

Chapter 72: Solar Bulwark

After bidding farewell to everyone, Su Ping and Fan Yujing went to the front counter of the base to apply for departure and to have the Nether Ore decontaminated. Once this was done, they could head to the designated pick-up station inside the base city to retrieve the ore.

Without wasting any time, they took their car to travel back to the city in the middle of the night.

When they reached the major intercity highway, the horizon was already brightening up. On the front passenger seat, Su Ping yawned in boredom and began checking what he earned for finishing the rescue mission.

“Solar Bulwark...?”

It seemed to be a skill designed to enhance his body. He didn’t have to read the book because its content was already imprinted in his brain.

“Let me see... Solar Bulwark is a bodily cultivation art created by an ancient clan of mythical creatures called the Jinwu, or ‘the golden sun crow’. Those who master this art will receive devastating strength that can punch through mountains and lands. Once perfected, it will even allow its user to shatter the stars and resurrect from fatal injuries.

“To harvest its power, you must draw in the energy of nature and develop a core of celestial consciousness inside, which in turn helps fortify your inner structure as well as your mentality. When you fully synchronize with this consciousness, you will be able to temporarily transform into a fledgling golden crow who can fly faster than sound and unleash an impinging blaze...”

Reading the description of the new skill had helped Su Ping get rid of the drowsiness completely. He knew he could expect something good from the system. But not this good!

If the book wasn’t overstating things, this art must have come from mythical creatures who could use all kinds of unimaginable moves.

“I can even become a mythical crow? Awesome...” He couldn’t help but feel extremely thrilled at the moment. As he remembered, “mythical” was a term for very ancient beings that existed way before Beast Kings came to be.

Also according to the book, this skill only had seven ranks, while proceeding to each following rank was extremely hard. At the same time, reaching a new rank would exceedingly improve its performance.

The first rank allowed its wielder to withstand common blades and bullets using an unprotected body and move at sonic speed. This alone meant powerful defenses, already as strong as that of fifth-rank Astral Pets.

Getting to the next rank meant moving even faster and defending against deadlier assaults such as armor-piercing weapons and cannons, which were commonly used against eighth or ninth-rank Astral Pets.

At the third rank, the user would be able to activate the “golden crow mode” and use several basic moves available to this particular mythical beast. In extreme situations, he might even survive in space briefly.

“Wicked! This thing can make people as sturdy as Astral Pets. Guess this is how battle pet warriors from old times trained. Well, as the masters of powerful pets, they should be strong themselves.”

Their car had entered the city area. Soon, they reached the street where Su Ping had been picked up the other day.

“We’re here.” Fan Yujing parked the car and was going to see Su Ping off.

Su Ping was already leaving. “I’ll be seeing you.”

“Thank you for your help. Really.”

“Don’t mention it.”

Fan Yujing saw Su Ping going away without looking back and shook his head with a bitter smile.

...

“Hey mom?”

Su Ping’s plan of sneaking back into his bedroom went bust when he saw his mother, Li Qingru, waiting right inside the living room. What was worse, Li Qingru was giving him a cold gaze that made him feel as if he were being stared down by an actual Beast King.

“Where have you been?”

“Staying up late, mom?” Su Ping felt bad all of a sudden.

“Just come here.”

Defeated, Su Ping went ahead while getting ready for a good beat-up.

Li Qingru checked him and made sure there weren’t any smells of alcohol or weed.

“Where did you go?”

“I was helping someone with their computer—wait, no. I was out looking after someone’s pet.”

“Someone’s pet? It took you an entire night?”

Su Ping had no choice but to follow up with his lie. Thankfully, his mother believed him somewhat, since he was looking after their shop after all.

“Did you tire yourself out? Oh dear. Are you hungry?”

“Yeah, uh, sorta.”

“Go wash your face. You look awful. I’ll prepare breakfast. And remember to wake your sister up. If you’re feeling unwell, you can take the day off.”

Once again, Su Ping felt glad that he had a home and someone who cared for him in this cruel world.

“Thanks, mom.”

He went to the bathroom to get washed as told, although he might need some more time to take care of his watering eyes.

Once this was done, he went to Su Lingyue’s room upstairs. He didn’t need to knock on the door because Su Lingyue came out first as if she knew this would happen.

Su Lingyue gave him an unfriendly glare, pushed him aside, and walked away.

“Don’t stay outside at night again.”

Su Ping raised an eyebrow, not sure what she meant by that.

The duration of the breakfast was awfully quiet. As soon as Su Lingyue finished her meal, she headed off to her academy without insulting Su Ping, which was pretty rare.

Su Ping still went to his shop as usual despite his mother’s suggestion. His trained body could take a sleepless night or two without trouble.

The business was poor as always. The few customers who did decide to come in were scared away by the price tags, without giving Su Ping any chance to introduce his merchandise.

He felt bored. Very, very bored.

Thankfully, he had something to do in the meantime, such as studying the four basic augmentation skills he just obtained from the settler base. Those skills worked by creating astral runes that were affixed onto his pets, using his astral power. To make the enhancement last longer, he had to “paint” the runes as accurately and completely as possible.

Learning how to paint astral runes was usually difficult at first. But being someone who had read a Chaos Star Chart before could get familiarized with such runes rather fast. Within a day, he successfully grasped all four augmentations of the first rank, which would usually take common students one to three months, or even half a year for someone bad at studying.

Using his spare time, he would also occasionally use the computer to look for tools and medications that could help him train Solar Bulwark, so he could get them from the settler base later.

The first rank and the very foundation of Solar Bulwark required an insanely large amount of natural energy to enhance his body. Using the energy, he could forge his body just like he would a weapon, until his flesh became hardy enough to both deflect blades and unleash devastating punches and kicks.

Chapter 73: Training

As stories told, this planet was rich in natural energy in ancient times. Even the vegetation was so energized that Golden Crows who fed on them had refined bodies upon birth, and would easily reach the third or fourth rank with minimal training.

At the moment, however, Su Ping had quite a big problem with the beginning of his study.

This world was currently so full of humans who sought to cultivate their bodies that all available herbs and medicines helpful for body forging were almost exhausted. Since the natural energy in the

environment also underwent a decrease as time went by, people had to find materials from newly-discovered space fractures.

Luckily for Su Ping, there were some valuable elixirs and similar things he could use in the settlers' base. By spending all of his remaining merit points, he purchased several mid to low rank ones.

Wonder how these will work out...

Since he still had to wait for his items to be delivered, he planned to spend a few days in the shop to train his augmentation skills first. Still, the workers in the base were faster than he expected. On the second day after he placed his order, a team consisting of eight uniformed guards and a settler reached his shop in a large black van that looked more fortified than armored vehicles used by banks.

It seemed this settler had decided to retire and become a deliveryman instead of risking his life day and night in expeditions.

"Greetings, sir. This is what you requested yesterday. 'Millennium Wurm Weed', 'Godfire Cypress'..."

The old settler carried several secured coffers made out of special alloys into his shop. Su Ping simply needed to enter the password he learned when shopping to open them. Anyone else who attempted to break the coffers open would only destroy the contents instead.

Su Ping picked a random one and checked the rich energy leaking through the opened lid, before he sent the workers away.

Meanwhile, the owners of shops nearby and some pedestrians all curiously looked Su Ping's way.

"Look at that. Those guys are from the federal government, aren't they?"

"Here to close the bastard down, I wonder? Serves him right. Not even the feds can stand this scammer."

"Yeah. I went there once. Man those are some crazy prices, I tell you. Thank god I got away before he forced me to buy stuff."

"Seriously? That's so lame."

Su Ping accidentally heard those words and couldn't help shaking his head in embarrassment. For the moment, he did need to close the shop since he needed time to look at the medicines.

"See that? He went out of business."

"That's what happens to a loser like him!"

"Let's just get out of here."

...

Meanwhile, Su Ping went inside the pet room, closed the door, and began looking through all four coffers. As soon as he unlocked all of them, Little Skeleton, who had been resting in a nursing pen, woke up upon sensing the overwhelming energy that filled the room.

The first merchandise was a handful of Millennium Wyrms recovered from a new space fracture. This particular plant, tagged “120,000 merit points”, was said to contain the condensed life aura left behind by powerful dragons.

Su Ping took a moment and noticed that the energy was not astral power, but spiritual power. This was just what he needed to train on Solar Bulwark. The nursing pens in the pet room were supposed to be built out of spirit stones which could slowly enhance the bodies of pets. Su Ping was going to overhaul himself by directly consuming items full of spiritual power.

Following the instructions he remembered, he slowly compressed his astral power and used it to wrap up the weed, before grounding the material into fine powder so he could absorb the spiritual energy.

From this point on, he could keep the spiritual energy inside him and start using it bit by bit. It sounded simple but was actually a taxing job for him. Unlike Golden Crows, he couldn't directly digest the spiritual power as if having a meal.

Under his control, the spiritual power entered all the astral power vortices all over his body and enlarged them, while enhancing his body cells at the same time.

Half an hour later, Su Ping opened his eyes and saw the weed had turned into a pile of spent ash. His entire body was covered in a thick film of black substance that reeked badly.

“Ughhh. Guess this stuff is what was washed off from the inside, right?”

He quickly went into the bathroom to deal with the new hygienic problem. And it felt good! He felt lighter and more vigorous than ever after that.

His skin looked tender. Some of the random scars from bug bites had vanished.

“Ah... I'm looking a whole lot cooler!” He felt rather satisfied when looking at his reflection in a mirror. His then better eyesight and hearing suggested that the merit points had been well spent.

Not wasting any time, he opened the second coffer and immediately continued.

The second item was weaker compared to the wyrm weed. Copying what he did before, he soon finished consuming it. Also like the previous time, more black filth was filtered out of his body.

He just found another problem—both sets of outfits he took that day required cleaning. He had nothing to wear.

Helpless, he did some quick work washing his clothes and hanging them to dry, before he went on to use the third item bare-bodied.

It was a piece of bright-red log this time which was hot to the touch. The energy he absorbed also felt like burning which caused him to shudder all of a sudden. At the end of his work, he felt his entire body was getting hotter.

It wasn't bad though, the warmth made him feel relaxed. Moreover, there was less black stuff seeping out as the fiery energy helped cleanse it.

It took him another hour to empty all four coffers. After that, only remains of the medicine were left on the floor.

Despite being a shut-in who barely worked out, he began to look somewhat muscular. The brawns on his arms and his chest appeared pretty outstanding, giving him a sports boy look.

“Ha...” He breathed deeply and felt the new strength he had just gained. He felt like a superman who could easily jump onto roofs or dash across insane distances in the blink of an eye.

Still, he could tell he was pretty far from achieving the first rank of Solar Bulwark. He was about 60% there, at most. Though what he did that day had already displayed the method’s potential. By fortifying his body with astral power, he would be invulnerable against common swords and knives, unless it was someone good who could use really expensive blades that could still harm him.

Su Ping inspected his skin and concluded, “This should be enough to withstand the attack of a fourth-rank opponent.”

While traveling and dying inside the Chaotic Realm of the Undead, he learned the different extents of monster attacks so he was pretty good at estimating his defense.

Human bodies were generally weaker compared to Astral Pets of the same rank, since the latter usually had thick fur or scales as protection. Without careful preparation, even a titled battle pet warrior could get killed by a stray bullet in the head. Although such things did not happen often because someone experienced as titled battle pet warriors all knew how to keep themselves secured twenty-four seven. Even when sleeping, they’d constantly cover their bodies with astral power.

Chapter 74: Lightning Rat Craze

Su Ping swept up the floor, tossed the remains into a “recyclable materials” dustbin, put on his slightly wet clothes and opened the shop again. If no customers came, he would just perfect his augmentation skills.

Between his study sessions, he would also check his computer for the latest news. This was more or less his daily habit ever since he came to this world.

[Stricken by severe depression, this beautiful lady did unspeakable things to her pet!]

[The shores of Whale Lift City were bashed by terrible tidal waves as high-rank beasts showed up.]

[A renowned school in Longjiang became infested with rats...]

Just like the article titles in his old world, everything on the “Internet” was also written in eye-catching and incomplete ways to attract more viewers. Although Su Ping knew better and would not fall for the seemingly interesting expression that suggested dirty business between a woman and a beast. The actual content of the news was probably something way less enticing.

Or, he would gladly take a peek to prove whether he was right, and was both happy and frustrated to know that his suspicion was right on the money.

“Damned media. They never change, using fake stuff to get more users, not caring how they would affect their readers.”

After closing the news about the problematic idol, he began checking the more productive ones, such as the beast hazard in Whale Lift City. This was another base city built along the seashore and was constantly having safety problems because many sea monsters kept coming to shore and causing trouble to inland structures by following the river.

As for the next piece of news, which was about invading rats...

Su Ping thought he saw something familiar when he skimmed through the headlines. Once he read more carefully, he found out the “renowned school” was Phoenix Peak Academy—the one his sister was studying in.

The “rat infestation” was not an actual vermin problem. The thing was, the students began raising a lot of Lightning Rats as their pets for some reason. When walking around, one would see these rats everywhere.

As for the reason for this new pet choice, it seemed this was because of a certain powerful Lightning Rat which helped its master go all the way to the finals the other day. According to the article, this Lightning Rat amazingly disposed of a good number of Astral Pets who were of superior aptitudes. It even learned one of the ten strongest thunder-type moves.

Su Ping watched the video in surprise.

“This little guy started it??”

There was more in the “related news” section, such as “Click here to watch what a Lightning Rat can really do!”, “Secrets revealed! A Lightning Rat is NOT a low-rank pet!”, “All hail this king hidden among peasants. If you don’t have it, get one NOW!”

The cameraman of the video perfectly captured Su Yanying’s image along with her small partner. The Lightning Rat still had that cocky look on its tiny face.

As soon as the judge blew the whistle, the Lightning Rat disappeared into a flash of lightning and slammed into its opponent.

Instant KO.

Then the next match ended in a similar way.

In other matches, the creature dealt with many popular mid-rank Astral Pets, and even some of the high-rank ones usually loved by nobility. No matter how powerful or graceful they looked, the Lightning Rat would always slap them away with ease.

The comments of the video below attested to the Lightning Rat’s rising fame.

Su Ping wondered how many passionate shoppers he would get if people learned he was the one who made this possible. But he then saw the advertisements of other pet shops claiming credit for getting the Lightning Rat in shape. They even had photos that showed their cooperation with Su Yanying. Forged ones, of course.

The nerve of these people!

However, Su Ping was not much of a keyboard warrior. His attempt to clarify his work was soon overwhelmed by other messages.

“Wait, I have Su Yanying’s number. Should I tell her to make everything clear instead?”

With this in mind, he quickly found Su Yanying’s receipt where he kept the number and dialed it.

“Hello?” Her voice came. The girl sounded confused.

“It’s me, the caretaker of Pixie Pet,” Su Ping used the cold tone he normally used when talking to customers.

“Hey mister.” Su Yanying had just recognized Su Ping’s voice and seemed happy about it. “Is there something you need?”

“Got any time? Can you come over and help me make a short video?”

“...” Su Yanying didn’t answer as she wondered whether she heard it right.

“Still there?”

“Oh, um, what kind of video?”

“Me and you. And remember to bring your rat.”

“My Lightning Rat? Are you going to help me train it further?”

“You’ll have to pay for that. You see, your pet became famous, and I kinda need the video to tell everyone that it came from my shop.”

“I see...” Su Yanying blushed. “Good timing, I happen to need to talk to you. Thank you, really. If not for your work, I would have never made it to the finals. Well, I didn’t win in the end, but that’s enough for me!”

Su Ping hung up and realized he just learned something interesting.

“She lost in the final match. If something can beat the Lightning Rat, it must be of the seventh rank or higher. The students in the academy have such powerful pets? If they take their pets to the settler base, they can form teams and lead them!”

The final match of the academy was not as popular as those of a professional league. Still, Su Ping found videos captured by the audience that involved a lot of shaking and unwanted noises.

Chapter 75: Exhibition Match

Su Ping picked a video with the highest view count and clicked it open. The owner of the video had a seat at the back of the crowd, though the position still offered a clear view of the arena.

Su Yanying’s opponent was a handsome-looking young man with a refined posture who summoned a silver-scaled Thunder Basilisk, a ninth-rank Astral Pet that usually possessed an amazing aptitude. This

thing was known as one of the most ferocious pets of the thunder family and could be born with powerful abilities.

The final match was between two thunder-type Astral Pets who had a giant level gap setting them apart. Most of the people watching were cheering for the Lightning Rat because they all hoped to see another miracle where the underdog triumphed over the strong.

Su Ping couldn't see the number of horns the Thunder Basilisk had due to the poor video quality, but judging from its size, the creature should be a hatchling still at the six or seventh rank. An adult Thunder Basilisk was big enough to occupy the entire arena, making a proper match impossible.

At the start of the match, Su Yanying applied a stealth effect to the Lightning Rat on top of the four augmentations so the rat was harder to detect.

Upon receiving her order, the rat dashed at its enemy while creating four shadows as good as the real body.

Many among the audience had seen such a move before, though this wouldn't prevent them from exclaiming in awe again.

Su Ping disabled all the floating comments that filled up the screen so he could look at the video better.

Not bad. She knows how to make good use of the rat's skills now. Su Ping silently approved Su Yanying's commands.

On the other hand, the young man on the other side of the arena also applied augmentations to his pet using astral runes, although what he used appeared to be of the fifth rank. He was surely an exceptional genius, since the academy didn't help their students to reach such a level.

As the Lightning Rat approached, the Thunder Basilisk coated itself in lightning bolts—this was a typical defense move used by thunder-types.

Meanwhile, the Lightning Rat used the same move which was obviously more powerful and deadlier.

The two pets clashed in the middle of the stage and the energy surge caused the video to go all blurry. When the static settled, Su Ping saw the Lightning Rat using Thunder Slash, which only hit the Thunder Basilisk's lingering illusion, after which the basilisk bit back at the rat's body using its lightning-enhanced fangs.

"Weird..." Su Ping frowned. "The rat could have used Thunder Roar beforehand to tell where the basilisk really is. But it didn't."

This hatchling Thunder Basilisk clearly didn't have a complete set of skills yet. But it still used the chance and left several wounds on the Lightning Rat by using simple tail whips.

"Thunder Flash, Thunder Slash, Thunder Shadow Image, Thunder Outerwear, All-round Thunder Prison... It's only using these five skills."

In the video, the Lightning Rat was slowly losing. It had many chances to unleash more helpful moves such as Thunder Rush to get away from certain attacks, but chose not to for some reason.

Something was off.

As far as Su Ping knew, the Lightning Rat had grasped at least a dozen different skills. It could pick an easy combination and defeat the inexperienced Thunder Basilisk in no time. He had noticed that the Thunder Basilisk was younger than he expected. Maybe an upper sixth-rank, at best.

A moment later, the basilisk slammed the rat out of the stage with another tail-swipe, announcing the end of the fight.

It lost? Just like that?

It was likely that Su Yanying only knew those five skills and would keep telling her rat to use them. As her loyal partner, the Lightning Rat couldn't do otherwise.

Talking about a terrible teammate... Su Ping sighed. The poor little guy could perform better if she just stood there without making a sound.

However, the viewers didn't have the same concern as they kept talking about how awesome the display was. As a matter of fact, four of the five skills shown by the rat were high-rank skills, while the remaining one was a secret art only available to a selected few thunder-type pets and Beast Kings.

Still, Su Ping couldn't quite accept the result.

Where the heck was his Undead Calling? Soul Eater? And Life Drain? What about Death Deceit? That skill alone was enough to turn the tables!

He didn't really care about the trophy because he wasn't the one participating. It was just that, looking at such a match felt like putting a god's gift to waste. He gave Su Yanying a god-tier pet, while she made a huge disappointment out of it.

Soon, Su Yanying came visiting.

"Hey, mister!" Su Yanying walked to the counter with a joyful look. "Now I can thank you personally. You helped me reach the finals after all."

Su Ping's lips twitched. He decided not to complain about the match as this would change nothing.

"*Sigh* Here, let's get the video done."

"No offense but, do you really need the video to make your shop known? I thought you just wanted to keep a low profile in this small place even though you have what it takes to make big money."

Su Ping grimaced. Low-profile my butt! I need freaking money!

"Oh, right, are you free these days, Mister Su? Since the official matches have ended, our school is going to hold an exhibition match tomorrow. There will be huge crowds and firework shows! I want to thank you more properly, so... Would you team up with me for a match?"

"An exhibition match? I'm not from your academy."

"It's fine! The exhibition match is all about being pretty. We'll be open to visitors on this occasion. My friends and their families will also go there to join in the fun!"

Chapter 76: Promos. I'm Serious!

Su Ping thought for a moment and nodded. "Sure."

Since he was going to advertise his shop, it wouldn't be a bad idea to go to the academy for this purpose. The students of such a famous school were the ones who were willing to put in a lot of effort on their pets, unlike those ordinary passersby who would just casually raise a house cat for fun and would not spend a lot of time to nurture them.

"Really?"

Su Yanying's eyes lit up with excitement when she heard Su Ping's decision. In her view, Su Ping was always a mysterious man. There had to be an extremely powerful teacher, probably a retired but formerly renowned pet warrior, backing him up. It would be very beneficial to get involved with such an entity.

"Should I pick you up tomorrow?" She quickly followed up while the iron was hot.

Su Ping nodded. "When will the match start?"

"There are a few exhibition matches scheduled. Ye Hao and I will be the finalists in the evening," Su Yanying said immediately. There was a hint of smugness on her face. After all, she had made it to the finals. Previously, she had been looking forward to becoming the champion. However, as she fought more matches with the Lightning Rat, she realized that she would have stopped at the quarter finals at best without her pet rodent. There were way too many hidden talents in college that she had overlooked.

It was for this reason that she was especially grateful to Su Ping for the honor of entering the finals. She gained more than she expected.

"Who is Ye Hao?" asked Su Ping.

"He's the champion of our academy, the one who defeated me." Su Yanying giggled. She didn't seem disappointed at all. That was a Thunder Basilisk after all, the strongest rank below Beast Kings!

Su Ping's lips twitched when he saw her innocuous look.

"I'll pick you up tomorrow in the evening then. At what time?" Su Yanying blinked happily.

"Let's see... In the afternoon, around four o'clock."

"You want to be there earlier?" Su Yanying's eyes twinkled again. Of course she wanted to spend more time with Su Ping and learn more about pets.

Su Ping nodded. "I'll have to trouble you with something. Speaking of which, it's not against the rules to hand out flyers in your academy, is it?"

Flyers? Su Yanying's shoulders slumped as she looked at Su Ping in shock. *He only wants to advertise the shop? Seriously?*

Looking at Su Ping's serious expression, Su Yanying was finally convinced that he was indeed asking her for help in this matter.

But... Why would someone like him need cheap promotion like this?

"Mister Su, with your skills and such, you know, is it alright to be handing out flyers?" Su Yanying asked, looking uncertain.

"Probably not."

Su Yanying heaved a sigh of relief. *I knew it. An expert like him couldn't actually—*

"I can't do that, but you can." Su Ping looked at her. "Remember to bring your partner. I'll print the flyers later, you two will be in charge of passing them out. Make sure to pick whoever looks rich. Don't even bother with the others. We'll just waste our time."

He means it!! Su Yanying just felt that she had fallen into a trap. *A general publicist? Me? He asked a school belle like me, who just won the silver medal in the tournament, to do grunt work??*

"What do you say?" Su Ping was still asking for her opinion.

Su Yanying wanted to refuse. But when she remembered that she was supposed to thank Su Ping properly...

"Fine! I'll do it."

Su Ping nodded in satisfaction. "Is there anything else? Need to buy something?"

Su Yanying subconsciously glanced at a shelf nearby, and quickly jerked her head away when she saw an item priced at 1.2 million.

"I—I don't need to buy something for my pet to be trained in the shop, right?"

"Huh? No you don't. Note that the training you'll get from now on is ordinary. Don't expect insane boosts like before."

"What do you mean with ordinary?"

"Like, your pet will only get one skill out of each service, or have its rank improved by half a rank or so."

Su Yanying found it difficult to speak all of a sudden.

You call that ordinary??

A common pet shop would do a pretty good job by improving someone's pet just a bit. Learning new skills would cost extra cash. A lot of cash.

When Su Yanying thought about how her Lightning Rat was growing so rapidly, she suddenly realized that Su Ping was not exaggerating things. In this particular shop, being ordinary meant being good!

He IS a hidden expert. No doubt about it. I can't judge him by common sense.

"I see! I'm going to keep all my pets here," Su Yanying said immediately. She had to seize this rare opportunity as soon as possible. Luckily for her, there were no other customers present. She feared that she wouldn't be as lucky once the shop was known by more people.

She suddenly regretted agreeing to help Su Ping advertise. It would be better if she was the only one who knew such a hidden treasure vault.

But on second thought, it was impossible for her to keep things covered anyway. What she needed to do right then was to use the chance to her advantage as much as she could before more people overran this shop.

"Mister, can I get a membership here?"

Su Ping raised his eyebrow and saw through her thoughts.

"No."

"Aww..."

"The service fee is the same as before. First to third rank, 10,000. Fourth to sixth, 100,000. How many pets do you want to train?"

Su Yanying suddenly realized that she was in a tight spot. She was just a student. She had spent most of her allowance the other day and still owed her good friend Lan Lele money. How would she find that much money?

"I, um..." Su Yanying blushed. "I didn't bring enough money today. Maybe next time."

Su Ping didn't look convinced.

Su Yanying showed a silly smile and waved her hand. "See you tomorrow Mr. Su. Buh-bye!"

With that, she turned around and escaped.

Su Ping shook his head. "It's not like I'm mugging her. Why did she look so scared?"

He remained at the shop for the rest of the day without receiving any customers, then he went back home at night.

As soon as he entered his home, Su Ping heard Su Lingyue asking their mom for pocket money. Apparently, she wanted to buy a Lightning Rat as well.

Huh... The new pet craze reached all the way to my house.

Su Ping removed his shoes and stepped into the living room. The girl who was affectionately tugging her mother's arm suddenly sat up straight and regained her indifferent composure within a second.

Su Ping rolled his eyes and asked whether dinner was ready.

Li Qingru gladly went to the kitchen to warm up his meal.

Su Ping washed his hands and sat at the dining table. He looked at Su Lingyue, who had yet to leave.

"I heard that your school has an exhibition match tomorrow."

“Where did you hear that from?”

“I just heard it from a customer,” Su Ping said casually. “Are you going on stage?”

Su Lingyue wanted to know who this customer was, but her proud character forbade her from asking his brother more unnecessary questions.

“Of course I am. I’m the champion of all freshmen. I will show up in the finale for tomorrow’s performance.”

“Isn’t the finale for third years?”

Su Lingyue was furious. “Well, I’m the champion of my peers! You got a problem with that?!”

Chapter 77: Flyer Campaign

Su Ping: “(☹_☹)...”

Soon, Li Qingru brought over the food; Su Ping was surprised to find that there were quite a lot of dishes left. What was more, there was actually meat left in his share.

Su Ping glanced at Su Lingyue, who snorted and looked away.

Ah, she knows how to be a good girl once in a while?

Still, Su Ping wasn’t going to test his sister’s patience; he started eating without saying another word.

When Li Qingru sat down again, Su Lingyue continued with her earlier plea. “Mom, it’s true. Help me out. You have no idea how popular the Lightning Rat is right now. Its potential has been severely underestimated. Apart from that particular pet star in our school, I heard that there’s also a third-rank Lightning Rat in Nanxiang Academy who defeated a fourth-rank Flora Trapper. Everybody is right. These rats are hidden jewels!”

Cough

Su Ping choked on his food. He quickly downed a glass of water to recover.

“Come on, I tried to be nice today. I won’t take all your stuff.” Su Lingyue rolled her eyes.

“Yeah, right.”

Su Ping noticed that his sister was probably talking about a real “genius rat” since he didn’t remember helping a second one.

“But this isn’t a common occurrence, dear. No matter how outstanding Lightning Rats are, they’re still low-rank pets. Their bloodline potential is limited.” Li Qingru was an adult and a beginner-level trainer. She was more rational about this matter. “What we can learn from this is that, as long as one is talented and has good aptitude, even a Lightning Rat would be able to display astonishing abilities. This also applies to your Phantom Flame Beast.

“There’s no need for you to buy a Lightning Rat and spend more time and resources to nurture it. One or two strong pets are enough for you. Focus on the Mirage Flame Beast for now, and it will repay you.”

Su Ping didn’t expect his mother to speak like this, although he totally agreed. “You’re right, mom.”

Su Lingyue shot him a murderous look, then she looked at Li Qingru with a completely different expression.

“But mom! Did you know that the teachers in the academy are constantly asking students about their Lightning Rats to see whether they are doing a good job? If I don’t have one, how am I supposed to answer?”

Li Qingru was surprised by this. “What? That’s not right. There are so many Astral Pets out there. They can’t snub other pets just because of a Lightning Rat becoming famous.”

Su Ping easily saw through the girl’s excuse but didn’t point it out directly. “Agreed. If every teacher is that stupid, that academy will close down in no time.”

“Can’t you keep your mouth shut??” Su Lingyue used that devilish look at Su Ping again. In fact, she would look just like a devil if something bloody were painted on her face.

Isn’t she always smart when playing pranks? Su Ping thought to himself, I see. She’s not so good at lying. Well, at least she knows how to bide her time. The rat problem started almost a week ago, and she’s only asking now.

She’s still a girl after all. All the general opinions and media will get to her eventually.

Nevertheless, her dogged persuasion bore fruit in the end; Li Qingru agreed to Su Lingyue’s request. Lightning Rats were not expensive. Five thousand was enough to buy an adult one. Breeders didn’t usually sell them to make profit straightaway. Instead, pet food was the biggest part of their revenue.

Li Qingru was mainly worried that an additional pet would distract Su Lingyue. But seeing how determined she was, Li Qingru had to comply.

Su Lingyue almost danced in joy. Then she remembered something. “Oh right, Mom, are you going to watch the exhibition match tomorrow?”

Li Qingru had heard of this. She shook her head. “I’m not feeling well, dear, so I won’t be going.”

Su Ping gave his mother a worried look. He knew the reason for her condition. There was one time when she kept someone’s pet in the shop as requested. However, the pet was still feral and had not been subdued by a contract. Without its master nearby, it lost control and attacked Li Qingru when she wasn’t paying attention. Fortunately, she reacted quickly enough to keep her life. But the incident left an ailment that prevented her from working for extended periods of time.

The owner of the problematic pet didn’t pay any compensation. Instead, he accused Li Qingru of not taking care of the pet which caused it to go wild. The dispute underwent a large amount of judicial procedures and also involved a lot of running around. In the end, Li Qingru received a few hundred thousand as the final result.

Such an amount was rather pointless compared to a person's long term health. However, there was nothing else she could do.

Su Ping remembered seeing some rare medicines in the settler's vault that could even help people regrow lost limbs. There was bound to be something he could use for his mother. But good medicine was extremely costly. He might need millions of merit points.

Damn it. Maybe I need to go on a settler mission again, Su Ping thought to himself. If he remembered this matter earlier, he could have saved up the points.

Su Lingyue's eyes dimmed a little when she heard Li Qingru's words, but soon recovered her smile. "I'll ask my classmates to help me take a video then, so you can watch it later."

"Sure." Li Qingru smiled back.

Su Lingyue left her seat to go upstairs. On her way, there was a brief and somber scowl as she glanced at her mother's injured leg.

Seeing this, Su Ping felt something click in his mind. Though he didn't say anything.

The next morning.

Su Ping had a night of peaceful sleep and there were no spooky pranks in the morning. Su Lingyue was already having breakfast when he went downstairs.

A few girls stood at the door and called Su Lingyue's name. They were the girls from last time.

While on her way out, Su Lingyue tossed a small card on the table. "Here, a ticket. You can take a look if you want, or throw it away. I don't care."

She left with her friends before Su Ping could say anything.

Li Qingru left the kitchen and saw what just happened; she said, "If you're not busy with the shop, you can go see your sister and cheer for her. Being her brother means that you should stand for her and keep her safe."

Su Ping almost rolled his eyes. *Keeping her safe? It's more like stopping her from hurting other people.*

All things said, he was planning on going to the academy anyway. He put the ticket away and left for work on his bike.

He studied a full day at the shop, and just like usual, not a single customer showed up.

He prepared the printed fliers in the afternoon. When it was almost four o'clock, two bright-looking girls appeared at the entrance of the store—Su Yanying and her friend Lan Lele, whom he had agreed to meet the day before.

"Hey dude, do you really want us to hand out flyers for you?" Lan Lele was at a loss when she saw the thick stack of handouts in Su Ping's arms.

"Why else would I ask you to come?"

“You—” Lan Lele felt angered again. She always did when she visited the store.

Su Yanying quickly tried to smooth things over. “It’s okay, I promised. Lele, my beautiful friend, you agreed to help me. Pretty please?”

Lan Lele spat in disdain but still took the papers.

“It’s almost time. Let’s go.” Su Ping checked the clock and went to lock the door, while the two girls called for a taxi.

Chapter 78: Fame

2

Su Ping sat in the front passenger seat of the taxi, letting the two girls sit in the back. Then, he told the driver to go to Phoenix Peak Academy.

By looking at the three and the direction they were headed, the driver guessed that they were all students of the Phoenix Peak Academy. They were easy to chat with and he got to learn more about battle pet warriors; being an ordinary person, he was even more curious about it.

Su Ping spoke less, fearing that it would affect the driver’s navigation.

Half an hour later, they arrived at the entrance of the academy. The streets in the area were already wide enough, and yet, they were filled with all sorts of famous cars. A few handsome young men and girls walked out of the cars. They were all students of Phoenix Peak Academy.

In order to get into this well-known Astral Pet school, one had to have good grades and a rich family background. At the very least, one had to be from a well-off family, since the tuition fees were more than ten times more expensive when compared to ordinary universities. Just the cost of buying pets and nurturing them was a weight that ordinary families could not afford.

The car stopped by the side. Su Ping pushed the door open and got out of the car. Lan Lele paid the fare behind him. Su Ping took a glance at the academy entrance, which was still rather imposing. He was satisfied and took the lead to enter.

Su Yanying and Lan Lele hurried to follow Su Ping. Su Yanying was surprised to see that Su Ping was familiar with the way. “You’ve been to our school?”

“No,” Su Ping replied without looking back.

Su Yanying was stunned. *Why does it feel like you’re in your home when you’ve never been here before?*

It had to be known that most people who had just arrived at Phoenix Peak Academy would be shocked by the massive sculpture of a phoenix at the entrance of the academy, spreading its wings and soaring. That lifelike statue had been created by a famous craftsman to depict the king of beasts, the ‘Purple-tailed Divine Phoenix’. It had the imposing aura of a Beast King.

Back when she had just entered Phoenix Peak Academy, she was just like the other freshmen. She had been stunned by the sculptured phoenix at the entrance for a long time. She got used to it after a long time passed. This was one of the famous sights of her school, and also the pride of the students.

“This guy...” Su Yanying mumbled and caught up with Su Ping.

The exhibition match would be held that day. Many of the students who entered the academy were accompanied by elegant and graceful figures. They were their parents, and some even brought their siblings.

“Hey, isn’t that Su Yanying?”

All of a sudden, a girl saw Su Yanying behind Su Ping and covered her mouth in shock. She was pleasantly surprised.

Hearing the words “Su Yanying,” the surrounding students immediately turned their heads over. When they saw Su Yanying’s face, exclamations were heard and the crowd quickly surrounded her.

Even in the past, Su Yanying was considered a famous person in the school. After all, she was one of the most beautiful students, and she was in the top ten of the girl’s battle power ranking. She had both beauty and strength. Which guy didn’t want to conquer her?

Or perhaps... be conquered by her?

Ever since the end of the annual competition, Su Yanying had relied on the Lightning Rat to pass the test and enter the finals. Her reputation had reached its peak. Even Ye Hao, who had won the championship, was not as popular as Su Yanying.

After all, coming in second wasn’t the main point. The main point was that she had won using the Lightning Rat.

The super Lightning Rat that could fight with a sixth-rank pet left a deep impression on everyone.

“Is that Su Yanying?”

“I heard she’s the first runner-up amongst the third-years.”

“She looks really good.”

In the distance, some of the parents who were attending the exhibition were jealous and envious of Su Yanying, who was surrounded by students. How glorious would it be if this happened to their children?

Lan Lele had already become a bodyguard. She stopped everyone who came to ask for autographs and questions about the reason for the Lightning Rat’s strength. She turned around and called out to Su Yanying, “You guys go ahead. Don’t bother about me. We’ll meet up at the same old place.” Her tone sounded like a warrior who was ready to die.

Su Ping grabbed Su Yanying’s hand and rushed into the academy as he saw the fanatical faces rushing toward him. He ran along a path of greenery. Behind him, a few boys were chasing after him, but they gave up after a short while. After all, it wouldn’t be nice to force things.

Su Ping stopped halfway and slapped his head. “Aren’t we here for publicity?”

Su Yanying said, "Yes."

"Then why are we running?"

"Uh, yes?"

Su Yanying and Su Ping stared at each other. However, it was a little strange to turn around and go back.

Su Ping pondered for a moment. "Forget it. Let's meet up with the second promoter first; I don't care if you don't want the trash at the door. You should know your college better, go find those rich ones first."

Su Yanying was stunned for a moment. She felt sorry for Lan Lele in her heart. After all, she was the school belle and the daughter of a rich family. Now, Su Ping was treating her as a second promoter... Wait, if she was number two, then who was number one?

Su Yanying was startled. By the time she came back to her senses, Su Ping was already far away.

She opened her mouth, smiled bitterly, and chased after him.

Not long after, the three of them met up at a pavilion in a meadow. Phoenix Peak Academy was extremely large and it was covered in greenery—from meadows to woods. Not only were there resting pavilions, but there were also some fish ponds for viewing.

"Hey, isn't that Han Xiangcheng and the rest?" Lan Lele suddenly saw a few people walking on a stone path.

Su Yanying's eyes lit up. She said to Su Ping, "All of them are on the battle power rankings."

"Battle power rankings?" Su Ping was surprised. "So they're rich? Hurry, don't let them go."

Su Yanying blushed a little when she heard Su Ping's urging. She had never taken the initiative to strike up a conversation with anyone. It was always others who took the first step. It was too embarrassing to pass out flyers at the academy.

Su Ping could tell that she was shy. He snapped, "Handing out flyers is also a job, okay? Are you looking down on this job?"

Su Yanying quickly replied, "No."

"Then why aren't you going?"

Su Yanying bit her lip. She had no choice but to brace herself and follow Lan Lele.

"Su Yanying?" The leader of the group, Han Xiangcheng, was a little surprised to see Su Yanying and Lan Lele jumping out of the room. Looking at their flushed faces, his heart skipped a beat. *Could it be that... they have taken a fancy to my handsome self?*

"Well, please take a look at this." Su Yanying blushed and handed a flyer to Han Xiangcheng.

Han Xiangcheng was a little puzzled. He took the flyer and looked at it. He couldn't help but be shocked. "What... what is this?"

“This is my Lightning Rat’s cultivation shop.” Su Yanying blushed. “My Lightning Rat was trained there. You can go there if you’re interested.”

“Ah?” Han Xiang Cheng was shocked, doubting his ears.

This is not how the story should unfold!

Wasn’t the beauty’s face red? Wasn’t it filled with love?

My heart was stirred, but you’re just showing me this?!

Su Yanying quickly passed each of them a flyer and said that they could visit if they liked it. Then, she turned around and ran away.

Seeing that she had settled everything before she could even speak, Lan Lele ran back with Su Yanying.

“Done.” Su Yanying panted as she ran. Her heart was pounding.

Su Ping saw that the other party had accepted the flyer from afar and was very satisfied. “Not bad, not bad. Let’s go find your rich classmates.”

Su Yanying and Lan Lele looked at each other. They knew that Su Ping’s cultivation service was not bad, but why did they feel like they were scamming their classmates?

The three of them wandered around the academy and soon found a new target. Su Yanying suddenly had an idea. She followed Lan Lele and returned shortly after. The thick flyers in their hands were gone.

Su Ping was surprised. “Where are the flyers?”

“They have them. They will hand them out for us.” Su Yanying giggled, her eyes filled with cunningness.

Su Ping was speechless.

They learned how to create downlines this fast?

“Then, did you tell them that they should prioritize the rich?” Su Ping asked.

“I did,” Su Yanying promised with all her might, but she didn’t dare to look Su Ping in the eye. She felt a bit guilty. Su Ping was expecting that as a matter of course, but how could she confess? Of course she didn’t.

However, she felt that even if she didn’t say it, as long as those flyers were distributed, Su Ping’s store would become more famous and the news would spread like wildfire. Everyone would know about it. They would have to line up to enter.

Su Ping took a glance at her and knew that she didn’t say anything. However, he couldn’t pursue the matter. As long as the promotion was done, dozens of people going to the store would be enough to keep him busy.

“Boss, let’s go watch the matches first. Although it’s not our turn yet, all the exhibition matches are very exciting. You have to see them.” Su Yanying immediately changed the topic.

Su Ping nodded. At this time, Su Lingyue’s exhibition match was about to begin.

“Are all the exhibition matches for the first to the third years at the same venue?” Su Ping asked.

“Of course.” Su Yanying grinned. “They’re all at the largest stadium.”

“Let’s go then,” Su Ping said.

With the two girls accompanying him, Su Ping walked towards the competition stadium.

Chapter 79: Seventh Rank

There was a huge plaza outside the venue.

Many students who had brought their relatives to the competition stadium were still strolling around.

Su Ping was surprised to find that it was as the news reported. The Phoenix Peak Academy had set off a storm of Lightning Rats. Among the students he had seen along the way, seven had a purple-furred Lightning Rat with them.

Those unaware would think that it was a school that specialized in cultivating Lightning Rats.

Su Yanying noticed Su Ping’s expression and said with a smile, “Boss, this is all thanks to you.”

Su Ping chuckled.

The three of them entered the stadium. The interior of the hall was huge, enough to accommodate a hundred thousand people.

Su Yanying and Lan Lele were clearly very familiar with the place, as they navigated through the complex sections and passageways with ease. Very soon, they arrived at a place with front row seats; the view was very good. This was the area from where the upperclassmen would watch the competition.

“Look, it’s Jiang Bingshan.” Lan Lele pouted.

At this moment, a man and a woman were engaged in a fierce battle in the stadium’s arena. However, although the battle seemed intense, it was just gaudy; not much lethality was involved. Even so, the atmosphere of the arena was pumped; people cheered uncontrollably.

Su Yanying glanced for a moment and then looked away. She was very calm.

“This time, she barely made it into the top eight. I heard that the academy assigned her to a second-level team. She had to serve in a Class C barren area for a year before she could be promoted to an official settler.” Lan Lele’s face was full of smiles, but her tone was dripping with a sense of schadenfreude. “Now, she can’t be arrogant in front of you anymore. You’re being fought over by those first-level battle teams. Once you reach the barren areas, you’ll become an official settler.

Besides, you only need to serve in the Class C barren area for three months before you’re sent for training in a Class B barren area. Your growth rate will definitely surpass her. It is not impossible for you to become a titled battle pet warrior in the future.”

Su Yanying looked at the tall and proud figure on the stage and sighed. She knew that she was only lucky to have met Su Ping. Otherwise, with her pets, she would only be able to enter the top eight at best; they were on par with her competitor’s.

But fate was like this. From then on, she would rise up and grow rapidly, completely severing this competitive relationship.

She would meet new opponents and see a wider world. All of this would turn into memories of the past.

“Barren area? Battle team?” Su Ping heard the two girls’ words and thought of Fan Yujing’s sister, Fan Xiaoyu. She was also a student of this school, but she had already entered the barren area for training.

He asked, “Do you all become settlers after graduation?”

Lan Lele shook her head and said, “Yingying will; It’s her dream. But I won’t. Even if I’m willing, my father won’t let me. Besides, I don’t want to go to a godforsaken place like a barren area. I can’t even shower every day.”

Su Yanying smiled and said, “That’s nothing if it means I can become a powerful battle pet warrior.”

Lan Lele pursed her lips. “Why should I become a powerful battle pet warrior? Even if I’m an eighth-rank battle pet warrior, I’m still my father’s bodyguard. There’s nothing in this world that money can’t resolve—unless you don’t have enough money. Earning money is the most important thing!”

Su Yanying smiled bitterly. She knew that she wouldn’t be able to find a common ground with her in this topic. The environment of their upbringing was different, and everyone pursued their dreams differently.

“Isn’t this Su Yanying?” Suddenly, a gentle and calm voice could be heard. The few of them turned around and saw three people walking in their direction, two of them trailing behind like lackeys. The young man walking in front was dressed in casual clothes. He had short hair and looked very spirited. His eyes were deep and warm, but he had a sharpness that could burst out at any moment. His temperament was restrained, but his outstanding persona would attract everyone’s attention wherever he went.

“Ye Hao?” Su Yanying was surprised to see the young man. “Why are you here?”

“This is where the audience stands are. Why can’t I come here?” Ye Hao smiled.

Su Yanying knew that she had said something wrong and shook her head. “No, that’s not what I meant. Shouldn’t you be with your class?”

Ye Hao smiled and said, “I came here looking for you.”

“You’re looking for me?”

“That’s right.” Ye Hao smiled. “The last time I fought with your Lightning Rat, my Thunder Basilisk seemed to have been agitated. It has broken through and has reached the seventh rank, officially entering adulthood. Although it’s still too early to become a real adult, it’s still all good. I’m here to thank you.”

“It broke through to the seventh rank?” Su Yanying was stunned. Lan Lele, who was standing next to her, was shocked as well. The other party was just a student in school. He had already nurtured a seventh rank pet!

Moreover, to be able to summon a seventh-rank pet, one could only imagine how powerful Ye Hao's astral power cultivation had to be!

"You... you can't be an advanced battle pet warrior, right?" Lan Lele couldn't help but ask. If that were the case, it would be too shocking!

Ye Hao glanced at her and laughed. "It's not that fast. We're still students, aren't we? I used to have level-four astral power and suffered a backlash by the Thunder Basilisk. I was lucky enough to break through to level-five. With my astral power, I can only barely summon the Thunder Basilisk. I can't let it stay out for long."

"Fifth level?" Su Yanying and Lan Lele's expressions changed when they heard his words. They were still at the fourth level. Su Yanying was in the middle of the fourth level while Lan Lele was in the lower position of the fourth level. Her strength was already considered outstanding and she was a top student in her class.

However, compared to Ye Hao's fifth level, she paled in comparison.

At the level of a middle-rank battle pet warrior, the difference between astral power levels was extremely obvious, not to mention that there was a huge gap between them. It was like a chasm that couldn't be bridged.

"Apart from gratitude, I'm here to say hi to you. After the Thunder Basilisk broke through to the seventh rank, it underwent some changes. It has a dragon's might. I haven't learned how to restrain it yet," Ye Hao said, "You know that this is an exhibition match. If your Lightning Rat were to tremble in fear, I'm afraid things will turn a little nasty. Although your Lightning Rat is monstrous, it is still of a low-class bloodline. It is natural to fear high-class bloodlines.

"So, I suggest that you use your Fallen Phoenix to fight me. In that case, at least it will look good. I will show mercy."

If it weren't for Ye Hao's gentle smile, Su Yanying would have thought that he was there to provoke her. However, seeing that Ye Hao didn't seem to have any ill intentions, she felt a little depressed and uncomfortable, but she still said, "I understand. I will consider it."

"You don't have to consider further," Su Ping heard what she had said and stepped in, "You can fight however you want. It's just a seventh-rank pet. Not only is it not an adult, the Lightning Rat won't be scared even if an adult Beast King shows up."

"Huh?" Ye Hao, Su Yanying, and the others looked at Su Ping. Su Yanying was stunned for a moment. Her eyes lit up. "Really?" Su Ping was the cause of the Lightning Rat's change. She was convinced by Su Ping's words.

Moreover, she remembered that there was a battle against the Dragon Hound. The Dragon Hound had used a deterrence technique mixed with dragon's might at the time, but it was ineffective against the Lightning Rat. It was clear that Su Ping's words were not baseless.

"And this is?" Ye Hao frowned. He was polite to Su Yanying because she had been scouted by a first-rate team and had a bright future ahead of her. However, he had never seen Su Ping before. He wasn't on the college's battle power rankings.

Besides, Su Ping sounded exaggerated. What did an adult Beast King mean? Just seeing one might already mean death.

This was one of the few monsters in the world. Ignoring the Lightning Rat, even the proud Thunder Basilisk would tremble in front of a Beast King. Could it be that the Lightning Rat had a higher blood lineage than the Thunder Basilisk and had a prideful temperament?

Chapter 80: Appointment Fee

Su Yanying then remembered she had not made the proper introductions. She immediately said, “Ye Hao, this is Boss Su. My Lightning Rat was trained in his store. He is also half the owner of my Lightning Rat. Speaking of which, Boss Su might know more about the Lightning Rat than I do. Boss Su, Ye Hao is the champion of our school’s annual tournament. He is the one who is most willing to spend money on pets.”

*1*The latter half of the sentence was obviously a hint to Su Ping.

“Boss Su?” Ye Hao was surprised. Su Ping was about his age. The latter was a few years younger than him. How was he such a young boss?

Moreover, the Lightning Rat had been groomed in his store? Didn’t that mean that he had a master in his store?

To be able to hire a cultivation master at such a young age, could it be someone from a large conglomerate or a large family clan?

He didn’t doubt Su Yanying’s words; such a lie would not do Su Yanying any good. If word got out, it would lower her standing in the eyes of her mentor and the battle team. After all, everyone thought that she had trained the Lightning Rat herself.

In that short moment, many thoughts surfaced in his mind, and the coldness on his face disappeared without a trace. He maintained his composure and smiled. “So, the Lightning Rat was trained in Boss Su’s store. I wonder where Boss Su’s store is? If there’s a chance, I hope that you can help me cultivate my Thunder Basilisk. No matter how much it costs, I’m willing to pay for it. Of course, money is nothing special. Boss Su, you may not be interested in it, but if there’s anything else that I need to do, I’ll do my best. I’m absolutely sincere!”

*1*When Su Yanying and Lan Lele heard his words, they thought to themselves, *Nope. He just wants money.*

Su Ping would not reject a business offer. Judging from the man’s appearance, he was obviously rich. He nodded. “Since you’re so sincere, I can consider it. If you give me a hundred thousand now, I can consider nurturing your pet with priority.”

“One hundred thousand?” Su Yanying and Lan Lele were startled when they heard Su Ping’s exorbitant demand. They couldn’t help but glance at Su Ping. *And this is just to get in line?*

They thought that Su Ping had been nefarious enough. But, he could be even worse. This was daylight robbery!

Before Su Ping opened his mouth, he had asked the system inwardly and got the answer he wanted.

The system was only responsible for keeping a close eye on the cost of the service in the store. It didn't care about anything else.

For example, the gratitude fee and the queuing fee were all things Su Ping could arrange and decide for himself.

1However, the system would not help to convert the extra money Su Ping collected into energy. Therefore, money was just money.

Although money could not be used to buy items from the system store, money was very useful in the Federation, nearly omnipotent in fact. Just as Lan Lele had said, you could buy anything with enough money. This included the things in warehouses. With enough money, one could also spend money to hire settlers to buy them with merit points before trading with them.

Su Ping had come up with this idea at the last minute. He didn't expect it to work. This could be considered as taking advantage of the system's loopholes. After all, the system's prices were too rigid; loopholes could be found in rigidity. Humans happened to be the most cunning creatures, able to exploit such loopholes.

What pained Su Ping was not having thought of this sooner. Otherwise, he could have gotten more money from Su Yanying.

However, Su Yanying didn't even have the money for the nurturing. He couldn't get much from a poor person.

Su Ping glanced at Su Yanying, who was standing next to him.

“???”

Su Yanying was baffled.

Why did she feel like she was being despised?

1“One hundred thousand?” Ye Hao was stunned for a moment when he heard Su Ping's words. He gave him a strange look. It wasn't that he found it strange to be asked for money, nor did he find it very exorbitant. On the contrary, he felt that the pricing was too low.

To be able to cultivate a low-level Lightning Rat to such a level, it had to be done by a master trainer.

As for the store that had a master trainer, the queuing fee was only a hundred thousand?

Was a hundred thousand even considered money?

In his eyes, that was not the case.

As far as he knew, those well-known pet shops with a master trainer needed years to make an advanced appointment. If they wanted to cut the queue, they would need at least a few hundred

thousand. If they were to directly cut the queue to the front of the line, they would need at least a million.

“No problem.” Ye Hao immediately nodded his head. As he agreed, he glanced at Su Yanying and then at Lan Lele beside her. Although 100,000 wasn’t money to him, it was a little foolish to give it willy-nilly. He thought that Lan Lele’s family was rich after all, so everything they said could be trusted.

Su Ping was stunned for a moment when he saw Ye Hao agree so readily. He regretted it immediately.

When a man is poor, his ambition isn’t far-reaching!

It seemed like he had accepted too little!

He sighed in his heart, but he couldn’t go back on his word at this moment. Was he going to simply accept it? He pondered for a moment and suddenly remembered that he had said he was going to consider. Yes, consider.

The word “consider” was debatable.

He glanced at Ye Hao and said, “Since you’re so straightforward, I’ll let you be the tenth in line.”

1Su Yanying and Lan Lele were dumbfounded once again.

Tenth?

Are there people making advanced appointments at your shop?

If they remembered correctly, every time they went to Su Ping’s store, the boss would be slumped on the counter doing nothing. The store was bleak. There weren’t any customers.

Besides, if someone really made an appointment, would they still be forced to send out flyers?!

Ye Hao, on the other hand, felt that it was very normal and was rather happy. However, he noticed that Su Yanying and Lan Lele’s expressions seemed a little strange. He couldn’t help but feel that something was amiss. He pondered for a moment and felt that there shouldn’t be any problems. There was no chance that they were lying.

If he was a liar, with his family’s connections, he absolutely could make Su Ping pay a heavy price!

“Okay.” Ye Hao agreed. He asked for Su Ping’s account and immediately transferred 100,000 to him.

Su Ping clicked his tongue poignantly when he heard the sound of a deposit notification. This was a rich and handsome guy from a famous school. He spent money without batting an eyelid. *Sure enough, it wasn’t wrong to come here to fleece... no—solicit business.*

“Okay. I’ll inform you of the exact time when it’s your turn,” Su Ping said generously.

Ye Hao nodded slightly and suddenly asked, “Boss Su, from what you said earlier, have you personally seen Beast Kings before?”

“Yes,” Su Ping said casually.

Su Yanying and Lan Lele were stunned when they heard this. They looked at Su Ping in astonishment. He had seen a Beast King before? They had only seen one in the disaster news at most. But in reality, they hadn't even seen a ninth-rank pet, not to mention a Beast King.

Ye Hao was taken aback. He took a closer look at Su Ping. Could he really be a member of a big family? Only those big family clans had the ability to protect their clansmen so that they had the chance to see a Beast King in real life as a way to embolden them.

However, it was also possible that he was just taking a peek from afar. It wasn't as amazing as he thought.

"Boss Su is indeed extraordinary," he praised with a smile.

Su Ping was pleased. *This young man has a bright future.*

With the two ladies by his side, Ye Hao didn't want to appear too humble. After all, his status wasn't too bad either. After informing the two girls, he turned around and left.

Once Ye Hao was gone, Su Yanying asked Su Ping at once, "Boss, is it true what you said? Have you really seen a Beast King? And, is my Lightning Rat really not afraid of one?"

Su Ping nodded his head. "It's basically immune to deterrence-type skills. So, feel free to fight with the Lightning Rat. After all, your match will be the grand finale. I'm sure everyone here has heard about your Lightning Rat. If they don't see it in action, wouldn't they be disappointed? They might even think that all the hearsay was just a bunch of false rumors."

Su Yanying was taken aback. She had never thought about this. Su Ping's words made sense. In that case, even if the Lightning Rat was intimidated by the advanced Thunder Basilisk, she had no choice but to battle with it.

Lan Lele nodded as well. "Boss is right. If you use the Fallen Phoenix, even if the other party is willing to give in, it will be a one-sided defeat, making the Thunder Basilisk stand out in the entire exhibition match. Your brilliance will be completely covered up and no one will pay attention to you anymore. Instead, if you use the Lightning Rat, as long as you display the skills of your pet, it will be enough to attract attention. It doesn't matter if you lose."

"I understand." Su Yanying nodded. Seeing that something was wrong with her expression, she asked, "Why?"

Lan Lele snorted at the direction where Ye Hao had left and said, "This Ye Hao has ill intentions. These days, all the academy has been talking about your Lightning Rat. I think he's just jealous and wants to steal your limelight. What kind reminder? He's just a snobbish fellow." She had been born in a business environment, so she was more sensitive to these things than Su Yanying.

Su Yanying was not stupid. She understood what she meant and frowned slightly.

Lan Lele snorted and said, "It's a good thing that Boss cheated him out of a hundred thousand. He paid a small price for it. Hmph, who asked him to scheme against someone?"

Su Ping objected, "What do you mean by me cheating him out of a hundred thousand? My pricing is very reasonable, all right!?"