out of the ordinary.

However, Lin Huang and the rest could do nothing apart from shielding their aura.

They began chatting through voice transmission from sheer boredom.

"The plan is going pretty well so far. Have you all done any rough calculations on our chances of being able to successfully make it out of here?" Lin Huang could not help asking Virtuoso, who had come up with the idea.

"Theoretically..." Virtuoso paused and turned their head to look at Lin Huang, "The success rate is close to zero."

"???" Lin Huang looked utterly bewildered. He had not expected Virtuoso to give such an answer.

However, the rest did not seem to be surprised at this reply.

"We're not even entirely sure if the Tank Beetle is going in the correct direction," Lan Ling delivered another piece of bad news.

"Didn't you investigate the nearby distribution of the bugs earlier?" Lin Huang was even more puzzled now, "I think it shouldn't be too hard to ascertain the general direction according to the rules of the bug distribution in the Demonic Bug Maze, right?"

Although the internal passages in the Demonic Bug Maze were complex, the distribution of bug beasts in the Maze followed the habitat rule of the Bug Tribe in the hive—the higher the level and combat strength of the bugs, the deeper their habitat would be in the Demonic Bug Maze.

Conversely, the lower their combat strength, the closer the bugs' habitat would be to the maze's exit.

Many people actually knew about this rule. However, as most probing techniques were restricted in the Demonic Bug Maze, not many were able to discover the distribution of the bugs.

Meanwhile, Lan Ling had used a spell to probe as soon as they were teleported here and had found out the distribution of monsters nearby.

This was also why Lin Huang was doubtful when Lan Ling said she was not sure of the general direction.

Lan Ling knew why Lin Huang was doubtful, so she explained immediately, "This Demonic Bug Maze is massive, and the interior is extremely vast. The distance between bugs is also very wide. My spell probe is a probing technique for short to medium distances. Moreover, as it's affected by the Maze, the probing range becomes very limited.

"The probe I did earlier was only able to obtain information from five distributions. Although there is a mix of combat strength levels, I can't be entirely sure that the two tribes with low combat strength are in the direction of the exit.

"Theoretically, the distribution of bugs follows the rule that the lower their combat strength, the closer they are to the exit. However, in reality, there's a definite complexity to the bugs' distribution in this Maze. The bugs are very close in terms of ability, so they might be in the same region.

"For instance, we're currently going toward the Scarlet Centipedes. Although their average combat strength is merely third-rank heavenly god-level, they might be in the fourth-rank heavenly god-level bugs' region, or even close to the fifth-rank heavenly god-level bugs' region.

"We're only judging based on partial distribution now. Scarlet Centipedes have rather low combat strength on average, so it's possible that they're closer to the exit. However, if we're looking at this from the standpoint of the entire bug distribution, we might be going deeper into the maze."

Lin Huang only understood what Lan Ling meant now. The bugs were not neatly distributed in the Demonic Bug Maze. It was just that as a whole, the habitat of the lower combat strength bugs would be closer to the exit. However, if they were looking at only a partial distribution, bugs that were close in combat strength would be mixed in the same region.

Therefore, they could not determine the actual direction just by looking at the bugs' combat strength in a partial distribution.

Lin Huang also immediately understood why Virtuoso said the success rate for this escape plan might be near-zero.

This was because they might go through a lot of trial and error.

Given that the partial distribution of bugs according to combat strength might not be the same as the overall Bug Tribe combat strength, Lan Ling would have probe all over again every time they got to a certain distance.

If the probing result came out the same after many tries, it would prove that the Tank Beetle was going in the correct direction.

If the result was different, they might need to use another tunnel to go in another direction, until the result of multiple probes came out the same.

It was a process of constant trial and error.

However, the longer they stayed in the Demonic Bug Maze, the higher the chances of them being discovered.

“Fortunately, we’re currently in the Demonic Bug Maze’s outer region. Moreover, our situation is much better than those who have their probing techniques completely prohibited,” Tu Tong, who was off to one side, could not help commenting.

However, nobody knew whether he said this to console himself or to console others.

“Better my a\*s, who comes into the Demonic Bug Maze to play around just because they’re bored?” Virtuoso ridiculed, not standing on ceremony. Clearly, they were pissed to have been teleported into the Demonic Bug Maze for no reason, “They’d better not let me find out who’s been pulling a fast one on us!”

“They better not let me find out who’s been pulling tricks!” The adjacent Saber9 also had a flash of killing intent in his eyes.

Both their Primordiums were big shots in the Club—big shots who might even have surpassed Lords.

If their clones died, they might really go into battle to avenge themselves.

Lan Ling and Tu Tong fell as silent as the grave when they heard that and did not dare say anything more.

Lin Huang, on the other hand, had no idea how powerful Virtuoso and Saber 9’s Primordiums were, so he did not really feel anything.

The Tank Beetle continued advancing, under Lan Ling’s control. After some twenty minutes, they finally arrived at the first destination of the plan – the gathering grounds of the Scarlet Centipedes.

The Scarlet Centipedes were not Bug Tribe beasts contaminated by Abyssal energy, but demons that were born in the Abyss.

These monsters bore some resemblance to bugs with many legs, like giant centipedes. Their bodies measured between eight to twelve meters and were wreathed in toxic red mist.

From birth, they had innate mastery of the Toxic Sequence of such poisons. A handful of gifted ones could even derive other sequence powers and Rule Bending Powers.

This was the first bug territory in the route Lan Ling had planned. They had to pass through this area anyway; there was no way of avoiding it or circumventing it.

She could only carefully control the Tank Beetle to get nearer to the Scarlet Centipedes’ territory.



When they arrived close to the Scarlet Centipedes' territory, a few Centipedes soon surrounded them.

Lan Ling controlled the Tank Beetle to stop.

This was a routine check.

The several giant Centipedes lifted their massive, ugly heads and clustered around the Tank Beetle, sniffing. It was as if they did not register the rotten stench coming from it; instead, it looked as though they enjoyed it.

After circling the Tank Beetle a few times and sniffing at it, the several Scarlet Centipedes retreated.

Just when Lan Ling was about to control the Tank Beetle to leave, a Scarlet Centipede that was much bigger than the previous few barred the Tank Beetle's way.

Not only was it much bigger, but it also had three heads.

The scarlet eyes on its three heads were staring at the Tank Beetle. A viscous purple liquid was flowing out of its three large mouths...

It did not discover anything unusual and merely thought the Tank Beetle was rather delicious.

Lin Huang and the rest were anxious; they were even ready to fight.

However, right at that point, a strange low hum sounded.

The three-headed Scarlet Centipede turned its head and glanced at the Scarlet Centipedes' territory. It only hesitated for a moment, before retreating into the shadows...

Lan Ling hurriedly controlled the Tank Beetle to leave.

What Lin Huang and the rest did now know was that in the Scarlet Centipedes' territory, a pitch-black centipede raised its head and glanced at the layers of hive walls, looking in the direction of where the Tank Beetle had departed...

### **Chapter 1536: Discovered!**

"That was so close!"

Everyone was relieved when they left the Scarlet Centipedes' gathering grounds. Tu Tong was the first to speak, unable to hold back.

"I've just found out that Scarlet Centipedes can grow three heads..." Lin Huang cared more about the Scarlet Centipede's form.

Although they could not use Divine Telekinesis to probe what was happening outside, Lin Huang and the others could still see everything out there clearly, thanks to Lan Ling's spell projection.

"The chances of mutated indigenous monsters in the Abyss are much higher than in other places. Some that look like distorted mutations to the outside world are actually a way for them to elevate. Just like that three-headed monster earlier—its level might be class-5.5, which has far surpassed its own tribe," Virtuoso, who was next to them, explained calmly.

Not only Lin Huang, but even Tu Tong and Lan Ling fell silent at that. Clearly, it was their first time hearing about such a unique method of elevation.

“The three-headed Centipede doesn’t seem like the bugs’ leader though,” Lin Huang commented after that, “The one that released the low hum and stopped it from attacking us might be the real leader.”

“But I didn’t sense any more auras more powerful than the three-headed Centipede among the Scarlet Centipedes earlier.” Lan Ling, on the other hand, shook her head to voice her doubt.

“That was probably a Mother Bug. It might even be that three-headed Centipede’s mother.” It was Saber9 who explained this time.

The Mother Bug that he mentioned was not merely a female bug but also one that possessed reproductive ability. Mother Bugs had a high status in the Bug Tribe; they might even be the leaders of the entire Bug Tribe. Mother Bugs becoming leaders of the Bug Tribe had nothing to do with their abilities. Usually, this was determined by the number of offspring that had surpassed a specific ratio. (The Queen Mother was a special kind of Mother Bug. Among Mother Bugs, only those with reproductive abilities that had exceeded normal limits would be named Queen Mothers.)

“That Mother Bug is very wise. It’s probably fairly high-level...” Virtuoso smiled and noted.

Although they did not say it outright, Lin Huang and the rest caught the hidden meaning behind their words.

“Do you mean we’ve been discovered?!” Lin Huang asked immediately.

“There’s an eighty percent chance we’ve most probably been discovered.” Virtuoso nodded calmly.

Lin Huang was rather confused, as he had not noticed anything odd.

Tu Tong and Lan Ling had not noticed anything out of the ordinary either.

Noticing their confusion on their faces, Virtuoso then explained calmly, “The bugs don’t live in harmony with each other in Demonic Bug Mazes. Conflicts are common, and it’s something very normal for a single bug beast to be eaten by other bugs. That’s also the reason why we were stopped by the three-headed Scarlet Centipede.

“In reality, the three-headed Centipede was famished, and had already locked onto the Tank Beetle we’re in as its prey. Under normal circumstances, the Mother Bug wouldn’t stop it from hunting and eating since it was hungry. That’s because hunting a single Tank Beetle is nothing.

“However, it was strange that the Mother Bug was so eager to stop it from attacking us...

“The only reasonable explanation is that it discovered us hiding in the Tank Beetle’s body. It was even shrewd enough to speculate that its bugs would lose as soon as a fight broke out... To prevent the bugs from being hurt, the only choice it had was to release the Tank Beetle to avoid conflict with us.”

Lin Huang and the rest felt that Virtuoso’s speculation made sense after listening to their explanation.

“If it’s really as you say, then I suspect we’ve already been discovered by now.” Lin Huang rapidly became aware of another issue. “That Mother Bug must have already spread the news about us.”

Clearly, Virtuoso and the rest had realized this too. After a moment of silence, Virtuoso turned their head to look at Lan Ling, “Wait for a little and find an opportunity—we’ll change to another puppet.”

Lan Ling nodded immediately.

Approximately less than three minutes later, she found a second puppet—a Boa Worm.

The Boa Worm was a bug monster that looked like a massive boa constrictor but bore a slight resemblance to an earthworm as well. Its body was usually more than twenty meters long, and its forte was soil elemental truth.

If not for Lan Ling’s ability with spells, it would have been very difficult for even an ordinary Heavenly God to capture a Boa Worm, as they were extremely proficient in soil escape methods.

When they saw the Boa Worm appearing under Lan Ling’s control, Lin Huang and the rest abandoned the Tank Beetle. After killing it, they climbed into the Boa Worm’s body.

The Boa Worm might have been an expert in soil escape methods, but in reality, to Lin Huang and the rest, it was even more suitable as a means of transport.

There were many restrictions in the Demonic Bug Maze, as well as many places that the Boa Worm could not pass through with its escape method.

However, under Lan Ling’s control, the Boa Worm moved forward at least ten times faster than the Tank Beetle from before.

Meanwhile, within five minutes of their departure, a Bug Tribe team hastened to where the Tank Beetle’s carcass was.

“They must have hidden in the Tank Beetle’s back previously...” After some investigation, a few bugs soon noticed the sliced opening on the Tank Beetle’s back.

“They’ve already escaped. They must be hiding in another bug beast now.”

“The trail seems to be left by a Boa Worm...”

“It might just have been passing through.”

“Whether it’s a coincidence or not, we must strictly monitor all Boa Worm movements!”

Lin Huang and the others remained hiding in the Boa Worm, and progress was smooth.

Very soon, Lan Ling determined that the general direction they started in was the correct one.

They could not help but be relieved.

This was because they would have to backtrack if the direction was wrong. There might even be a great deal of trial and error involved to determine where the general direction of the exit was.

“Since we’re in the correct general direction, the next thing that we need to do is to look for the passageway that leads to the exit,” Virtuoso said calmly.

However, Lin Huang did not forget to remind them, “We still need to escape the bugs’ pursuit as well!”

They knew that by now, the news of them invading the Demonic Bug Maze would have already been broadcast everywhere.

Almost all the bugs from the shallower areas of the entire Maze had left their lairs in search of the five of them.

If the Bug Tribe's probing techniques had not also been affected by the Demonic Bug Maze, the group might have been discovered way early on.

"We'll fight our way out if we really can't escape them!" Saber9's tone was grim. He was obviously not joking, judging by the expression on his face—he genuinely had every intention of doing it.

"That has to be the last resort," Lin Huang disagreed, "If we can, we should avoid battle as much as possible. After all, this is the Demonic Bugs' lair. No matter how powerful our individual abilities are, we're not Lords after all. We can't hold off the entire Maze; it's only a matter of time before we exhaust ourselves and die."

Saber9 shot a glance at Lin Huang and said nothing more.

Lan Ling remained silent from beginning to end. Given that she was the one using spells to control the Boa Worm, she was the one who faced the most pressure out of everyone there. She did not have extra energy to participate in the discussion...

### **Chapter 1537: That's A Secret**

Lan Ling controlled the Boa Worm as they sneaked around, quietly slipping through a few of the bugs' gathering places.

"We're looking at first-rank heavenly god-level bug territory now. We should be close to the exit." When Virtuoso finished speaking, they looked at Lan Ling. "You still haven't found the tunnel that leads to the exit?"

"No..." Lan Ling shook her head helplessly.

A major difference between the Demonic Bug Maze and the Bug Tribe's hive was that the combat strength disparity between bugs in the hive could be very big. Among the hives that had a heavenly god-level Queen Mother or Bug Queen as ruler, it was extremely normal to have Heavenly Gods, True Gods, and even virtual god-level Bug Tribe fighters in the hive together. However, it was different in a Demonic Bug Maze. In a Maze that was ruled by a Heavenly God, there would only be heavenly god-level bug beasts. If bug beasts below heavenly god-level came in, they would be treated as food and eaten.

Therefore, the first-rank heavenly god-level bug territory in the Demonic Bug Maze—where Lin Huang and the rest were now—housed the bugs with the lowest combat strength. Their gathering place was the shallowest layer in the entire Maze, and closest to the region where the Maze's exit was.

Generally, there was more than one exit and entrance in a Demonic Bug Maze. However, there would not be many of them.

Judging from the scale of the Demonic Bug Maze that they were currently in, there should be four to six entrances and exits.

However, it meant that there would only be four to six passageways that led to the exits. Locating those few specific passageways among the tens of thousands of other complex passages was an astronomically difficult undertaking.

“The range of my probing ability is approximately thirty kilometers at most in this Maze. Furthermore, with the direction we’re traveling in, it’s still at least several thousand kilometers to the border region where the exit is—possibly even up to ten thousand kilometers... If we’re unlucky, I might need to probe up to a hundred times before I find the exit.” Lan Ling did not have any better ideas either. She could only look for the exit the hard way, probing repeatedly.

The rest were helpless too. After all, everyone’s probing techniques had been blocked. Lan Ling’s rather unusual spell ability was the only probing technique that could be used here.

Lin Huang pondered for a moment, then spoke up suddenly, “The efficiency of this method is too low.”

“You have a plan?” Virtuoso asked immediately. The rest looked at Lin Huang as well.

“I’m not sure how feasible it is, but we can try.” Lin Huang nodded, then said to Lan Ling, “Don’t go around the bugs when you encounter them later. Stop for a little bit.”

“Sure!” Lan Ling heaved a sigh of relief upon seeing someone taking the initiative to share her burden. She nodded immediately in agreement.

Very soon, she controlled the Boa Worm to slow down.

“There are a group of bugs approximately three kilometers ahead.”

Lin Huang nodded and eased himself half out of the Boa Worm’s back. As he moved his ten fingers slightly, tens of thousands of invisible Leech Pods wafted forth.

As the master of Monster Paradise, he could borrow Bloody’s Leech Pods ability with ease.

Leech Pods could be cast on all creatures with combat strength that was either the same as or lower than Bloody. Furthermore, she had gone into closed-door cultivation together with Kylie previously. Not only had she elevated to fifth-rank, but she had also achieved a breakthrough to first-rank heavenly god-level.

The Leech Pod ability was perfect for use in the current situation.

Lin Huang wriggled back into the Boa Worm’s body as soon as he was done releasing the Leech Pods.

Although Lan Ling’s projection allowed the others to see what he had done, they were not able to see the Leech Pods.

“What did you do?” Tu Tong was the first to ask as soon as Lin Huang returned, unable to restrain himself.

They did not use their sensing techniques, so it was only natural that they could not sense the Leech Pods.

“Just a little trick.” Lin Huang smiled but did not elaborate. “We’ll find out when we check out the bugs’ gathering place.”

“Are you sure you want us to barge in directly?” Virtuoso spoke before Lan Ling could ask any questions.

“Don’t all of you want to know what I did?” Lin Huang replied to Virtuoso, smiling.

Lan Ling, on the other hand, seemed to be hesitating a little. She was not sure if she should listen to Lin Huang.

Off to the side, Virtuoso fell silent for a moment, then nodded at Lan Ling. “Let’s go take a look.”

Lan Ling’s worries eased only after getting Virtuoso’s confirmation. She then controlled the Boa Worm and headed to the bugs’ gathering area.

A moment later, the Boa Worm arrived where the bugs were.

This was a group of Bladefoot Worms, approximately two thousand of them. Their bodies were purplish-black from being contaminated by Abyssal energy and were wreathed in black miasma. A number of them had mutated, sprouting even more strangely-shaped bladed feet on their bodies... They looked even more frightening than normal Bladefoot Worms.

However, what puzzled Virtuoso and the rest was that the Bladefoot Worms in front of them had tidily ordered themselves into a square formation.

Not only that, they did nothing when they saw the Boa Worm. They remained where they were neatly, seemingly waiting to be inspected.

“What is this...” Even Lan Ling thought this was rather unbelievable.

“I’ve never heard of an Imperial Censor who can control bugs, let alone control bugs from a distance.” Virtuoso glanced at Lin Huang. They were clearly somewhat surprised.

“I merely used a little trick,” Lin Huang said, smiling.

“If you’ve got such a trick up your sleeve, when didn’t you use it earlier?” Tu Tong asked from off to the side. He was not skeptical; instead, he was shocked.

“At the moment, I can only control first-rank heavenly god-level bugs at most. I can’t control those with higher combat strength,” Lin Huang explained rather helplessly. Naturally, he did not tell them that the reason for this was that Bloody—whom he had borrowed the ability from—only had the combat strength of a first-rank Heavenly God.

“To be able to control a group of first-rank Heavenly Gods while at true god-level—this trick of yours is already quite incredible,” Saber9, who had been quiet all along, gave his assessment apropos.

“What do you plan to do? Use these Bladefoot Worms to find the path for us?” Virtuoso asked.

“No, I’ll command a few of them to leave this Demonic Bug Maze from the closest exit,” Lin Huang answered unexpectedly. “We just need to follow them secretly.”

The others understood Lin Huang’s intentions immediately.

There was no way of retrieving information from the Bug Tribe beasts' minds, as they were contaminated with Abyssal energy. However, the beasts definitely knew where the Demonic Bug Maze's exits were.

Although Lin Huang's command was simple, he could very efficiently turn the Bladefoot Worms into their guides.

"That's a great idea!" When Virtuoso and the others heard that, their eyes lit up.

At that moment, six Bladefoot Worms emerged from the multitude. They formed a small group and left quickly in a specific direction.

Meanwhile, the rest of the Bladefoot Worms that were in formation soon resumed their usual relaxed mode.

"Follow them!" Lin Huang said to Lan Ling immediately.

Lan Ling hurriedly controlled the Boa Worm to follow behind the group of Bladefoot Worms.

"You've even specifically put together a search team. What a smart trick!" Virtuoso gave Lin Huang a thumbs-up. "Nobody would suspect them even if they ran into other search teams."

"Details determine whether a plan succeeds or fails," Lin Huang said expressionlessly.

"I have a question. Can you control more Bug Tribe monsters with this ability?" Lan Ling could not help asking.

"Yes."

"Then how many can you control at the most?" Lan Ling questioned further.

Lin Huang turned his head to glance at her, giving her a slight smile. "That's a secret."

"..." Not just Lan Ling, but the rest were also bereft of speech.

### **Chapter 1538: Mixed Team**

Lan Ling controlled the Boa Worm, surreptitiously following along behind the group of Bladefoot Worms. The Bladefoot Worms encountered a few search teams on the way, but nobody suspected them.

Lin Huang and the others progressed very smoothly on their journey in this manner.

Over an hour later, Lan Ling finally spoke up in excitement.

"I see the exit!"

However, her expression changed right after that moment of enthusiasm.

"What's wrong?" Lin Huang and the rest immediately noticed her unusual reaction.

“There are Bug Tribe monsters guarding the exit...” Lan Long announced the result of her spell probe. “I’m not sure of their exact combat strength, but their aura is very powerful.”

Virtuoso and the rest looked rather grim, although they had expected something like this already.

“I’ll get the Bladefoot Worms to check. We’ll discuss more after we’ve confirmed their exact combat strength,” Lin Huang suggested.

Virtuoso and the rest nodded immediately, agreeing to Lin Huang’s suggestion.

Lan Ling controlled the Boa Worm to burrow into the ground and wait, while Lin Huang controlled the group of Bladefoot Worms to hurry toward the exit.

Very soon, the group of six Bladefoot Worms arrived near the exit.

Through the Bladefoot Worms’ eyes, Lin Huang saw that there was a Black Blind Bug blocking the way out.

The Black Blind Bug was a bug monster that possessed no visual organs. However, their hearing was extremely developed. Not only that, they possessed sensing ability that was similar to a bat’s echolocation.

The Black Blind Bug ahead was contaminated by Abyssal energy and was even bigger than usual. It was over five meters tall, while each of its sixteen bayonet-like feet was close to five meters long. Its feet were even more sharp and terrifying than those of the six Bladefoot Worms.

When the team of Bladefoot Worms appeared, the Black Blind Bug merely turned its head to look at them, and its ultrasonic waves had already swept over the Bladefoot Worms’ bodies. Realizing that they were its own kind, it turned its head away and ignored them after that.

Lin Huang controlled the group of Bladefoot Worms to leave the exit.

“How was it?” Virtuoso asked immediately, noticing that Lin Huang had opened his eyes.

“Not good.” Lin Huang shook his head slightly. “There’s a Black Blind Bug guarding the exit, and it has ninth-rank heavenly god-level combat strength.”

Virtuoso and the rest immediately looked even grimmer after hearing what Lin Huang said.

“Ninth-rank...” Tu Tong and Lan Ling frowned hard.

“My guess is that the guardians at the other exits are all ninth-rank as well. Even if they’re not, their abilities probably won’t go below ninth-rank,” Lin Huang voiced his speculations.

“A Black Blind Bug—are you confident?” At that moment, Saber9 asked Virtuoso something that was neither here nor there.

“No.” Virtuoso shook their head. “That’s a ninth-rank powerhouse, after all. Not only that, types like this with extraordinary sensing ability will be much more powerful in sensing other things too. It might even be close to the level of a half-step lord, which will make it very hard to deceive.”



After listening to the conversation up to this point, Lin Huang had roughly figured out that the two were discussing whether or not they could depend on Virtuoso's ability to cast illusions so they could deceive the Black Blind Bug. However, Virtuoso had answered in the negative.

"Let's find the next exit," Saber9 told Lin Huang, not dwelling on the matter after hearing Virtuoso's answer.

Lin Huang nodded and immediately ordered the Bladefoot Worms to get to the next closest exit.

With an exit that was so near yet inaccessible, Lin Huang and the others were in very low spirits. They could not force their way through by facing down the powerful Black Blind Bug guarding the way out, so they had no choice but to take a roundabout route instead.

Although there might be Bug Tribe powerhouses of the same combat strength guarding the other exits, they still might stand a chance of escaping. Even if said powerhouse was slightly weaker, the chances of them escaping would increase significantly.

The group of Bladefoot Worms started moving after receiving Lin Huang's new order. Meanwhile, Lan Ling controlled the Boa Worm to sneak behind them.

Along the way, Lin Huang and the rest could clearly see that there were more and more bug teams joining the search.

The group of Bladefoot Worms encountered a search team every few minutes. Fortunately, none of the teams noticed anything unusual about the Bladefoot Worms.

Lin Huang and the others stealthily followed behind the team of Bladefoot Worms for half a day, just like that, without being discovered. That is, until the Bladefoot Worms encountered a mixed team made up of members from various Bug Tribes.

On average, this mixed team was intermediate-level in terms of combat. There was a Devilish Sonic Bug that was expert in probing, two Iron Blood Bugs that were experts in combat, a King Kong Beetle with powerful defenses, and two Wretch Spiders with controlling techniques.

The mixed team did not have any major reactions when first encountering the group of Bladefoot Worms.

However, after the Bladefoot Worms passed them by, the Devilish Sonic Bug suddenly stopped walking.

Lin Huang and the rest did not expect to encounter such a team out of nowhere.

To prevent anything unforeseen from happening if they were too far apart in distance, Lan Ling controlled the Boa Worm to follow behind the team of Bladefoot Worms closely.

Therefore, when the Bladefoot Worms team saw the mixed team, the Boa Worm was less than 30 meters away from the mixed team.

Although Lan Ling managed to control the Boa Worm to stop in time, Lin Huang and the rest felt rather uneasy.

This was because apart from sonic wave attacks, the Devilish Sonic Bug was a bug beast that possessed probing abilities. It could hear the tiniest sound in its surroundings, including breathing and heartbeats.

When they saw the Devilish Sonic Bug suddenly stop not far above their heads after the mixed team had passed by the group of Bladefoot Worms, Lin Huang and the others had a moment of sudden tension.

The Devilish Sonic Bug raised its head high and stared fixedly at the location where the Boa Worm was hiding. It seemed to be ready to give an alarm.

At that moment, the group of Bladefoot Worms suddenly released a low, warning hum.

The Devilish Sonic Bug and the rest of the bug beasts from the mixed team all turned their heads to look at the group of Bladefoot Worms behind them.

Suddenly, six consecutive blood-red electric arcs appeared out of thin air, charging at the six bug beasts in the mixed team.

By the time the six bug beasts noticed something wrong, it was too late. The six electric arcs pierced through all six of their heads with unparalleled accuracy. It took less than half a minute for all the kills.

Saber9 and the rest stared at Lin Huang with the most extraordinary gazes when they saw him recalling the telekinetic flying daggers.

“Sixth-rank Heavenly Gods killed almost instantly...” Lan Ling’s eyes widened.

“And there were two Sixth-rank Heavenly Gods,” the adjacent Tu Tong added.

Saber9 was not interested in that particular point. He exclaimed, “You’re a psychic as well?!”

Virtuoso was the only one who did not seem to be shocked by Lin Huang’s abilities.

Lin Huang did not respond to the others’ exclamations. Instead, he said to Lan Ling calmly, “Get the Boa Worm to bury the carcasses, or the other search teams will discover them very soon.”

Lan Ling nodded immediately and controlled the Boa Worm to bury the six bug carcasses underground, then cleaned up all the traces of blood.

After taking care of the scene of the incident as fast as they could, they did not linger there.

Lin Huang proceeded to control the Bladefoot Worms to look for the exit, while Lan Ling controlled the Boa Worm to follow behind the group of Bladefoot Worms. However, she was smarter this time and extended the distance between them a bit more. Previously, it had been twenty meters, but now she stretched it out to fifty meters. Not only that, she got the Boa Worm to burrow deeper underground.

### **Chapter 1539: Wasted Effort**

After half a day, the group of Bladefoot Worms finally led the Boa Worm near the second exit.

Through the Bladefoot Worms, Lin Huang had already caught sight of this exit’s guardian from far off.

The bug beast guarding the exit this time was a Ghoul Spider. Its combat strength was also ninth-rank heavenly god-level.

A Ghoul Spider was a brutal bug beast that specialized in assassination.

Not only did it possess invisibility and control-type powers, but its body also contained toxins, and it was extraordinarily swift in its attacks.

Ghoul Spiders that were not contaminated with Abyssal energy were already hard to deal with.

The one that was guarding the exit had an even more terrifying aura, and its character was even more twisted.

The moment the group of Bladefoot Worms appeared in front of it, the Ghoul Spider spat out spider silk to control the six Bladefoot Worms.

Lin Huang thought his parasite technique had been discovered, so he dispersed the Leech Pods. However, after that, he saw the Ghoul Spider manipulating the Bladefoot Worms to walk over to it. It then bit off half of one of the Bladefoot Worm's bodies.

Within two minutes, the Ghoul Spider had devoured all the Bladefoot Worms completely.

Right after that, it faded from view and disappeared.

Virtuoso and the rest noticed that Lin Huang was silent and did not press him. Instead, they patiently waited for his probing results.

Lin Huang heaved a sigh of relief only after confirming that the Leech Pods had not been discovered. He then told the rest what he had seen.

"The exit guardian is a ninth-rank Ghoul Spider. I'm not sure if it was being cautious or it just happened to be hungry—it attacked my group of Bladefoot Worms and ate all six of them..."

"It wasn't being cautious, nor was it hungry," Virtuoso explained from where he was off to the side, "Ghoul Spiders are inherently brutal. They will attack any creatures that enter their territory. The Ghoul Spiders that have been contaminated with Abyssal energy are even more ruthless. It's very normal behavior for them."

"So what do we do now? Do we go to the next exit?" Lan Ling had already manipulated the Boa Worm to stop.

"This exit is also guarded by a ninth-rank bug beast, so we can basically confirm that our previous speculation is correct. The remaining exits should be guarded by ninth-rank bug beasts as well," Virtuoso said calmly, "The next exit will be the same as this."

"Are we going to charge through?" Tu Tong had entered battle mode as he spoke.

"There's no rush; let's try this first," Virtuoso swiftly performed a few hand seals with both hands as soon as he was done speaking.

The next instant, a figure that looked exactly like Virtuoso detached itself from their body. It seemed to ignore the existence of the Boa Worm and the hive walls, gradually emerging from the ground and appearing in the Maze passageway.

Virtuoso No. 2 charged quickly as soon as it found steady footing in the passageway. Their figure abruptly sprang forward, running straight at the Ghoulish Spider that was guarding the exit.

The invisible Ghoulish Spider attacked almost as soon as Virtuoso No. 2 appeared.

Virtuoso No.2 seemed to have sensed the incoming attack. Before Ghoulish Spider's attack could come anywhere near them, they retreated quickly and turned to flee.

The Ghoulish Spider chased after it for two paces, but soon recalled something. It then turned around and retreated to the exit. It watched Virtuoso No.2 as they departed in the distance, and gradually turned invisible again.

Everyone saw the scenario clearly through Lan Ling's spell projection.

"It failed." Saber9 was clearly a little disappointed.

After seeing this, Lin Huang and the rest understood that Virtuoso was attempting to lure the tiger from its den, using the shadow to draw the Ghoulish Spider away. Unfortunately, it was not fooled.

"Given a Ghoulish Spider's character, it will give chase under normal circumstances, but it decided to give up right away." However, Virtuoso seemed to have expected this to happen. "It proves that the orders it was given definitely included no pursuit to prevent being lured away from its post."

"If any of you have other techniques, you need to utilize them quickly. The Ghoulish Spider has almost certainly reported the test we did on it earlier." Lin Huang glanced at the group. "As expected, there will be more search teams coming in this direction now. We don't have much time left."

"Let me try again." It was still Virtuoso who spoke up once more. They turned their head to look at Lan Ling as soon as they were done speaking. "In a little, when you hear my order, send the Boa Worm charging over there."

Lan Ling nodded instantly.

Virtuoso swiftly began performing complicated hand seals with both hands. The mask on their face also started lighting up with gold sigils.

A moment later, Lin Huang and the others saw the Ghoulish Spider suddenly reveal itself; it was hanging above the exit. However, it suddenly froze.

What they did not know was that to the Ghoulish Spider's eyes, a Boa Worm had come out from underground suddenly and was hurrying toward the exit.

The Ghoulish Spider leaped down from above the exit, and a sharp claw pierced through the Boa Worm's body.

However, a few figures suddenly emerged from the Boa Worm's body and attacked it...

“Now!” As soon as Virtuoso gave the order, Lan Ling controlled the Boa Worm to burrow underground toward the exit.

It took only the work of a moment for the Boa Worm to arrive beneath the Ghoulish Spider. The way ahead was a dead end, so Lan Ling could only manipulate it to emerge from the ground and continue hurrying toward the exit.

However, right at this moment, a spatial fluctuation suddenly came from not too far away.

A silhouette stepped out of a Dimensional Whirlpool and happened to see the Boa Worm that was about to rush out from the exit.

A claw flashed through the distance, turning several golden gleams that pierced through the Boa Worm’s body and sliced it into multiple bloody pieces.

Everyone was shocked. Never had they thought that a ninth-rank Golden-clawed Bug would emerge out of nowhere at the very last second and ruin Virtuoso’s plan completely.

The Golden-clawed Bug was a being in the Bug Tribes that had extremely powerful attacks.

Their legs were unlike many of the Bug Tribe monsters—they had sharp, beast-like claws, and usually possessed slicing sequence power. The intensity of their attacks was no lower than human sword cultivators and saber cultivators of the same combat strength.

Golden-clawed Bugs that were contaminated with Abyssal energy had even tougher physical constitutions. The Abyssal energy within them could absorb Rule Bending Power and sequence power remnants from attacks. This meant that their Enhanced Regeneration ability would go into effect when they were attacked with Rule Bending Power and sequence power, which caused their close-quarter combat abilities to be even more resilient.

In the wake of the intense energy shockwaves from the Golden-clawed Bug’s attack, the sixteen eyes of the Ghoulish Spider above Virtuoso’s group rapidly began to glow with blinding blood-red gleams.

The Ghoulish Spider was awake!

The initial plan of pulling a Ghoulish Spider a full level higher than their combat strength into an illusion was already the limit of Virtuoso’s ability. In reality, even without any interference from the outside world, their illusion would not last for even a few seconds when cast on the ninth-rank heavenly god-level Ghoulish Spider. Therefore, they had immediately urged Lan Ling to control the Boa Worm and leave at once.

However, the energy wave caused by the Golden-clawed Bug’s attack made the Ghoulish Spider realize something was wrong. It merely struggled a little and shook off the illusion. It then saw the carcass that the Golden-clawed Bug had sliced into multiple pieces and several figures emerging from the carcass...

#### **Chapter 1540: Escaping From The Maze**

The sudden appearance of the Golden-clawed Bug was something nobody had expected at all.

Although Lin Huang and the rest knew from the beginning that there would certainly be other search teams hurrying over, they had not expected anyone to show up so soon.

They knew something was wrong the moment the Golden-clawed Bug appeared.

As expected, the Golden-clawed Bug charged and attacked the Boa Worm as soon as it stepped out of the dimensional gateway, slicing it into several pieces.

Although Lin Huang and the rest were not harmed by this attack, the Golden-clawed Bug's actions had startled the Ghoul Spider above their heads into wakefulness.

Therefore, a situation worse than the worst-case scenario occurred.

The worst-case scenario that they had anticipated previously was that the Ghoul Spider would sense something wrong before they escaped and shake off the illusion.

However, at the moment, not only were they facing an awakened, furious Ghoul Spider, but there was a Golden-clawed Bug staring at them from the sidelines as well.

Both bug beasts were ninth-rank heavenly god-level supreme powerhouses.

Even a ninth-rank heavenly god-level Protoss would have a headache if they encountered such a situation.

However, in Lin Huang's group, the person with the highest combat strength was merely ninth-rank true god-level. This was a full level lower compared to the two bug beasts.

"In a little, seize the opportunity and run. It'll better if a single one of us manages to escape than all of us getting stuck here!" Saber9 said to Lin Huang and the rest through voice transmission and was the first to emerge from the Boa Worm's carcass.

He lifted his head to look at the Ghoul Spider above him, with its blood-red pupils.

Countless golden saber gleams began to coalesce in front of him.

Virtuoso did not run either. Instead, they planted themselves firmly on a spot near Saber9 and swiftly began performing hand seals with both hands.

They spoke through voice transmission to Lin Huang and the rest as they performed the hand seals, "The few of you came in your true forms; if you're killed you'll die for real. Both of us will buy you some time. If you can escape, escape!"

As soon as they finished speaking, they completed their hand seals. Their body began to replicate rapidly. Countless figures that looked exactly the same as Virtuoso in appearance began charging at the Golden-clawed Bug on one side.

On the other side, the countless golden saber gleams in front of Saber9 also rained down like a storm, heading toward the Ghoul Spider above his head in an enveloping swarm.

Lin Huang noticed that Tu Tong and Lan Ling were still debating whether or not to help Virtuoso and Saber9. He grabbed both their wrists, one in each hand, and dragged them with him as he charged toward the exit.

"Both of them can't buy us much time. If you rush over now, not only will this not increase any chances of success, but you'd also cause a mess! They can only get an opportunity to run after you've made it

out!” Lin Huang said to the pair through voice transmission. Only then did Tu Tong and Lan Ling stop resisting being dragged to the exit. However, they did not notice that Lin Huang’s comments only mentioned both of them and did not include himself.

At the same time that the three of them were escaping, the Ghoul Spider above their heads had been completely swallowed up in the golden gleams. Meanwhile, the Golden-clawed Bug on the other side was utterly surrounded by tens of thousands of Virtuoso clones.

Lin Huang grabbed Lan Ling and Tu Tong, arriving at the exit almost immediately.

He paused as soon as they arrived at the exit. Instead of rushing out, he suddenly used both hands to forcefully push Tu Tong and Lan Ling outside.

At that moment, the completely unharmed Ghoul Spider suddenly broke out from the midst of Saber9’s countless saber gleams. Meanwhile, the Golden-clawed Bug on the other side tore free from the circle of countless Virtuoso clones.

Despite using full force, the pair’s techniques did not impede the two bug beasts for even the span of a breath.

At that very moment, countless blood-red gleams shot out of Lin Huang’s sleeves like electric arcs, dividing themselves between the two ninth-rank heavenly god-level bug beasts and hurtling toward them.

Although Lin Huang’s Divine Telekinesis had been weakened significantly despite not touching the Maze’s walls, it still worked within a short range of merely over ten meters.

This attack of Lin Huang’s saw the telekinetic flying daggers compounded with eight levels of sequence power and Sword Dao heavenly rule.

Even the two bug beasts sensed the threat and immediately switched their attention to the blood-red electric arcs coming at them.

Right in the midst of Virtuoso and Saber9’s amazement, they sensed a thread being tied about their waists. Almost at the same time, Lin Huang’s voice sounded in their ears through voice transmission, “It’s time to go!”

Only then did the duo realize that these were Lin Huang’s telekinetic threads. The minute they stopped resisting, they felt a tremendous force pulling at them, and their figures flew toward the exit.

Amid their frantic retreat, they saw the blood-red electric arcs form into two giant spheres, enveloping the two ninth-rank bug beasts completely.

After pulling the duo to him, Lin Huang then dragged them both toward the exit and went through, without even turning his head to look back.

Outside the exit of the Demonic Bug Maze was a vast expanse of barren land.

Tu Tong and Lan Ling, who were waiting anxiously, saw the three of them emerging together.

“Go!” Lin Huang was still moving. After his shout, he continued running into the distance.

In the Maze, the telekinetic flying daggers fell onto the ground one after the other once Lin Huang had left.

When the two bug beasts appeared again, there were clear traces of blood on their bodies. However, these were merely flesh wounds, which rapidly recovered at a speed that could be seen with the naked eye.

Both bug beasts merely glanced once in the direction of the exit. Instead of pursuing Lin Huang and the others, they chose to report the incident immediately.

Lin Huang and the rest fled some distance away. When they realized that the Bug Tribe monsters were not coming after them, they were finally able to heave a sigh of relief.

“Both of you owe me a set of top-tier god telekinetic weapon relics,” Lin Huang said to Saber9 and Virtuoso in all seriousness.

The two of them were speechless upon hearing that.

However, both of them also were aware that Lin Huang had indeed left behind that set of telekinetic flying daggers in the Demonic Bug Maze after his attack.

“We’ll give you back a set each when we get out of the Abyss, alright?” Virtuoso said in some annoyance.

“Alright,” Lin Huang agreed cheerfully, but he soon thought of something after that, “Or you could give me materials of the same level in exchange as well.”

He asked for this to prevent a lack of rare, hard-to-obtain materials for his imperial monsters when they eventually elevated their levels.

“Sure,” Saber9 agreed at once.

Meanwhile, off to one side, Virtuoso rolled their eyes at Lin Huang.

However, they knew very well that if Lin Huang had not sacrificed his telekinetic flying daggers to save them and Saber9, they both might have been the ones sacrificed in the Demonic Bug Maze.

Tu Tong and Lan Ling did not understand what the three of them were talking about, nor did they dare to ask. They could only follow behind and run.

“Since those bugs didn’t chase after us immediately, can we consider ourselves to have escaped successfully?” Lin Huang asked Virtuoso.

“I think so.” Virtuoso nodded. “The Abyss is massive. Since they didn’t come after us right away, it would be hard for them to catch up to us now.”

“It’s very normal for them not to pursue us, as they have no way of ascertaining if we have other partners left behind in the Maze. They’d definitely do a thorough check of the Maze immediately to prevent the Bug Queen or Queen Mother from being assassinated. As for us, we’ve been chased out of the Maze, so we’re no longer a threat to them. Naturally, coming after us isn’t as important as checking inside the Maze.” Saber9 was very clear about the operation mechanisms of the Demonic Bug Maze.



“The Bug Tribe powerhouses that guard the exits must have received orders beforehand not to chase after the intruders once they escaped from the Maze. Otherwise, with that Ghoul Spider’s character, there’s a pretty high chance it would have come after us,” Virtuoso added.

“We can consider the threat of the Demonic Bug Maze removed,” Virtuoso continued, “What we must find out as soon as possible is... where exactly are we?”