

Chapter 591: Puzzled

Aden walked away. Next, Charon approached Lu Yin and looked at him with a complex expression. "Congratulations, you've broken through to the Explorer realm."

"It's nothing worth congratulating," Lu Yin commented indifferently.

"I saw Tian Hou," Charon said. "He was exchanging blows with someone from the Myriad Swords Peak. Even a Hunter can't deal with that beast."

Lu Yin did not find that unexpected. Although he had not seen Tian Hou during the battle, that must have simply been because Seasons Fort was too large. However, he was confident that Tian Hou must have seen him. After all, killing an Enlighter beast was too big of a commotion.

"I really admire you. You were able to defeat such a monster!" Charon exclaimed.

Lu Yin laughed. "I've already killed five Enlighters."

Charon was speechless, and just walked away silently.

What was Tian Hou compared to an Enlighter?

Ironblood Weave was not that large, so it didn't take long to go to Brokenblade Fort from Seasons Fort. The closer the survivors got to the fort, the easier it was for them to panic since it also meant that the astral beasts' invasion was closer than ever.

This was Lu Yin's second time seeing Brokenblade Fort, as it was the first place that he had seen upon entering Ironblood Weave, and now, it might end up being the last thing he saw in the weave.

Brokenblade Fort had already made preparations to welcome the survivors.

The scene of Wang Wen and the others arriving at Seasons Fort after the fall of Ironblood Fort was relived here. Everyone at Brokenblade Fort silently watched the arrival.

The commander of Brokenblade Fort was called Han Fei, and he was a nominal mentor from Erudite Flowzone's Lost Radiance Academy, as well as an Enlighter with a power level of 230,000.

Once they arrived at Brokenblade Fort, Wang Wen watched Lu Yin like a hawk until he returned all of the resources that he had been given to transport from Seasons Fort to Brokenblade Fort's warehouse. After he made the deposit, he was allowed to take 140,000 star essence from the repository.

Since Seasons Fort had fallen, the battle system had not been able to update Lu Yin's ranking, but it was pointless since he had immediately exchanged all of his points away.

After he handed the resources over, Lu Yin had intended to find a place to rest and use his newly gained wealth to upgrade something. However, a cultivator appeared to escort him to see Han Fei, who was already accompanied by Wang Wen and Topmist.

Topmist was still shrouded in his black mist, making it impossible to see his face.

Wang Wen's face was solemn.

Han Fei looked at Lu Yin with a stern expression. "Please be seated."

Lu Yin sat down without much courtesy. He had gained the qualifications to act in such a manner. After all, not even Han Fei had killed more Enlighters than Lu Yin.

"No matter what methods you employed, being able to kill Enlighter beasts means that you qualify to stand on an equal footing with us. Brother Lu—I'll call you as such, is that alright?" Han Fei asked. Although he looked stern, he was actually unexpectedly polite.

Lu Yin nodded. "Of course."

"The astral beasts' invasion is imminent, and so, I hope that Brother Lu can help us as you did at Seasons Fort and point out where the holes in the sourceboxes' danger zones are," Han Fei said solemnly.

Lu Yin nodded. "I understand. Rest assured, Commander."

Han Fei acknowledged him with a grunt, and then he looked at Topmist. "For now, Brokenblade Fort only has us two Enlighters. I'll protect Wang Wen and you'll protect Brother Lu."

Topmist replied with a hoarse voice, "He does not require any protection."

Han Fei frowned. "These are direct orders from Elder Lohar. Nothing can be allowed to happen to Brother Lu, and his protection level has been upgraded to the highest grade."

Lu Yin was stunned to hear that Elder Lohar actually valued him so highly. It seemed that his value had been realized and that he no longer needed to cower in front of Enlighters after his breakthrough to the Explorer realm. With his universal armor and the Yu Secret Art, he was confident in facing off against any Enlighter, which was not as simple as being a Realmbreaker. If the Hall of Honor valued Wang Wen for his monstrous intelligence, then they valued Lu Yin for his monstrous battle abilities. One was combat and the other was strategic.

Of course, Lu Yin relied on external strength to achieve his combat power.

Topmist did not dare to defy the orders of a Hall of Honor Elder.

There was nothing much left to discuss after Han Fei's announcement, and there was only one thing left to do: fight.

Lu Yin's current authority was very impressive, and he was allowed to stay at Brokenblade Fort's command center or even visit any location he wished.

He sent Topmist away, as he wanted to talk with Wang Wen.

"I've always wanted to ask—is Wang really your surname?" Lu Yin looked at him.

Wang Wen's eyes flashed. "You're surnamed Lu."

"You should know what I'm trying to ask," Lu Yin said gravely.

Wang Wen nodded. "Yes, but you'll unfortunately have to be disappointed, because I know nothing."

"That's impossible. Your intelligence is so high, but you're going to tell me that you've never looked into the secret of the primeval surnames even after so many years? How many are there? And why are they

being discriminated against? Why do people with such names have to obtain a legal status? You've never looked into any of this?" Lu Yin asked.

Wang Wen sighed before helplessly explaining, "I've investigated, but I've found nothing. Let me put it this way. The primeval surnames are even more troublesome than the Neohuman Alliance. At the very least, the Neohuman Alliance is able to survive. Meanwhile, the primeval surnames are different. As soon as someone with an illegal status shows up, they are immediately judged. There are many organizations in the universe that don't allow anyone with a primeval surname to join them, even if that person has a legal status. Carrying a primeval surname means that you carry an unfair burden."

"I know all this. What I actually want to ask is if you've heard of the Primeval Surname Alliance." Lu Yin stared into Wang Wen's eyes.

Wang Wen was astonished. "The Primeval Surname Alliance? There's an organization like that?"

Lu Yin was disappointed, as the shock in Wang Wen's eyes was genuine, which indicated that he had truly never heard of the alliance. "Do you know which family names are considered to be primeval surnames?"

Wang Wen thought about it. "Wang, Xia, Liu, Lu, Bai. I only know these five, and I'm not sure about any others."

Lu Yin nodded and left.

Wang Wen looked at Lu Yin's retreating figure, muttered to himself, and then softly said to the departing Lu Yin, "Chesspiece Bro, don't discuss the primeval surnames with others ever again. Never mind it. Regardless, you're legal."

Lu Yin waved a hand and did not reply, but his eyes turned cold. Legal? When he had been judged in the past, there had been a single piece of paper with seventy two people with the Lu surname, which had represented seventy two lives. His legal status had been bought with those seventy two human lives.

No matter if it was because of his missing memories or for those seventy two lives, Lu Yin had to investigate the secret of the primeval surnames. Why had they been sentenced to such a life, and why did they face such injustice? Also what about Earth and Jupiter?

Unfortunately, there was no use thinking about such things at the moment. If Ironblood Weave could not repel the astral beast invasion, then the humans in the Outerverse would be exterminated without giving anyone the possibility of escaping.

Outside the command center, Topmist had hidden himself in a corner in the form of a mass of black mist.

Lu Yin glanced over at the Enlighter. "I heard that when you defended Seasons Fort, you used a power vessel to kill an old freak with a power level that passed 300,000."

"That's right." Topmist was downcast.

Lu Yin looked at him. "If you had such a powerful power vessel, why didn't you use it in the Primal Zone? If you had done so, we would have destroyed the gap in the energy stream."

Topmist fell silent.

“If I’ve realized this, then so will Wang Wen, and many others too. Old fart, you better come up with a good excuse,” Lu Yin sneered.

Topmist grew furious. “Kid, despite everything, I’m still your senior! You’d best be more polite to me. Even if you have that secret technique and that gun, I have no reason to fear you as long as I’m prepared.”

“Old fart, you still owe me for that matter from Shuta Planet,” Lu Yin said coldly.

Topmist was puzzled. “What are you talking about? You plotted to kill Elder Wu on Shuta Planet, and I didn’t harm you at all.”

“Don’t try to tell me that the Hunter from Darkstar Gorge who chased after me wasn’t doing so because of the information that you leaked, which must have included how I killed Elder Wu.” Lu Yin snorted.

“I’m a killer, and I value promises and trust. Your methods were never revealed by me. I didn’t speak a single word about them. It’s up to you whether or not you want to believe me.”

Lu Yin’s eyes trembled, and he looked at Topmist. “You weren’t the one to leak that information? Why would I believe that?”

“Hehe, when you defended Seasons Fort, you used that gun more than once, and now, many know your tools. Is there any point for me to lie to you at this point? It wasn’t me who revealed your techniques.”

Lu Yin’s eyes narrowed, but he still did not believe Topmist. Did killers really honor trust? But then again, what if it really hadn’t been Topmist? Who else could it have been? There had only been a select few who had known what his method for killing Enlighteners was, and aside from Topmist, the rest were all from the Great Yu Empire. Hold on. Lu Yin suddenly thought of someone: Granny Chan. She had been around when he had killed Lei Long.

Could it have been her? Or was Topmist lying?

“Eh, aren’t you Lu Yin?” There was a shout from a girl who looked at Lu Yin in amazement. The girl had a fish on top of her head.

Lu Yin looked over at her. “Xi Qi?”

“Hey, familiar two-legged beast,” the fish atop Xi Qi’s head greeted him.

Xi Qi looked excited upon seeing Lu Yin, and she hurriedly walked over. “Lu Yin, is it really you? That’s wonderful! You aren’t dead.”

Lu Yin was similarly surprised. “You’re here too.”

“Two-legged beast, Lord Fish can tell that you’re decent. Come, you can be a mount for Lord Fish,” the fish said.

The Ghost Monkey's voice rang out in Lu Yin's head, "Seventh Bro, smack that cheap fish! It even dares to try to make you its mount! Isn't he insulting this monkey?"

Lu Yin could not be bothered with the fish or the monkey, and he only spoke with Xi Qi. He wanted to learn about the current situation concerning the Outerverse's Lockbreaker Society.

"Ever since the Innaverse and Outerverse became separated, many people became unreachable, such as Brother Casanova, President Geoffrey, and Master Wusheng. We might never see them again in our lives," Xi Qi said dully.

"Are there still any Boundless Advanced Lockbreakers in the Outerverse Lockbreaker Society right now?" Lu Yin asked.

"Two-legged beast, Lord Fish is talking to you!"

"Seventh Bro, kick its tail!"

Xi Qi shook her head. "No. From what I know, all of the registered Boundless Advanced Lockbreakers are either in the Innaverse or the Neoverse."

Lu Yin felt that it was a pity.

"Two-legged beast, you've improved! Come over here. Lord Fish will accompany you and train you."

"Seventh Bro, let this monkey out to 'train' with it."

"The entire Outerverse Lockbreaker Society has come to Ironblood Weave to assist in the defense of the five lower strongholds. The commander hopes that we can mend the holes in the sourceboxes' danger zones, but that's something that can only be done by a Boundless Advanced Lockbreaker."

"Two-legged beast, Lord Fish is growing unhappy."

"Seventh Bro, this monkey is also unhappy."

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After a short talk, Lu Yin and Xi Qi went their separate ways, and Wang Wen urged Lu Yin to start updating the locations of the holes in the sourceboxes' danger zones.

When watching Lu Yin leave, Xi Qi commented, "He's strong. Can't you feel it? After he broke through to the Explorer realm, Lu Yin's strength has greatly improved, and it doesn't seem possible to see his limits."

Atop her head, that fish serenely responded, "His physical strength and domain have undergone a fundamental change, and he's also gained an unclear strength. Girl, you should follow him. Follow that two-legged beast."

"Why?" Xi Qi was puzzled.

"Fool! Only by following him will you be able to survive. Lord Fish does not wish to frequently change mounts, so go on. Follow him!" The fish slapped its tail as it urged the girl.

Xi Qi was placed in a difficult position and grew embarrassed. "That wouldn't be very good."

“What are you afraid of? Just inform him that Lord Fish is recruiting him as a mount! He’ll be more than elated.” The fish was pleased with itself.

Xi Qi was left speechless.

Chapter 592: Targeted

One day later, Brokenblade Fort rumbled as countless attacks launched out with Lu Yin’s instructions. As they soared into the sky, they destroyed a large batch of Void Wanderers.

Brokenblade Fort cheered, as they had never fought such a satisfying battle before.

Han Fei relaxed, as this was how it should be. As long as they destroyed more Void Wanderers, the astral beasts’ invasion would be delayed, and their progress would slow.

Wang Wen’s face looked unpleasant. According to his analysis, since the battle had progressed to this step, the astral beasts should be giving it their all. They should not be acting as cautiously as they had been against Seasons Fort. Rather, they should be feeling rushed due to Seasons Fort collapsing.

Wang Wen had not guessed wrongly. Soon, a howl shocked the stronghold as Monster Loach appeared.

No old freak with a power level that exceeded 300,000 had ever appeared to attack Brokenblade Fort before. However, Monster Loach had made an exception this time and appeared by itself to take on the attacks of the entire Brokenblade Fort. This meant that the defenders were unable to quickly eliminate the Void Wanderers, and the battle soon became a drawn out affair.

Lu Yin lowered his gadget since battle was about to break out again.

“Try to hide yourself. I can’t take care of you,” Lu Yin said softly before leaping into the sky.

Xi Qi looked at Lu Yin’s shrinking figure. “What should we do?”

The fish wagged its tail. “Hide.”

“That can’t be very good.” Xi Qi was caught in a dilemma.

The fish looked up, pleased. “Look at the heavens! Do you see that large fish? That’s Lord Fish’s relative. Rest assured. Anyone can die here except for you.”

Xi Qi looked blankly at Monster Loach. “Relative? More like a distant ancestor.”

The fish was pleased. “That’s right, an ancestor!”

“That’s your ancestor?”

“Rubbish! Lord Fish is that one’s ancestor.”

Boom!

There was a loud explosion as Monster Loach’s tail shattered Brokenblade Fort’s command center. Han Fei and Topmist acted in unison to stop it, but they were blocked by the other Enlighter realm astral beasts.

Wang Wen hid in his coffin again, only to be sent crashing into another part of the fort.

Lu Yin dashed into space, and his eyes scanned the surroundings. There were four Enlighter beasts here as well as Monster Loach. This was troubling, as his gun only had four shots left, and only two days had passed since he had last rolled his die. Thus, it was nearly guaranteed that he would not be able to get three pips: Enhance. This was a battle that he had to win as is, or die trying.

What about Elder Lohar? Why hadn't he been able to hold back Monster Loach?

Monster Loach continued rampantly destroying Brokenblade Fort in a berserk fashion. Against this terrifying beast whose power level had reached 300,000, even the thousands of planets and the hundreds of floating continents that had assembled together were quickly destroyed.

Lu Yin had nothing left that he could use to threaten Monster Loach, but he could still intimidate the fish. He thought about it for a moment before pointing his gun at Monster Loach.

Monster Loach suddenly stopped all movement and quickly shrank down until it had vanished into the void. It was gone.

Lu Yin was stunned. That old bastard couldn't have been constantly guarding against me, could it? That thing's too wily.

Suddenly, Lu Yin's back went cold. The void split open, and an Enlighter beast rushed out to crash into his back, sending him tumbling quite far.

At the same time, another Enlighter beast appeared and swatted out at Lu Yin.

Lu Yin's performance at Seasons Fort had attracted too much attention, and his ranking on the Celestial Vanquisher's List had climbed higher and higher. Now, he was the target of countless astral beasts.

There was another thump, and a wave of Lu Yin's hand caused a bullet to vanish only to reappear right in the skull of an Enlighter realm beast. It only took a moment for its head to explode.

But there was something strange—that Enlighter beast did not die. Instead, another head grew out. This was the creature's innate gift.

There was another thump, and Lu Yin was sent flying by its paw.

Lu Yin struggled to stabilize himself as he panted heavily. He had been targeted by such a strange beast with an exotic gift. It would be difficult to kill it since he did not know what its weakness even was. This would be difficult.

Against the Enlighter realm beasts, Lu Yin's only defensive method was his universal armor, but no matter how sturdy it was, it could not resist the constant back-and-forth attacks from two Enlighter realm beasts.

"Seventh Bro, hurry up and think of a way, or run!" the monkey shrieked.

Lu Yin gritted his teeth, as he did not know if he would be able to successfully flee if he made the attempt. The Void Thunderbeast's flesh could let him escape into the distance, but was there any point? If Brokenblade Fort collapsed, then the entire Outerverse would be thrust into the apocalypse.

Crack!

The Enneadic Wings split apart, and Lu Yin quickly stored them away before pulling out the Stellar Ruler. He evaded an attack and then teleported a great distance in an instant. He continued to pant as he stared into the distance.

The two Enlighter beasts were staring at him. "Human, surrender. The Celestial Beast Empire will welcome you."

"Human, you should feel very honored that you have forced the two of us to deal with an Explorer like yourself, and you have even caused Senior Monster Loach to fear you. However, it all ends here," the other Enlighter beast said.

Lu Yin panted heavily. His palms were covered with sweat as he kept a wary eye on the two Enlighter beasts. At this moment, he saw a sudden bolt of lightning light up an area in the distance, and he charged towards one of the Enlighter beasts. "Even if I die, you'll join me! Try me if you don't believe it."

The two Enlighter beasts exchanged fearful glances, as even Monster Loach was wary of this Explorer before them. They did not think too much of Lu Yin's charge and were about to conceal themselves within the void, but then, one of the two Enlighter beasts was suddenly sent flying by a humongous thunder shield. Lu Yin took advantage of this opportunity to fire his gun and use the Yu Secret Art to send the bullet into the other Enlighter's head.

Its head exploded again, but it grew back just like before. However, this time, the head was clearly much smaller.

The Enlighter beast swung out with a paw to repel Aden. Then, it fled into the void to join the first beast. Lu Yin didn't even get a chance to fire his gun a second time.

Lu Yin felt that it was a pity. He was about to speak when a darkness enveloped the area above him. He looked up, and his eyes shrank. Aden similarly stared up in amazement.

Monster Loach had appeared out of the blue, lashing down at the two of them with its tail.

The two of them were instantly batted away.

Aden's thunder shield was shattered by the massive force, and his nine-lined battle force collapsed. He spat out a mouthful of blood as he landed on a planet, with no one knowing if he was dead or alive as he fell into a pool of magma.

Lu Yin was still alright, since Monster Loach's attack was not able to break through his universal armor's defenses. Nonetheless, his brain had been jostled, and he felt dizzy. He crashed into a sturdy object. What could be this tough?

"Chesspiece Bro? You almost crushed me to death!" Wang Wen exclaimed.

Lu Yin opened his eyes and saw that, coincidentally, he had landed on top of Wang Wen's transparent coffin after being struck by Monster Loach.

In the heavens, Monster Loach released a tremendous roar, and many covered their ears in pain.

Right at this moment, an elder in a white gown appeared in front of Monster Loach and pressed both hands against the beast's head. The elder then pushed Monster Loach towards the danger zone formed by the numerous sourceboxes.

"Old man Lohar!" Monster Loach roared as its two whiskers swept towards the old man.

The elder allowed the whiskers to thrash against him, and fresh blood flowed down from the corners of his mouth, but he still pushed Monster Loach into the invisible danger zone formed by the sourceboxes.

Every stronghold had a similar setup of sourceboxes that had been arranged to create a defensive perimeter, but unfortunately, after countless years, holes had appeared in the defenses.

If it had been pushed into the danger zones that had protected Ironblood Fort, Monster Loach would have been in trouble, but the danger of Brokenblade Fort's sourceboxes was not nearly as threatening.

"Old man, why are you here?" Monster Loach shouted.

The elder stared at Monster Loach. "I killed that Amethyst Beast."

"Impossible! That freak's defense is even greater than mine's!" Monster Loach shouted.

The elder sneered as a strange weapon appeared in his hand that he aimed at Monster Loach. "You're next."

Monster Loach's massive eyes went wide in bewilderment.

Lu Yin looked up and saw the two's interactions. When he saw the elder's rune lines, they seemed to be overflowing into the surrounding area. The man's strength was currently even greater than Monster Loach's, but the rune lines were also quickly dissipating. Could this be Elder Lohar? He had been injured, and not lightly at that.

In comparison, Monster Loach wasn't very injured, and if the two really fought, Elder Lohar would not be able to defeat Monster Loach in his current state.

However, Monster Loach was too timid, and after being intimidated by the old man, it retreated.

The battle ended soon after Elder Lohar appeared.

Lu Yin let out a breath, as he had been targeted during this battle and prevented from displaying any of his formidable strength. Topmist had only focused on fleeing during the conflict, and Han Fei had done his best to hold back an Enlightener realm beast. If not for Elder Lohar intimidating Monster Loach into backing off, the outcome of the battle would have been bleak.

"You can scare it once but not twice," Wang Wen grudgingly commented as he stepped out of his coffin.

Lu Yin was astonished. "You could tell?"

Wang Wen rolled his eyes. "You guys will never be able to understand the superiority of intellect. It's something on a whole other level."

At this time, Elder Lohar was not the only new arrival, and numerous other spacecraft started to appear at Brokenblade Fort. They brought with them news that Giantghost Fort had fallen.

Yellowsoil Fort's fall had closely followed the collapse of Seasons Fort, and all the survivors had retreated back to the five lower strongholds. Lu Yin had made a special point to check on whether Wendy Yushan was still listed on the rankings, and that she was fine. Now, he had learned that Giantghost Fort had also collapsed.

The three middle strongholds had all fallen, and now, the Outerverse's last line of defense was these five lower strongholds.

Almost half of Brokenblade Fort had crumbled during the battle. The survivors from Giantghost Fort were considered reinforcements, but in a similar manner, the astral beasts that had attacked Giantghost Fort would also move to join the assault against Brokenblade Fort.

Giantghost Fort originally had four Enlighters stationed there, and they were Commander Long Ke, Elder Qing Han, Huo Houye, and Meng Ningge. Of them, only Huo Houye had survived, and the others had all been killed in action.

Elder Lohar had bluffed Monster Loach into backing off, as the Enlighter realm Amethyst Beast had not died.

Because of this lie, although they had driven back Monster Loach, the next battle would definitely arrive quicker than normal, and they would likely only have one or two days before battle broke out once more.

Although it had already proven to be ineffective, Lu Yin still continued to update the positions of the gaps in the sourceboxes' formless danger zones. Due to the previous battle, his Ironblood Points had shot up into the top fifty once again.

During this most recent battle at Brokenblade Fort, Lu Yin had held back Enlighter beasts, and he had even made Monster Loach nervous. These contributions were not insignificant, but since he had not killed any Enlighter beasts during this battle, he only managed to earn a few thousands of points. Still, they were enough to propel him up into the top fifty of the Ironblood Points rankings.

Having his name in the list meant that Lu Yin was still alive. He did not exchange his points this time, and he hoped that Wendy Yushan as well as anyone else who cared about him would see the information that he was fine.

Aden had sustained heavy injuries during this battle, but fortunately, Huo Qingshan had pulled him out at a critical moment. Otherwise, Aden might have met his end. At this moment, he was being treated.

At Brokenblade Fort's command center, Commander Han Fei, Wang Wen, Topmist, and Huo Houye were all in a meeting.

"Invite Brother Lu here," Han Fei ordered.

Huo Houye frowned, as he was aware that this "Brother Lu" to whom Han Fei was referring to was Lu Yin. The genius had become an Explorer by now, and he had even caused two Enlighter realm beasts to

gang up on him. Even if Huo Houye was an Enlightener himself, he had to admire this kid, as he was indeed a freak. Even when the Ten Arbiters were Explorers, they had not been able to accomplish such things!

“There’s no need to summon him right now. He needs to constantly observe the holes. The Astral Beast Domain must be feeling very anxious about this invasion, or else they would not have forced that cowardly Monster Loach into the vanguard position. Something must have happened in the Astral Beast Domain, so let Lu Yin continue his observations.”

Han Fei nodded. A few of them had also sensed the urgency of the Astral Beast Domain’s invasion, and the gathered experts started to discuss their subsequent battle plans. They wanted to know which astral beasts had destroyed Giantghost Fort, as well as what abilities and innate gifts they had so that they could make some preparations for the coming battle.

Chapter 593: Kong Shi’s Hopes

In another part of the stronghold, due to Wang Wen’s orders, Brokenblade Fort’s warehouse was opened. Everybody in the top fifty of the Ironblood Point rankings were able to obtain some free resources, and the top ten were even able to receive some power vessels.

Those of Ironblood Weave knew that, once they fell, everything was over. The commanders knew that they may as well give out some more resources to the defenders so that they could kill more beasts.

Lu Yin was also able to get his hands on some resources, which amounted to several thousand star essence. It was quite a bit for someone like him who had nearly dropped out of the top rankings.

But he did not care about any of that at the moment. Instead, he was concerned about what had happened to the sourceboxes that had been circling around Seasons Fort like satellites now that the stronghold had fallen.

“You mean those sourceboxes? Gone. The stronghold has fallen, so those sourceboxes must have been buried along with the ruins,” Liu Miaomiao replied as she passed Lu Yin his share of the resources. She was a Hunter with a power level of 110,000, and she was also someone who had survived the fall of Seasons Fort, and like Lu Yin, she had also retreated to Brokenblade Fort.

Lu Yin felt it was a pity. “But those are sourceboxes.”

Liu Miaomiao replied. “We’re well aware of that fact, and we know that they’re priceless. It’s possible that some of them hold wonderful treasures that would shock the heavens after being unlocked, but no one has the ability to do so. Only those at the level of a Boundless Advanced Lockbreaker can unlock them, and anyone else can just forget about it. It’s possible that there isn’t such a Lockbreaker left in the entire Outerverse.”

Lu Yin thought about it and agreed. Those sourceboxes had possessed a natural formless danger zone, which made it impossible to bring them away, and that wasn’t even mentioning the fact that they did not have enough Spiritual Thread to do so. Hence, they could only be left in the fortress’s ruins. Perhaps in the future, Ironblood Weave would be rebuilt, and the sourceboxes would be used again. Or perhaps the Astral Beast Domain would take them away. Since they were able to see through the holes in the danger zones, they must have Lockbreakers among their members as well.

Unfortunately, the separation of the Inniverse and Outerverse had been too sudden. Otherwise, the powerful forces of the Inniverse definitely would not have allowed those sourceboxes to be lost.

Liu Miaomiao moved away, as she still had to deliver resources to more people. Another woman showed up in front of Lu Yin, and the number of rune lines he saw from her were very close to what he saw from Aden.

"I'm Kong Shi," the girl indifferently introduced before looking at Lu Yin strangely.

Lu Yin's eyes gleamed. "So you are Kong Shi?"

She had a cold appearance, and although she looked young, she was actually from a generation that was senior even to the Ten Arbiters. More importantly, she had been a part of the previous Ten Arbiters Council. No—before the Ten Arbiters, it had been called the Universe Youth Council, and she had been one of their councilors.

"The universe has undergone great changes, which led to the abrupt rise of the Ten Arbiters. However, those ten freaks aren't the only ones who appeared, as there's also your generation," Kong Shi said as she looked at Lu Yin with a serious expression.

Lu Yin did not know what she was trying to say to him.

"I've exchanged blows with Arbiter Zhenwu before," she quietly told him.

Lu Yin's eyes changed. "And?"

"What do you think?" Kong Shi raised a hand and tapped her forehead with her index finger. "One finger. He used just one finger to crush me. At that time, he was just an Explorer, while I was already a peak Cruiser with a power level of 90,000."

Lu Yin's eyes narrowed. Someone becoming a councilor was not just a reflection of their individual power level. Any member of the younger generation who was able to become a councilor had to be a monstrous genius as well. Since Kong Shi had become a councilor, then it meant that she was also a monster among monsters, and fighting across realms was something that was as easy for her as taking a sip of water. Despite that, she had been defeated by Arbiter Zhenwu while he was crossing realms, and even then, he had defeated her with a single finger. This was not as simple as a mere disparity between the two.

"Zhenwu of the Ten Arbiters has exchanged blows with almost all the previous councilors, though the outcomes were all generally the same. The Ten Arbiters truly have the ability to match their reputations." Kong Shi's tone turned gloomy, as if she was reminiscing about something.

"Why are you telling me this?" Lu Yin felt strange.

Kong Shi looked at him. "The Ten Arbiters brought despair to us, so I hope that I can see them fall into despair in turn."

Lu Yin's brows lifted. "You think I can do that?"

"I don't know. If you rely on foreign objects, then you should be able to. Even the Ten Arbiters will find it very difficult to kill an Enlighter in their present state, but you have already done it. However, the Ten

Arbiters will not necessarily give you an opportunity to rely on such objects, so I wish to see your own power.” Kong Shi looked at Lu Yin with a grave expression.

Lu Yin laughed. “Your generation was defeated, so now you’ve placed your hopes on my generation redeeming yours?”

“Through battling with me, you can directly observe the disparity between you and those in the top ten of the Top 100 Rankings. Cool Sis is ranked tenth, so don’t you want to know the difference?” Kong Shi commented softly.

Lu Yin’s eyes flashed, as this indeed interested him. He truly did want to evaluate his current personal strength, as well as see how far he could go at this time. The scene where Wendy Yushan and he had been forced to work together to deal with Nightking Gu was still fresh in his mind, but that had happened more than half a year ago. Now that he had transformed and become an Explorer, he wanted to know how great the disparity still was.

Unfortunately, there was an imminent battle with the astral beasts on the horizon, so doing such a thing now was meaningless. He turned to leave.

“Let’s go. No matter what the outcome ends up being, my Ironblood Points will belong to you,” Kong Shi loudly offered.

Lu Yin turned right back around. “Alright.”

Kong Shi looked resolute, as she did not care about the battle or even about the future. She only wanted to see Arbiter Zhenwu defeated. No—she wanted to see him crushed. She wanted to personally witness him experience for once the sorrow that he had brought to her and the other members of her generation.

In Lu Yin’s eyes, this woman was crazy. Entrusting one’s hopes to someone else was a sign of the weak. However, that didn’t matter; he just wanted her Ironblood Points.

As the human Enlighters had died one after another, Kong Shi’s ranking on the list had entered the top ten, which meant that she should have tens of thousands of points, and he did not want to let such a sum get away.

The ground dried up as cracks spread out.

Kong Shi burst forth with all of her strength as a Hunter, but she could control it to only affect an extremely small area. This created a visible, forcefield-like vortex of energy that crashed straight towards Lu Yin. Perhaps in her eyes, Lu Yin looked like Arbiter Zhenwu from the past.

With a whoosh, her overwhelming star energy coalesced before striking out at Lu Yin. His gaze trembled, and he casually waved a hand to activate the Yu Secret Art. The star energy attack instantly vanished only to suddenly crash back towards Kong Shi. She was shocked, and she quickly tore through the void to evade her own attack. A massive ditch appeared where she had just been standing.

Green stripes wrapped around Lu Yin’s body and covered him, before blue stripes appeared on top. This was seven lined battle force.

Back on Planet Pyrolyte, Lu Yin had managed to break through and comprehend six lined battle force, and about half a year had passed since then. Now that he had become an Explorer, his physical body had undergone a fundamental transformation, and so, his battle force had also broken through to the next level, reaching seven lines. He now possessed the same level of battle force as Long Yun.

Kong Shi appeared behind Lu Yin and tapped out with a finger, as she wanted to be like Arbiter Zhenwu from back then and crush Lu Yin with an overpowering strength. Thus, she made a bid to destroy him with one finger.

For a peak Hunter, they could defeat even a Cruiser, not to mention an Explorer, with one finger. Lu Yin stood firm in the same place, and he similarly raised a single finger that he wrapped his Fatesand around before colliding with Kong Shi's finger.

The two fingers clashed in midair, causing a storm to burst out in all directions, tearing the void apart. Countless spatial cracks spread out like raindrops and shattered across the ground.

From a distance, many looked over at the commotion and were stunned. They had felt a powerful strength sweep past them and found it difficult to breathe.

There was a thump, and Kong Shi was knocked back several steps. She had been pushed back by Lu Yin, and she looked at him in disbelief. After all, she was a peak Hunter.

Lu Yin's feet were pressed into the ground, and he pulled his finger back as his lips curled up. The seven lined battle force had supplemented the explosion of his full physical strength along with the Fatesand, and the combined force was able to even knock back a peak Hunter like Kong Shi, who was not just some average Hunter.

The two had only fought for a brief moment, but even Han Fei and the others in the command post looked over.

In particular, the collision between their fingers had shocked many people.

Some had assumed that Lu Yin could only demonstrate any form of ability by relying on external strength and that he had merely learned the Yu Secret Art to develop his methods of killing Enlighters. Now, it seemed that, even if he relied solely on his own strength, he was able to cross multiple realms and rival a Hunter. This was a battle where he was crossing two realms.

Overwhelmed, Kong Shi looked at Lu Yin and said, "Seven lined battle force, a powerful physical strength, and... is that Fatesand?"

Lu Yin was astonished. "You actually recognize Fatesand?"

A sword appeared in her hands. "I'm going to get serious now."

Lu Yin's eyes narrowed, and the soil beneath him started swirling before flying up into the sky. An invisible pressure wave rippled out around him, increasing its area until it enveloped Kong Shi. It then released an indescribable pressure. This was Lu Yin's domain.

When she saw this, Kong Shi's eyes trembled, and she unleashed her domain as well in an attempt to crush Lu Yin's. However, she was soon amazed once again. Lu Yin's domain was very sturdy and was as deep as an ocean.

After his breakthrough to the Explorer realm, although Lu Yin did not know why, his domain had become very terrifying. No matter how hard he had trained his domain in the past, it had never surpassed the realm of merely being a secondary support tool. But at present, it contained a strength that Lu Yin could not understand, and it seemed as if his domain's potential had been fully unlocked. This was his first time truly utilizing it.

The key detail was that he felt like, at any moment, he could turn this domain into something that could crush everything: a forcefield.

This sensation was very similar to when he had broken through to the Melder realm, as after that breakthrough, his physical strength had become exceptionally strong. This time, it was his domain that had been reinforced. What exactly had happened to his body during his breakthrough?

As a former Universe Youth Councilor, as well as a current powerhouse, Kong Shi's domain was also able to become a forcefield. It condensed into a sword tip that sliced everything apart, but it was still suppressed by Lu Yin's domain, and its cutting edge started to fade.

"How can your domain be so powerful and solid?" Kong Shi was astonished.

Lu Yin did not know how to answer, as he truly didn't know himself. "Practice."

Kong Shi looked agonized, as this was the most monstrous youth of his generation. He was unequaled among his peers, and his power was a bit too exaggerated. Although his true power might not be enough to defeat her, it would not take him long before he reached the same level as the Ten Arbiters' back then, and then, he would be able to easily crush her.

Kong Shi suddenly withdrew when she felt the power from Lu Yin's domain, as she had no desire to continue fighting.

Lu Yin was taken aback. "No more?"

Kong Shi looked miserable, as her generation was bound to be forgotten. She was still one of the top powerhouses from her generation, but she could not defeat the top ten experts on the Top 100 Rankings, let alone the Ten Arbiters who stood above them. At this moment, she was feeling extremely stifled by the person in front of her, and she had lost her confidence in facing him.

The only thing that left her with any gratification was that this youth actually did have the potential to defeat Arbiter Zhenwu, as Lu Yin was way too freakishly strong. He even gave her the feeling that he was stronger than Arbiter Zhenwu had been as an Explorer. Back then, Arbiter Zhenwu had faced her when she had been a Cruiser, whereas this youth was facing her as a peak Hunter.

"I hope that you'll be able to live through this war and survive to return to the Inverse," Kong Shi said to Lu Yin. She then transferred all of her Ironblood Points to him and left.

"Wait a second! How's my power compared to Cool Sis?" Lu Yin was curious.

Chapter 594: Desperation

Kong Shi fell silent for a moment when she heard Lu Yin's question before finally saying, "I don't know. The strength that you showed today is enough to prevent her from defeating you, but neither are you able to defeat her."

And with those words, she left.

Lu Yin let out a breath. He had not been confident about his chances of defeating Kong Shi. After all, she was a peak Hunter, and she had not used a single battle technique or innate gift during their spar, only her raw strength as a Hunter. On the other hand, Lu Yin had used his full physical strength, Fatesand, and domain. Due to this discrepancy, he believed that his current strength was not enough to defeat a peak Hunter like Kong Shi who surely had an excellent innate gift.

He might be able to defeat an average Hunter, but his chances of beating Kong Shi were slim. At the very least, he would not be defeated by her, though that was not due to his universal armor, but rather the Yu Secret Art. With the secret technique, Kong Shi's attacks could be easily negated, and Lu Yin had also comprehended the Secret Sidestep technique.

Kong Shi had also indicated that Cool Sis, who was ranked tenth on the Top 100 Rankings, was able to rival Kong Shi herself. So was Cool Sis a Realmbreaker then? This also seemed to imply that she was not a regular Realmbreaker either and that there was a large gap between those in the top ten of the rankings and those below them.

If Lu Yin faced off against Nightking Gu again, then it would not be too difficult for Lu Yin to win. Even so, Kong Shi believed that Lu Yin was not capable of defeating Cool Sis, which showed that the disparity between them was great.

Lu Yin had previously guessed that, once he broke through and became an Explorer, it might be possible for him to enter the top fifty, whereas Wendy Yushan had estimated that he would be able to enter the top thirty. Reality had proven both of them wrong; Lu Yin was actually able to rival the top ten, and this was when his domain was not completely unleashed. Moreover, he still had one hidden move left up his sleeves, though he didn't know if it could actually be used. Once it was activated, its might would likely be very terrifying. It was the finger from his dreams.

Once again, Lu Yin stepped into the top ten of the Ironblood Points rankings. The moment his name reappeared, it left An Shaohua speechless, who was currently stationed in another one of the five lower strongholds. He felt like Lu Yin was just playing around; why else would he keep jumping up and down through the rankings unlike anyone else.

Yue Xianzi had a complex expression, as this person only became more unfathomable.

Wendy Yushan smiled; everything else was fine as long as he was still alive.

Another battle broke out again unexpectedly. When the astral beasts appeared in the gaps of the sourceboxes' formless danger zones, a huge wave of attacks burst forth. However, they were all blocked by an Enlightener realm Amethyst Beast. The creature already had an impressive defense to begin with, and despite it only having a power level of around 200,000, Elder Lohar was the only person in Ironblood Weave who could fight against it.

Countless attacks smothered the Amethyst Beast, but they were all to no avail.

Then, a large group of Void Wanderers appeared.

At the command center, Wang Wen gave the order, "Smash them."

The next moment, dozens of grams of pyrolyte were thrown towards the invading astral beasts. This pyrolyte had belonged to the Blaze Realm.

Explosions with a force that could rival attacks with power levels in the hundreds of thousands shook the region, tearing space apart as if it was a curtain, creating countless blackholes.

With a furious roar, the Enlighter Amethyst Beast smashed its way directly towards Brokenblade Fort. At the same time, Monster Loach appeared and erupted with the full force of its power level of 300,000 as it also crashed towards Brokenblade Fort.

Elder Lohar shot up into the sky and pushed the Amethyst Beast back before attacking Monster Loach.

Countless Void Wanderers were eliminated, but more continued to appear in an unceasing wave, and each one of them carried numerous groups of beasts with them, many of which were space-exploring powerhouses.

Experts like Topmist, Huo Houye, Posion Flame, Anfield, Kong Shi, Liu Miaomiao, and Huo Qingshan all dashed into outer space.

Lu Yin donned his universal armor and similarly leaped up as seven lined battle force erupted from his body. Nearby, Long Yun also charged upwards, though he was a bit stunned when he saw Lu Yin's battle force. Not much time had passed, but this kid had already upgraded his battle force. What a monster!

There were five Enlighter beasts among the invaders. Han Fei, Topmist, and Huo Houye took on three while Elder Lohar single-handedly dealt with the Amethyst Beast and Monster Loach. The Hunters, like Kong Shi, along with Poison Flame, restricted one while Wang Wen had Lu Yin take on the final one.

Wang Wen had his own plan of defending while the astral beasts similarly had their own invasion strategy. This was especially so after encountering someone as unconventional as Lu Yin, a human who had all sorts of sneaky tricks. One particular Enlighter beast had already made preparations for him, and it formed a mass of shadow that attacked the new Explorer.

"Seventh Bro, be careful! That's a Shadowbeast!" The Ghost Monkey became frantic.

Lu Yin subconsciously dodged, but his head was still hit by a strong force, and his entire body was sent flying.

"What's that?" Lu Yin asked.

"A Shadowbeast! It's an astral beast that can hide in the shadows and launch attacks from there. It has no material body, so they're very difficult to face," the monkey said solemnly.

Lu Yin frowned, "A Shadowbeast? How do we deal with it?"

"Let me think," the monkey replied.

There was another thump as Lu Yin was struck once again. The Shadowbeast was unlike the other Enlighter realm beast, as most of them could only unleash sneak attacks by hiding in the void. But this

particular beast only needed to hide within Lu Yin's shadow, and its fighting style would be a problem for any Enlighter to face, not just Lu Yin.

During this invasion, the Shadowbeast's combat strength surpassed even that of Monster Loach and the Amethyst Beast.

The beasts had made their own preparations by bringing the Shadowbeast to deal with Lu Yin.

If not for his sturdy universal armor, Lu Yin would have been doomed at the beginning of the fight and wouldn't have even been able to take a single hit.

"I got it! Seventh Bro, find a place without any light sources! As long as there are no shadows, that thing won't be able to get close to you," the monkey shouted.

"You don't say," Lu Yin cursed, as he had thought of that long ago. But the heavens were huge with light sources everywhere. How could he find such a place?

"BLACKHOLE!" the monkey screamed.

Lu Yin looked up. Many blackholes had been created by the detonated pyrolyte, and there was definitely no light to be found within them. Thus, no shadows could be produced there either. However, Lu Yin was too scared to enter a blackhole.

"Relax, Seventh Bro, those aren't real blackholes. The sky in this place is false." The monkey paused briefly before hurriedly continuing to say, "A destructive strength with a power level in the mere several hundred thousands isn't enough to create a true blackhole that can swallow everything. In fact, the blackholes created from a planet's explosion isn't real either. They all belong to the surface layer. Don't forget—even a blackhole-grade Aurora can pass through these blackholes, let alone you."

Lu Yin ferociously dashed towards the blackholes. According to the rune lines that he could see, they were not much of a threat to him.

A shadow appeared before him, and Lu Yin casually waved a hand and activated the Yu Secret Art. At the point directly in front of him, the shadow attack missed, and it only managed to shatter some layers of the void.

The Shadowbeast clearly wanted to stop Lu Yin from entering a blackhole. However, Lu Yin managed to rely on the Yu Secret Art and the Secret Sidestep Technique to shake off the Shadowbeast. He then directly charged into one of the blackholes.

In an instant, the gravity nearly caused him to lose control of his body. He thought of Tian Hou, as that freak was essentially a living blackhole.

The Shadowbeast's rune lines neared Lu Yin, and the creature dashed into the blackhole right behind Lu Yin. It had no intention of letting Lu Yin off.

There was not a single ray of light in the blackhole, and it incessantly tried to pull Lu Yin into an unknown space. He filled his eyes with star energy and looked around him, only to see that even rune lines were distorted in this place. He could not track the Shadowbeast's position at all.

“Seventh Bro, think of a way to attack the Shadowbeast, or else it’ll just toy with you until you die!” The monkey was flustered.

Lu Yin was similarly anxious. He was in a position where all he could do was evade the Shadowbeast’s attacks. However, with the size of this blackhole, he would eventually be hit.

Any attack from Lu Yin would be too weak to do anything to an Enlighter, and only his gun would be effective. “Monkey, aren’t you a shadow as well? Can you hide in its shadow?”

The monkey was stumped. “I- I don’t know.”

“Try!” Lu Yin then dashed out of the blackhole since it was useless to keep hiding within it, especially since he could not remain hidden for long.

After Lu Yin emerged, the Shadowbeast left the blackhole as well. Its boundless rune lines immediately vanished, only to suddenly strike at Lu Yin. The beast had hidden itself within Lu Yin’s shadow again.

At this moment, the Ghost Monkey appeared. While Lu Yin was being attacked, the monkey locked onto the Shadowbeast’s position. Lu Yin fired his gun, but the Shadowbeast had already disappeared. It was aware of how dangerous the gun was, so it was very cautious. However, the monkey also turned into a shadow and latched onto the Enlighter’s shadow. So, when the beast reappeared, Lu Yin waved a hand and activated the Yu Secret Art. The bullet vanished, only to reappear and strike the Shadowbeast. The Enlighter had been hit. Even though its body was immaterial, that did not mean that it couldn’t be hit. As long as its shadow was hit, it would be similarly affected.

The Shadowbeast did not expect for Lu Yin to have a tamed beast in his body, much less one that could follow and reveal its location.

That shot wasn’t enough to kill the beast by itself, but it was certainly enough to scare it off, and the beast immediately distanced itself from Lu Yin.

The Ghost Monkey reintegrated into Lu Yin’s body afterwards. “Seventh Bro, I never thought that there would come a day when this monkey would help you deal with an Enlighter!”

Lu Yin stored his gun away and sighed. There was only one shot left. “That Shadowbeast won’t give up. Get ready to stop it again.”

The monkey was excited. “Alright!”

Lu Yin glanced at the monkey, and his eyes flashed. This monkey still thought that Lu Yin had not caught on to what he had said about the false sky. The monkey clearly knew something, but he had never elaborated.

Battles were erupting in every corner of Brokenblade Fort, and Lu Yin could not afford to wait for when the Shadowbeast came looking for trouble again. He still had one bullet left in his gun, and he wanted to use the Yu Secret Art to help the Enlighters deal with the beasts. However, at that moment, he saw that Wang Wen was surrounded by beasts and two Hunter beasts at that.

Lu Yin quickly dashed over.

“SAVE ME! SAVE ME!” Wang Wen shouted urgently.

The two giant Hunter beasts were angrily trying to smash the coffin apart, but they quickly realized that they couldn't do a thing to it. Then, one of them opened its mouth and moved to swallow the coffin whole.

Wang Wen's face turned deathly white.

Two attacks landed on the beast from above: one was sword qi and the other was a blaze of fire. They came from the Myriad Swords Peak's senior disciple Linley and Lilyrose, respectively. The two had acted to deal with the Hunter beasts, which allowed Wang Wen to breathe easy again.

Linley wasn't able to hold out for long before being sent flying by one of the beasts' tails; his sword qi had not been able to harm the beast in the least.

“Fiery Lilies—Karmic Flame Sword.” Lilyrose released a fierce shout as flames that looked like a hundred blossoming lilies appeared and enveloped the two Hunter realm beasts. After that, sword qi streaked by to pierce the two Hunter beasts before tearing through the void.

Linley spat out a mouthful of blood from where he was laying on the ground. He then watched on expectantly.

Lilyrose was panting heavily as she glared in front of herself.

As the burning lilies dissipated, the two Hunter beasts reappeared and howled at the sky.

The burning light in Lilyrose's eyes dimmed, as her attack had ended up being ineffective. She was still a little lacking since she did not have much of the Karmic Flames.

Linley looked devastated. Were they going to die?

Wang Wen screamed, “Get away! You guys can't stop them.”

Lilyrose's body swayed. Her last attack had been made with all of her strength. Run? She couldn't escape, and the most unfortunate part was that she still had not tasted enough men!

There was a deafening howl as one of the Hunter beasts snapped at Lilyrose, Linley, and Wang Wen, looking like it wanted to swallow all three of them in one gulp.

The giant shadow shrouded the three of them, and Lilyrose looked up into the beast's mouth. It had a horrible stench. She had never imagined that she would die like this.

Suddenly, a figure appeared in front of them and raised a fist to release a punch.

Boom!

An intense shockwave swept out, blasting Lilyrose and the others back. The coffin flipped end over end nonstop until it finally crashed into a wall in the distance.

Chapter 595: Terrifying Cursewind

The smoke dispersed, and when Lilyrose and the other two looked up, they saw that the massive Hunter realm beasts had been beaten back a kilometer. There was a figure standing tall in the sky above them, directly facing off against the two Hunter realm beasts.

“Bro-ther-Pawn.” Tears of joy leaked out of Wang Wen’s eyes.

Linley was stunned. Lu Yin? Wendy’s fiancée?

Lilyrose’s eyes also revealed surprise, as it was actually that person.

Lu Yin shook his right arm. He had managed to rush over in time, but that Hunter realm beast’s bones were incredibly hard.

He looked back and saw that Wang Wen was fine, and his eyes were then instinctively drawn to Lilyrose. She had an alluring figure, and she was even dressed in clothes with fiery colors. Was she afraid of not being attractive enough even on the battlefield? Lu Yin had seen this woman release the Karmic Flame earlier, which must mean that she was from the Blaze Realm.

Roar!

With a snarl, the two Hunter realm beasts simultaneously charged straight at Lu Yin. He took a deep breath. There was no need to rely on his own strength when up against Enlighter realm beasts since he was relying on the Yu Secret Art and his universal armor, but against Hunter realm beasts, he needed to use his own power. He thought about the situation for a moment before blue, seven lined battle force rippled out and covered his body. He removed the suppression of the three grains of Fatesand, and his physical strength fully erupted.

There was a soft thump as Lu Yin suddenly appeared in front of the two Hunter realm beasts with extreme speed and pressed down with a palm. “Thirty Stacks Hundredfold Shockwave Palm.” He had increased his Shockwave Palm to the hundredfold threshold, and this attack was also reinforced with his seven lined battle force and terrifying physical strength. This was the strongest attack that he could unleash at this moment.

The beasts raised their paws and swatted back at him.

With a bang, the ground trembled, and the void shattered. Lu Yin had just used his Explorer realm strength to tear through the void, and his enormous physical strength directly crushed one of the beasts’ claws before slamming against its skull. At the same time, Lu Yin was struck by the other beast’s claw, and his body smashed towards the ground like a meteor.

Lilyrose watched on in shock. Could he have died after having been swatted by a Hunter beast?

Wang Wen was not afraid in the least bit. Lu Yin had taken part in Enlighter level battles, so just a mere Hunter beast could not pose a problem for him.

The beast that Lu Yin had slapped in the head trembled for a moment before crumpling to the ground. It was already dead as its brain had been smashed into pieces.

Lilyrose was stunned. One strike had killed a Hunter realm astral beast; this kid had become extremely terrifying after becoming an Explorer.

Lu Yin panted heavily and raised his body from underground. The Hunter realm beast that he had just killed only had a power level between 110,000 and 120,000, so it couldn't even compare to a Hunter like Kong Shi. It was not a surprise at all that he had been able to destroy such a beast. And beyond this beast, if Lu Yin had managed to hit an Enlightener in the head, then even that supreme powerhouse would not have a good time.

The other Hunter beast glared at Lu Yin, but then its body suddenly shrank, and the four people watched on as it took the shape of a human before leaping at Lu Yin. It was obviously scared of Lu Yin hitting it in the head, so it had panickedly reduced its size to make it a smaller target.

Lu Yin sneered. Did the beast really think that it could deal with him so easily? It was underestimating himself.

The Hunter beast moved extremely quickly, and it tore through the void to strike at Lu Yin with its claws. But Lu Yin effortlessly dodged its attacks. The Hunter beast could not touch him as long as he had the Secret Sidestep Technique. Suddenly, Lu Yin stopped moving. The Hunter realm beast appeared to be thrilled at this development, and its claws immediately sliced towards Lu Yin's head.

Lu Yin reached out to grab its arm. "It's over."

He then raised a leg and slammed his knee into the beast's abdomen. It spat out a mouthful of blood and looked at Lu Yin in shock. "Human, why is your strength so frightening?"

Lu Yin was about to hit it a second time, but the beast quickly severed its own arm and retreated as its blood splattered across the ground. It stared nervously at Lu Yin, as it had never encountered such a scary human with such a formidable strength before.

Some distance away from the battle, Lilyrose and Linley were both stunned. By himself, Lu Yin had managed to kill one Hunter realm astral beast and suppress another. This was mind blowing to the two of them.

"Chesspiece Bro, be careful!" Wang Wen shouted.

Lu Yin's eyes flashed, and he evaded an attack with the Secret Sidestep Technique. A shadow appeared where he had just been standing, though its attack had missed.

Lu Yin had noticed the shadow long ago, or more accurately, he had noticed its rune lines. "Tian Hou, it's been quite a long time. It looks like you've learned to sneak up on people."

It was Tian Hou who had sneak attacked Lu Yin.

"Lu Yin, I haven't seen you for quite a while, but you've become even more fearsome," Tian Hou said. He then struck out at Lu Yin. This was his Phantom Soul Strike, which was the same as Lu Yin's Shockwave Palm. The technique grew stronger the more phantom palms there were.

Lu Yin had no intention of backing off, and he landed a single palm against Tian Hou's body, the impact smacking Tian Hou through the sky until he crashed into the ground and created a large crater.

"It's still useless." Lu Yin was stunned, as his palm strike had been very powerful.

Conversely, Tian Hou's Phantom Soul Strike had done nothing when it struck Lu Yin's body.

At this moment, the Hunter realm beast attacked Lu Yin in unison with Tian Hou. Lu Yin was about to retaliate, but then, a hurricane suppressed him from above and wiped everything out.

A blue lion towered high in the void and coldly looked down. It was Cursewind of Skymender's List.

Lu Yin moved away from his battle with Tian Hou and looked up at Cursewind. He furrowed his brows as he could see that the blue lion's rune lines surpassed those of the two Hunter realm beasts that he had been fighting previously. In fact, they even surpassed what he had seen from Kong Shi. The blue lion was indeed an expert worthy of being on Skymender's List.

What made Lu Yin the most afraid was not an Enlighter, or even an old freak whose power level had reached 300,000 or 400,000. Those powerhouses could crush everything in their path, so his caution would make no difference. On this battlefield, the one he was the most afraid of was actually Cursewind, because the blue lion was an existence who stood on the same level as the Ten Arbiters.

The Ten Arbiters were at a level that Lu Yin currently could not even grasp. Cool Sis was ranked tenth on the Top 100 Rankings, and even she could rival Kong Shi's power, who was a peak Hunter. There was an insurmountable chasm between Cool Sis and the Ten Arbiters, which had been demonstrated by the Ten Arbiters' ability to cause their opponents to fall into complete despair.

Even if Cursewind did not join the fray with the Enlighters, Lu Yin was certain that the lion was hiding a terrifying strength.

Cursewind remained high above and coldly stared down at Lu Yin. "Everyone, back off."

Tian Hou and the other Hunter realm beast didn't hesitate, and they immediately started to slowly retreat.

Lu Yin's eyes narrowed. Skymender's List carried the same status in the Astral Beast Domain as the Ten Arbiters did in the Human Domain. They wielded authority and were allowed to make decisions. This authority had not been bestowed on them from bystanders, but had been earned by their personal strength.

Aden had exchanged blows with Cursewind in a previous battle. During that fight, Lu Yin felt like Cursewind had not gone all out against Aden, though he had commended the man. That incident had become something unforgettable for Lu Yin.

There was another clue to his strength, which was that Wen Sansi of the Ten Arbiters had pierced through the five sealing planets that protected Shenwu Continent with his own strength and then influenced the continent. When Lu Yin had visited Shenwu Continent's space station before, he had personally seen for himself the enormous number of rune lines that the five sealing planets possessed. Not even Nightqueen Qiuyu could break through them. Despite that, Wen Sansi had succeeded, which allowed him to gain a direct comparison of their strength.

If Cursewind was truly able to rival the Ten Arbiters, then if he went all-out, he might even be more of a threat than the Shadowbeast.

"You're the human who defeated Tian Hou before?" Cursewind used star energy to vibrate the air and speak.

Lu Yin's eyes grew solemn, and he gestured to Wang Wen and the others behind him to get away.

Wang Wen looked dejected. Retreat? How? There are beasts all around us.

Lilyrose and Linley had both been injured, so they could not even save themselves, much less take Wang Wen away.

"Are you on Skymender's List? Like Yao Gu?" Lu Yin asked.

"So you even know about Yao Gu. That fellow has always stayed in the depths of our domain, and he only went out to the border warfront once. It looks like you were there at that time too." Cursewind's eyes were full of contempt. "You're indeed capable since you're able to fight with an Enlighter. It looks like the defense of that armor is rather strong, and even the Shadowbeast can't do anything about it. In that case, let me test my strength."

The void suddenly froze after the beast finished speaking, and a ferocious hurricane pressed down upon Lu Yin once again. But this time, the amount of rune lines that he saw in this hurricane made Lu Yin's scalp turn numb. They numbered no less than the rune lines from Kong Shi or Aden, which meant that this ferocious wind matched the strength of a peak Hunter.

Cursewind dared to say such words even after he had learned how strong the universal armor's defense was, which gave Lu Yin a bad feeling. Lu Yin wanted to retreat, but the space around him had been strengthened in a manner reminiscent of how certain higher-level powerhouses had done so in the past. In short, he could not budge at all.

With a whoosh, the violent hurricane pressed down and completely pulverized the mainland that Lu Yin was standing on. His body was forced to endure the devastating wind head on. Even though his armor could clearly resist the attack, he still felt a bone-deep pain. This wind contained a terrifying penetrative effect that was able to pierce through even Lu Yin's universal armor.

Monster Loach had once used its enormous strength to almost knock him unconscious despite him wearing his universal armor, and the principle of the current wind storm was very similar. A portion of the strength was able to seep past the universal armor and invade his body.

Lu Yin gritted his teeth and waved a hand to activate the Yu Secret Art, causing the hurricane to sweep back towards Cursewind.

Cursewind was astonished. "This must be a secret technique!"

And with that, an incredible head wave rippled out from the blue lion's body and swept towards the hurricane. When the two forces collided, it caused a huge explosion that tore into the void and released a visible shockwave that engulfed the entire region.

"Besides that secret technique, you have no other strength to stand up to me. Although it's interesting that you actually have a secret technique."

Lu Yin charged up from the crater that the hurricane had formed and warily stared at Cursewind. This fellow was indeed different from a common beast, and he had already proven to be far more dangerous than the Shadowbeast. That Enlighter beast had only been able to hide within the shadows and unleash

sneak attacks, but Cursewind was acting brazenly. He clearly did not fear Lu Yin's gun, but why? He must have something that he was relying on, and Lu Yin only had one last shot left in his gun, so he could not use it casually.

"Show me your methods! I want to see how you killed those Enlighters." Cursewind's left eye caused another hurricane to swirl out, but this time, his target was not only Lu Yin, but also Wang Wen, Lilyrose, Linley, and the many other human defenders on the mainland, as well as the many astral beasts.

Suddenly, a thunder shield rumbled down towards Cursewind.

Cursewind's eyes narrowed. "It's him again." An inferno then appeared from his right eye that shot out to clash against Aden along with the wind storm.

The violent impact caused the floating continent to crumble as lightning flickered across it. Aden dashed out from the clash to reveal a body riddled with injuries, and he attempted to push the flaming hurricane aside.

"Do you really think that you can stop me?" Cursewind's voice sounded out from behind the thunder shield. It only took another moment for the shield to break apart, and as the blue lion's claw sliced through it, there was the sudden sound of a gunshot. Lu Yin had fired his gun and used the Yu Secret Art to redirect the bullet to send the bullet squarely into Cursewind's head.

At this moment, the entire battlefield fell silent, and everyone looked over at Cursewind.

Lu Yin's eyes flickered, as even an Enlighter could not dodge such an attack. He had acted when the thunder shield was being torn open, so it had definitely hit.

However, Cursewind's rune lines did not decrease in any way, which caused Lu Yin's heart to sink. Why?

Some distance away, Wang Wen and the others were also stunned. The attacks from Lu Yin's power vessel were even able to kill Enlighters.

There was a tremendous bang as the thunder shield was completely shattered. Aden spat out a mouthful of blood and then looked over in shock.

The blue lion's eyes shone with a faint light. "Human, the attack from your treasure is indeed very strong, but you're not the only one with a power vessel."

Lu Yin's face turned ugly. Ever since he had first used the gun to kill an Enlighter, he had already known that, as soon as his method of attack was exposed, an enemy would come up with an appropriate method to counter him. It might be a strange innate gift like the Shadowbeast's or something like a power vessel.

It was impossible for Lu Yin to forever rely on an upgraded weapon to cross realms and kill powerful enemies, and he would not make it far if he walked such a path. He had been very obviously targeted during this battle.

Chapter 596: That Finger's Elegance

There was a cracking sound, and the gun suddenly split apart and shattered. Lu Yin let go of the weapon, as the gun was now completely useless.

Eh? What's that? Lu Yin's gaze trembled when he noticed that there was something wedged between the layers of metal inside the gun. Shockingly, it looked like a piece of hide from some beast. He had no time to properly observe it, but he decided to save it.

Right then, Cursewind's attack was about to land between Lu Yin's eyes.

The hurricane that had combined with the inferno swept everything in its path away, and the bone-eroding wind combined with the soul-burning flames was enough to make Lu Yin feel an intense pain despite his universal armor, let alone the others like Lilyrose, Linley, or the heavily-injured Aden.

Suddenly, the attack disappeared, which left Cursewind completely bewildered as he stood high above them in the sky.

Lu Yin and the others all looked at the blue lion.

Wind and fire alternated within Cursewind's eyes, and after a bit, he reluctantly looked back at Lu Yin and the others. "Get Wang Wen away from here!"

Lu Yin suddenly turned to look over at Wang Wen, where he saw an enormous amount of rune lines converging beside Wang Wen's transparent coffin. There was a Hunter hiding there. Not good. It's a Yin Guai!

Lu Yin wanted to move to help, but right then, Cursewind's left eye spat out a hurricane that swept everything away.

At that moment, an inferno engulfed the entire area as Huo Houye suddenly tried to attack Cursewind.

Cursewind stared at Lu Yin. "Consider yourselves lucky. The Outerverse will belong to us sooner or later." After speaking, he moved back into outer space and grabbed the transparent coffin. He blocked Huo Houye's attack and rushed away from Brokenblade Fort.

With the blue lion's breakaway, the rest of the invading beasts simultaneously retreated like a flood.

"SAVE ME! SAVE ME!" Wang Wen screamed.

Huo Houye reached out for the coffin, but Cursewind merely snorted at him. "Human Enlighter, you're just slightly stronger than me. Unless a human has gone through the transformation of a six-stage formcast model, they've experienced no fundamental changes, so there's no use."

A hurricane then swept out that forcibly blew Huo Houye's strength away.

Han Fei also tried to stop Cursewind from taking Wen Wang, but he was blocked by two Enlighter realm beasts.

"Everyone, listen to my orders! Snatch Wang Wen back!" Han Fei's voice was transmitted to everyone who was in outer space.

Topmist, Huo Qingshan, Kong Shi, and a group of Hunters all rushed over.

Monster Loach and the Enlighter realm Amethyst Beast held Elder Lohar back while the old man furiously scolded, "You've decided to back off, so why must you capture Wang Wen?"

“This is an order, and you guys cannot stop it.” Monster Loach’s tail lashed out at Elder Lohar.

The Enlighter realm Amethyst Beast also clashed with the human powerhouse.

In the battle in outer space, the overall strength of the beasts had already surpassed that of the humans, and multiple Enlighter beasts were blocking Han Fei, Huo Houye, and Topmist from taking back Wang Wen.

Lu Yin’s eyes grew cold as he watched Wang Wen being taken away. He pulled out his Stellar Ruler and measured the distance. Back when he had been a Limiteer, he had used this Stellar Ruler to evade attacks from Enlighter realm beasts, and he had been able to teleport a considerable distance to escape from them. Now that he was an Explorer, his power had greatly increased, so the distance that he could teleport with the Stellar Ruler had also increased multiple times. Right now, Lu Yin could teleport to where Wang Wen currently was.

Lu Yin’s body flashed, and he suddenly reappeared on top of Wang Wen’s transparent coffin.

Wang Wen was thrilled to see Lu Yin. “Bro-ther-Pawn.”

Cursewind suddenly turned its head. “Lu Yin, you’re seeking death!”

Lu Yin’s left hand pressed against the transparent coffin, and he quickly pulled out the piece of flesh that was covered with lightning. Right next to him, the Hunter realm Yin Guai lashed out. Lu Yin was surrounded by many powerful astral beasts, and there were even Enlighters as well as Cursewind nearby. Although Lu Yin could withstand an attack from the Yin Guai, it would still send him flying, which would render it impossible to rescue Wang Wen and take him away.

He only had one choice: not only did he have to block the Yin Guai’s incoming attack, but he also had to activate the lightning flesh in order to take Wang Wen away at the same time.

The Hunter realm Yin Guai was strong, and although Lu Yin felt confident in being able to beat it, he didn’t dare to confront the beast head on in a contest of strength. As for the Yu Secret Art, it allowed Lu Yin to redirect attacks and even Lu Yin himself, but it would be very difficult to shift the Yin Guai at all. Lu Yin only had one chance to act—one chance! But so be it!

The finger that transcended the heavens appeared in Lu Yin’s mind. It had frequently appeared in his dreams, and although he did not know whose finger it was, or why it triggered such a furious reaction from him, there was no doubting the power contained within that finger.

During his process of breaking through to the Explorer realm, he had remained unconscious for more than ten days, and during that time, he had observed and studied every minute change and charm contained within the movements of that finger. He had even managed to see a trace of what looked like a battle technique.

It was a finger that could transcend space and disregard any distance. Lu Yin was certain that this finger surpassed any attack that he had ever seen, and from the bottom of his heart, he felt that even the Yu Secret Art could not compare to that finger. That was the finger from his dreams.

Lu Yin raised his right finger and tapped out, though his eyes suddenly glazed over as he fell into an unconscious state. At that moment, he had reentered his dream and was once again witnessing that

finger while his heart burned with a boundless rage. His finger seemed to merge with the finger in his dream as he tapped out towards the Yin Guai.

They were obviously on a battlefield that was filled with seething bloodlust and death, but at this moment, the Yin Guai was not able to hear or see anything. It could only look at that finger. The finger pointed towards it, and time seemed to freeze. That finger transcended everything as it ruthlessly moved towards the beast.

This finger pierced through the Yin Guai's claws to tap against its forehead, which suddenly exploded. Traces of ripples and fluctuations could be seen within the void, but not a single spatial crack appeared. The next instant, Lu Yin successfully activated the power within the piece of lightning flesh, and he disappeared from the sea of the beasts along with the transparent coffin.

Everything had happened too quickly, and from the time Lu Yin appeared to the moment where he had vanished, the whole event did not even take three seconds to pass. By the time Cursewind and the other beasts tried to take action, Lu Yin had already disappeared along with Wang Wen. However, the Yin Guai that had been guarding Wang Wen was already completely dead.

Cursewind stared at the Yin Guai's corpse in shock. How was this possible? Lu Yin had just instantaneously killed a Hunter realm astral beast, and a Yin Guai at that, without using a power vessel. The human Explorer had used his own strength, and Cursewind had very clearly seen the finger, though he had not felt anything formidable about it. Despite that, the finger had completely crushed the Yin Guai.

Cursewind turned to look at Brokenblade Fort. How had that human done it?

Cursewind was not the only one overwhelmed by the event, as even Lu Yin himself was frightened by what had just happened. He had not expected the finger to be so frightening, as that lone finger had crushed a Hunter. Even in his dreams, he had not thought that the power would be so great, but the price that he had paid was similarly extreme. He looked down to see that his right finger was dripping fresh blood. Lu Yin grimaced, and he used some of Shamrock Enterprises' special medicine to treat it.

"Chesspiece Bro, I love you!" Wang Wen screamed. Emotional tears rolled down his face as he gazed at Lu Yin.

Lu Yin sighed, as he had been forced to use that piece of lightning covered flesh. However, it was well-worth the price since he had rescued Wang Wen. At this moment, Lu Yin was worried that the astral beasts would not give up on Wang Wen and that they would rush back to the fort.

Fortunately, his worries were for nothing as the invading beasts quickly retreated. Not one of them moved forward to try kidnapping Wang Wen again.

Before long, all of the beasts were completely out of sight, only leaving a ruined Brokenblade Fort behind.

Han Fei and the others exchanged glances, seemingly lost. The astral beasts certainly could have breached Brokenblade Fort this time, so why had they retreated?

After Monster Loach and the Enlighter realm Amethyst Beast pulled back, Elder Lohar's arm shuddered as he stored his weapon and released a slow breath.

Even though the astral beasts had retreated, most of the defenders believed that they would soon face another attack, and that the next attack would be no different from the one that had just ended.

“Elder.” Han Fei and the others flew towards Elder Lohar, all of them looking at him in confusion.

Lu Yin also took Wang Wen over.

Elder Lohar’s gaze passed over all of them, and then in a voice that betrayed his exhaustion, he said, “The battle has ended.”

Han Fei and the others were astonished.

Wang Wen stepped forward and looked at Elder Lohar. “What battle ended? Speak clearly.”

Out of everyone present, he was the only person who dared to speak to Elder Lohar in such a tone.

Elder Lohar looked past Brokenblade Fort. “The Astral Beast Domain is being invaded, and the Celestial Beast Empire is going all-out in its war preparations, so it has no energy to deal with us here.”

The crowd was stunned.

Wang Wen could not understand the explanation. “Old man, are you sure that the Astral Beast Domain is being invaded? By whom? The Inniverse?”

Elder Lohar continued speaking in a soft voice, saying, “There are some things that you don’t have to know just yet. When you become a Hunter or an Enlighter, I will naturally explain everything to you. In any case, Ironblood Weave’s battle will end here for the time being.”

Lu Yin looked at Wang Wen, who was clearly conflicted, and also at Elder Lohar. He then quietly asked the Ghost Monkey, “Your Astral Beast Domain can still be invaded? Elder Lohar does not seem to be referring to the Inniverse. Does the Astral Beast Domain have other enemies?”

The monkey was also at a loss. “There shouldn’t be any. The Astral Beast Domain is only bordered by the Astral Wilderness and your Human Domain, so only your Human Domain can possibly invade it.”

“Are you sure?” Lu Yin did not believe the monkey’s words. If the Inniverse was the one invading the Astral Beast Domain, then there would be no need for Elder Lohar to hide the matter. And judging by the speed that the beasts such as Monster Loach had retreated, the invasion was no small matter. Logically, since the Astral Beast Domain was being invaded, and the war in Ironblood Weave had come to a temporary end, Elder Lohar should be very happy. However, his expression was actually even more worried than before.

“Definitely. That is, unless a new civilization has been discovered in the Astral Wilderness that has the power to invade the Astral Beast Domain,” the monkey replied confidently.

Close to Lu Yin, Wang Wen was still discussing things with Elder Lohar, and he seemed to want to receive a straight explanation. Elder Lohar had Han Fei take Wang Wen away, and then he looked over towards Lu Yin.

Lu Yin sensed Elder Lohar’s gaze, and he hurriedly stepped forward. “Junior Lu Yin greets elder.”

Elder Lohar nodded and then commented, "You were able to deal with Enlighters while still at the Limiteer realm. Kid, you're very powerful, as not even the Ten Arbiters were capable of such feats when they were in that realm."

Lu Yin promptly replied, "Junior was only relying on external strength, and I cannot compare to the Ten Arbiters."

Elder Lohar smiled. "As long as you know it. Kid, I must warn you, though. It's not good to rely on foreign objects, unless it's truly a matter of life and death. Sometimes, crises are able to ignite your potential. The universe does not lack for powerful treasures, which the Ten Arbiters are also able to obtain, but they hardly ever use them, precisely for that reason. You may obtain status and glory by borrowing strength from external that surpasses your own, but you should also be aware that you will owe a debt for such things."

Lu Yin seriously replied, "Junior understands. Rest assured Senior, I will not borrow external strength anymore unless it's truly a last resort."

Elder Lohar sighed. "In the past, the Hall of Honor had a genius who was incredibly talented in his cultivation, and his innate gift also perfectly complemented power vessels, giving them a mysterious ability. He used his innate gift many times to fight across realms and kill his enemies, and he was unrivaled within his own realm. Unfortunately, once he became famous, he was targeted in every battle, and he eventually fell prey to the schemes of others.

"If excessively high prestige cannot be supported by sufficient strength, then only death will follow. It's the same as digging one's own grave."

After his speech, Elder Lohar left.

Lu Yin remained rooted in place, lost deep in thought. Excessively high prestige?

Many people currently viewed Lu Yin as someone who stood on the same level as Enlighters, especially after the various battles in Ironblood Weave. This was readily apparent from the fact that all of the beasts sent to deal with him had been Enlighter realm astral beasts, not to mention the fact that he had even caused old freaks whose power levels were at 300,000 to be apprehensive. This truly was an excessively high prestige, and if Lu Yin went through a few more battles of the same level, then he really might be targeted and killed off.

"Seventh Bro, don't bother with what that old fart just told you. You were also forced to take such actions." The monkey tried to console him.

Lu Yin looked up; he had indeed been forced, as if he had not done so, the Great Yu Empire would have ceased to exist long ago. Still, no matter what, he had to place restrictions on himself, and he could not always use external aids against his opponents.

Once he became accustomed to using external strength, it would be very difficult for him to improve his own strength any further.

Chapter 597: Borrowing Power

Although Elder Lohar tried to reassure everyone that the Astral Beast Domain would stop trying to invade the Outerverse, the fortresses maintained their defenses to play things safe. Furthermore, the news of the invasion ending was not publicly spread, so only a few people were aware of the truth.

After resting for two days, Lu Yin sat on the edge of a region of broken land and watched the people collecting the corpses in the distance. He didn't know why Elder Lohar was so sure that the Astral Beast Domain wouldn't attack anymore, and he couldn't think of any power that could threaten the Astral Beast Domain even after discussing it with the Ghost Monkey. He was worried that Elder Lohar had been deceived.

Crack!

He heard footsteps from behind him, and he was able to perceive a woman in a red dress approaching him through his forcefield. It was the woman next to Wang Wen whom he had saved during the most recent battle. She had a sexy appearance, and she should be from the Blaze Realm.

He noticed an enticing scent that caused him to frown.

"Brother Lu, can I sit here?" Lilyrose stood behind Lu Yin and gazed at him with a smiling face. A gentle breeze caused her red dress to gently graze against his hand.

Lu Yin nodded. "Sure."

Lilyrose didn't care about the dirt on the ground, and she directly sat down next to Lu Yin before turning her head to look straight at him.

Lu Yin curiously looked into her eyes. The woman had an alluring aspect to her that was different from the breathtaking charisma of Mira or Madam Nalan. Her allure, combined with her red dress, could easily stir any man's desire. "Why are you looking at me?"

Lilyrose smiled bashfully. "Brother Lu, thank you for saving me."

Lu Yin turned around. "No problem. I would have saved anyone in that situation."

"I know, but still, you saved me, and I have to thank you." Lilyrose inched closer to Lu Yin. "Brother Lu, let's have a drink."

Although Lu Yin wasn't very experienced in the matters of the heart and had quite impulsively entered into a relationship with Ming Yan, he could still understand the clear motivation of this beautiful woman who "wanted to have a drink" with him. He knew that she was trying to seduce him.

Lu Yin stood up and straightforwardly said, "I'm busy, so I'll be leaving first." He didn't like this kind of woman, especially since she was being so forward in her attempts to seduce him.

Lilyrose watched Lu Yin walk away and smiled. "Brother Lu, you have contributed greatly during this battle. Would you be interested in joining the Blaze Realm?"

Lu Yin didn't hesitate at all to respond, "With the Innerverse and Outerverse currently separated, you might not even be able to return to the Blaze Realm ever again. Be more realistic."

“In that case, has Brother Lu ever thought about how you’ll face the upcoming dangers?” Lilyrose asked loudly.

Lu Yin paused and turned to look at her. “Dangers?”

Lilyrose smirked. “Brother Lu, your gun is now broken.”

Lu Yin’s eyes flashed. “Are you threatening me?”

Lilyrose replied, “Of course not. I would never threaten my savior. However, there are a lot of people that now know that your gun is broken. Even though you have become an Explorer and have your universal armor, you still don’t have any methods that can stand up to an Enlighter’s attack. I’m also aware that you have quite a number of enemies.”

She was clearly implying that the greatest threat to him was Huo Houye from the Blaze Realm.

Lu Yin’s eyes narrowed. “I didn’t use the gun to kill Karthika.” He left after giving her those words.

Lilyrose was shocked. If he hadn’t used the gun, then could it be that he actually had other methods to deal with Enlighters? If Lilyrose knew that Wendy Yushan had also managed to injure the Scholar Newmoon at San Dios, she wouldn’t have been as surprised by Lu Yin’s words.

However, Lilyrose’s words also served as a reminder to Lu Yin that he had to find a weapon that could threaten Enlighters. Otherwise, he would face a distinct disadvantage against someone like Huo Houye.

He wasn’t naive enough to think that his universal armor would be sufficient enough to protect him.

Lu Yin spent the next month updating the locations of the holes in the sourceboxes’ invisible danger zones, but there were no subsequent attacks from the Astral Beast Domain.

On the same day that Lu Yin stopped updating the locations of the gaps, Elder Lohar left the weave. He returned after just one day with a bit of exciting news: he had managed to destroy the hole in the Primal Zone’s energy stream.

This piece of news inspired Ironblood Weave, and the news regarding Elder Lohar’s achievement soon spread across the entire weave as they slowly recovered without any more attacks from the beasts.

The destruction of the gap in the energy stream meant that the Primal Zone couldn’t receive any further reinforcements from the Celestial Beast Empire. Thus, this signified that the war was truly over for the time being. Otherwise, the Astral Beast Domain would have never allowed Elder Lohar to destroy the gap, especially since there had been a Void Thunderbeast guarding it.

Lu Yin activated the communications feature of his gadget, and Wendy Yushan appeared on his screen. He hadn’t seen her for quite some time, and she had become much thinner during this arduous period. “We’re both alive.”

Lu Yin touched his head. “Yes, we’re alive.”

Initially, neither of them had known much about Ironblood Weave aside from the fact that many people died there, and neither of them knew anything about its true horrors. As they participated in more and more battles, they had slowly begun to understand what Ironblood Weave truly stood for, and they had

witnessed for themselves the frontline battles where both sides fought to the death. This was a place where even Enlighters could die.

Lu Yin had faced imminent death several times in Ironblood Weave, and he would have died if not for his good luck.

Of the people that the Great Yu Empire had sent to Ironblood Weave, only Lu Yin, Wendy Yushan, Huo Qingshan, and Aden had survived. Everyone else had perished.

This could already be considered as a good outcome, as other weaves such as the Lars Weave and Northcastle Weave didn't have even a single survivor.

Coincidentally, the day that the war in Ironblood Weave came to a conclusion marked the sixth anniversary since Lu Yin had started cultivating, and it also marked a year since the Innderverse and Outerverse had been split apart.

Ironblood Weave was left with just five forts since the Ironblood Fort and the three middle forts had all been completely destroyed. Elder Lohar, on behalf of the Hall of Honor, ordered all of the Eastern weaves to send more resources to Ironblood Weave so that the destroyed strongholds could all be rebuilt. Topmist, Nightqueen Qiuyu, Granny Chan, Huo Houye, and the other Enlighters were also tasked with staying behind and helping rebuild the forts.

As for Lu Yin and the rest of the reinforcements, they were all allowed to leave.

Lu Yin had contributed greatly to the final battle as he had saved Wang Wen from being taken away by the astral beasts. Elder Lohar gave Lu Yin two Honor Points, which was equivalent to 40,000 Ironblood Points, and that was just for saving Wang Wen. The elder also gave Lu Yin an additional 20,000 Ironblood Points to commend his performance during his time in Ironblood Weave. That, combined with the Ironblood Points that Kong Shi had given Lu Yin and the subsequent points he had been awarded, meant that Lu Yin now had a total of 70,000 points. He had initially wanted to convert all of his points to star crystals, but he was stopped by Aden.

Aden had always been very mysterious, and Lu Yin didn't probe any deeper into his past.

Lu Yin had mentioned in passing that he was going to convert his points to star crystals while visiting Aden, but Aden suggested that since Lu Yin already possessed four Honor Points, he should exchange for two more points to have a total of six points.

"Having six Honor Points is completely different from having four Honor Points," Aden commented solemnly.

Lu Yin asked, "What do you mean by that?"

Aden looked at Lu Yin in a serious manner. "Do you think that there's no one from the Hall of Honor left in the Outerverse?"

Lu Yin shook his head. "That's impossible. Although most people don't know about the Hall's existence, they are still able to influence the entire Outerverse."

“That’s right. Although I’m not too familiar with the degree of the Hall of Honor’s influence in the Outerverse, I do know that having six Honor Points grants you some degree of immunity, and it even lets you borrow power from the hall,” Aden said.

Lu Yin grew even more confused. “What do you mean, ‘borrow power?’”

“Basically, with six points, you are able to represent the Hall of Honor to a certain extent. For example, when people are debating, if one party has the moral high ground, then what they say will be more convincing to people. With six Honor Points, you will have the high ground provided by the Hall of Honor, and so as long as the Hall of Honor remains in power, you will enjoy a tremendous amount of influence in the Outerverse,” Aden explained.

Lu Yin finally understood. This was the advantage that was given by the Hall of Honor. He remembered that En Ya had once told him that the Hall of Honor would provide a custom-made gadget for him with numerous special benefits once he reached six Honor Points. It seemed that borrowing power from the Hall of Honor was one of those unspoken benefits, and although he couldn’t command others by using the name of the Hall of Honor, it nonetheless still meant that the Hall of Honor would be on his side, and that alone would be a huge support for him.

Despite that, since the Innerverse and Outerverse had been separated, Lu Yin was unsure how much influence the Hall of Honor still wielded in the Outerverse.

“Don’t underestimate the Hall of Honor. They have powerhouses who can affect all of humankind,” Aden said.

“How do you know?” Lu Yin asked, but Aden didn’t answer.

Lu Yin quickly apologized. “I’m sorry. I asked too much.”

Aden went back to go rest, and Lu Yin was left thinking about Honor Points, star crystals, the Hall of Honor, the ability to borrow power... Currently, he was the most uncertain about what borrowing power meant as he didn’t know how useful that could be. If the weaves in the Outerverse decided to ignore the Hall of Honor due to the Outerverse being isolated from the Innerverse, then it would be basically useless.

After considering his options for quite some time, Lu Yin finally decided to trade his Ironblood Points for more Honor Points. Even Undying Yushan had been unable to pardon Sigmund Mathers’ alleged crime, and even if the Hall of Honor’s influence in the Outerverse waned from the separation, it would still take some time for that to be realized. Just from how many reinforcements Elder Lohar had managed to draft, Lu Yin could tell that the Hall of Honor still enjoyed a certain amount of authority over the major weaves. Thus, as long as he could put his newly acquired influence to good use, it wouldn’t be a waste.

Moreover, it didn’t matter even if those Honor Points did nothing. Lu Yin already had 160,000 star essence on him, which seemed sufficient to him.

To obtain the Honor Points, he needed to go through Elder Lohar. This would be the second time where Lu Yin met Elder Lohar, and it was a one-on-one meeting.

“Two Honor Points for forty thousand Ironblood Points. Young man, you’re not too bad.” Elder Lohar truly admired Lu Yin and immediately gave him the two Honor Points. “Someone will go to the Great Yu Empire and deliver your new gadget there. I hope that you’ll put your new status to good use.”

Lu Yin respectfully answered, “Yes, I will. Don’t worry, senior. I won’t disgrace the Hall of Honor.”

Although being awarded Honor Points didn’t mean that one had joined the Hall of Honor, Lu Yin could still be considered as a part of the Hall of Honor.

Elder Lohar was fond of Lu Yin, especially since no one had been willing to trade for Honor Points after the Outerverse had been isolated. Everyone seemed to think that the points were useless, and only this young man still showed respect to the Hall of Honor.

“It’s a shame that the Innaverse and Outerverse have been separated. If not, you definitely would have been given a position with your abilities,” Elder Lohar said with a sigh.

Lu Yin was confused. “A position? What position?”

Elder Lohar waved a hand. “Forget it. What’s done is done, and unless the Innaverse and Outerverse can be rejoined before you reach the age of forty, you won’t be able to gain that position. What a shame.”

Chapter 598: Path Of Cultivation

“Elder, could you please tell me exactly what you mean by ‘position?’” Lu Yin asked. He was very curious, since even someone like Elder Lohar who had a power level over 300,000 had said that it was a pity. This proved that it had to be very important.

Elder Lohar shook his head. “Kid, you may go. Remember, unless you are facing a life or death crisis, do not borrow power or use external items. The cycle of the heavens suggests that, in the end, you will be forced to return however much you have borrowed.”

Lu Yin nodded and then helplessly moved away.

“Seventh Bro, this guy’s rather superstitious. What cycle of the heavens? This monkey only believes in science!” the Ghost Monkey stated.

“Then tell me what the deal with Skymender is,” Lu Yin commented indifferently.

The monkey could not come up with a reply, as there was truly no explanation to some matters. It was inexplicable that Skymender was able to predict the future.

Lu Yin exchanged his remaining 10,000 Ironblood Points for star essence, grabbed Huo Qingshan, and then left Brokenblade Fort with him. Lu Yin wasn’t alone, as many other Explorers and those with weaker cultivations had started leaving. Wendy Yushan was also preparing to leave where she had been stationed.

Only the few Enlighteners were forced to stay until the defenses of Ironblood Weave were completely reestablished.

To Lu Yin, this was good news, as it meant that the Eastern region of the Outerverse, where his Frostwave Weave was located, would be completely devoid of Enlighteners, which would make it his playground. Unfortunately, due to Aden's extraordinary capabilities, he had been kept back by Elder Lohar. Also, Aden himself had no desire to return to Frostwave Weave.

Lu Yin really wanted to take Aden with him and have the man join the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons, but that was impossible at the moment.

After leaving Brokenblade Fort, the two men immediately entered Eastly Weave. At the border, Lu Yin looked back into the darkness of outer space and was finally able to relax.

He silently recited the Stonewall Scriptures and took a rest.

Eastly Weave lay close to Frostwave Weave, and not even a day passed before Lu Yin and Huo Qingshan returned to Frostwave Weave.

Wendy Yushan had traveled slightly faster than Lu Yin.

They returned to discover that the Great Yu Empire had not undergone that many changes. After all, they had only served in the Ironblood Weave for a few months.

There were visitors on the day that Wendy Yushan arrived at Zenyu Star, and they tried to secretly reveal their desire for her to take back the reins of the empire. However, none of them dared to say this outright, and Wendy Yushan pretended not to notice their hints.

Lu Yin taking control of the empire had adversely affected many people's benefits, and he had behaved ruthlessly. The establishment of his four ministries had rearranged the Great Yu Empire's authority, and it was a common prediction that, in the future, the true wielders of authority in the Great Yu Empire would be these four ministries, especially the Lu Ministry of Defense and the Lu Staff, as Lu Yin was the sole decider of who could join either ministry. This meant that he would be able to single-handedly control the Great Yu Empire, which was something that not even Undying Yushan had achieved during his time as emperor.

Unfortunately, Lu Yin had become too assertive, which caused some people to hope that Wendy Yushan would step forward and use her position to wrestle the authority of the Great Yu Empire back to the Yushan family. Unfortunately for them, Wendy Yushan had no interest in any such thing, and she knew that she was not cut out to be in a position of authority.

The first thing that Lu Yin did upon returning to the Great Yu Empire was to hold a court meeting. News of the events in Ironblood Weave had spread, and they had had a tremendous effect on the surrounding weaves. This made the masses feel anxious, and so, Lu Yin now needed to calm them down.

The meeting lasted for a long time before it finally ended. Lu Yin then looked for Hai Qiqi, only to learn that she had gone to visit the Astral River yet again.

Lu Yin sighed, as her first time leaving home had ended up lasting for eternity. This was a harsh reality that not many people would be able to accept. He did not go looking for her, and instead, he decided to leave her be. Looking for a way to cross the Astral River was something that could at least give her a bit of hope.

He left the palace and headed towards the Fifth Princess's residence.

This was the second time that he had visited Wendy Yushan's home, as the first time had been when he had been trying to conceal his identity as a Lockbreaker. Back then, he had used the princess's residence to divert Wendy Yushan's attention.

He arrived, only to find that there were several people already waiting at the gate, and a few of them were elders. The moment they saw Lu Yin appear, their faces went pale. "Gre-greetings to the Royal Regent, Your Highness."

Lu Yin did not even spare them a glance. "Inform Princess Wendy that Lu Yin has come for a visit."

A guard hurriedly entered the residence.

The gate quickly swung open, allowing Lu Yin to step inside.

He understood what the objective of these people gathered outside of Wendy Yushan's home were. There were some people who would never give up in their attempts to overthrow him. These buffoons.

The residence was not very large, and to show his respect to the owner, Lu Yin did not release his domain or his star energy, but he also made sure not to conceal his presence.

"Why did you come here?" Wendy Yushan stepped out and looked at him.

Lu Yin touched his nose. "There's something that I want to ask you for advice on."

"Tell me," Wendy Yushan said indifferently.

"I've already broken through to the Explorer realm, so what's my next step?" Lu Yin asked. He had consulted Aden and Huo Qingshan in the past, but he also wanted to ask Wendy Yushan. This was because the two men were already Hunters, so their views might be different from Wendy's.

Wendy Yushan thought about it a moment before responding, "An Explorer has already experienced a change in their physical body, which has transformed to harmonize with the universe. The cycle of star energy sustains life, and every cycle of star energy will alter the physical body, which also increases one's strength. Essentially, each cycle will increase your power level by 10,000, and the time that it takes to complete one cycle is different for every person. Also, the quality of the star energy that is absorbed is different for everyone as well, so there is a spectrum of superiority.

"Some people absorb star energy multiple times faster than normal, which naturally shortens the time that it takes for them to complete one cycle and allows them to gain strength much faster. Some absorb much more star energy than others, and while a single cycle of theirs might last longer, the increase in their strength will also be much more noticeable. I can't tell you how you should walk your path, so I can only tell you to let nature take its course."

Lu Yin nodded. Her words were very similar to what he had heard from Aden. Lu Yin had a ninefold absorption rate granted to him by the Cosmic Art, as well as his die's four pips: Timestop. As long as he had enough star energy, he would be able to quickly increase his strength.

Time was not a problem for him.

On the surface, he had cultivated for about six years, but in reality, there should be another one or two years added on to account for the time that he had spent in the Timestop Space.

“Do you still have a formcast model?” Wendy Yushan suddenly asked.

Lu Yin did not want to lie to her. “Yes.”

Wendy Yushan was astonished. “You have a six-stage formcast model?”

Lu Yin nodded. “Yes.”

Wendy Yushan was shocked. “Even the top ten in the Top 100 Rankings might not necessarily have a six-stage formcast model, but you have one. With that, once you become a Hunter, you’ll become much more terrifying than the average Hunter.”

Lu Yin looked at Wendy Yushan, puzzled by her comment.

“The greatest difference between an Explorer and a Cruiser is not in their strength, but rather in their potential. An Explorer’s physical body is freshly transformed, whereas a Cruiser’s cells are compressed. It takes the average person four cycles before their bodies are no longer able to absorb any more star energy, and at that point, they have to compress their cells. This raises the amount of energy that their body can consume, and although it increases their physical abilities, it’s nothing much. This stage of compression is what happens in the Cruiser realm, and Hunters are similar in that regard. This change is not as extreme as when you become an Explorer, but the situation is completely different if you still have a formcast model. In that case, you will experience a qualitative change when you break through to the Hunter realm.”

“What about you? Do you still have a formcast model?” Lu Yin asked.

Wendy Yushan shook her head. “White Knight once said that I’ll get one, but there’s no chance of that happening now that the Outerverse has been cut off from the Innerverse.”

Lu Yin frowned. “You have that good of a relationship with that White Knight?”

Wendy Yushan grunted, but then she looked at Lu Yin with a strange expression. “You really seem to care about White Knight.”

Lu Yin touched his nose. “Maybe. He is an Arbiter after all.”

Wendy Yushan looked at Lu Yin with a serious expression. “Do you remember what I said before we left for San Dios?”

Lu Yin had forgotten, so he shook his head.

“I told you that if we survived the crisis, then I’d marry you,” Wendy Yushan spoke quietly.

Lu Yin’s heart skipped a beat and he looked at Wendy Yushan’s tall and slender figure and her beautiful face. He could feel her conqueror’s aura, and he nearly agreed in the heat of the moment.

“However, you already like someone else, and I prefer pure feelings.” With that, Wendy Yushan turned to leave.

Lu Yin stood frozen in place for quite a while. He felt like he had just been played.

“Seventh Bro, you’ve lost your love,” the monkey teased.

Lu Yin pursed his lips. “I never loved, so how could I lose it?”

“Don’t try to brag! Any man would want a woman like her. It’s her who doesn’t want you!” The monkey was very happy with this development.

Then Lu Yin screened his arm off. How annoying.

He returned to King Zishan's palace, where he suddenly thought of something. When his gun had shattered, something had fallen out of it that looked like a piece of a beast’s hide. He checked his cosmic ring for the scrap.

It turned out to not be a piece of beast hide, but rather some material that was similar to paper, and there were a few words on it, though Lu Yin did not recognize any of them. He removed the screen that he had placed on the monkey. “Hey, check this out and tell me if you recognize the language.”

The monkey was surprised. “These should be words from hundreds of thousands of years ago, which was a period when writing was still being developed. Back then, written words were particularly complicated, so the average person can’t make sense of them.”

“Are you familiar with them?” Lu Yin asked.

“I’ve studied it a bit. Right, I recognize several of the characters, and altogether it looks to be a name.”

The Ghost Monkey paused and then pointed out several characters while enunciating, “Wen Zhaocheng, Cang Yi.”

“What does that mean?”

“How should I know? But they should be names.”

Lu Yin put the paper away. Wen Zhaocheng should be someone from the Wen family, but as for Cang Yi, he did not know where a Cang family could be from. But why had there been a piece of paper with these two names hidden inside of the gun?

He did not spend too much time thinking about the issue as there were too many matters in the universe that had no easy explanation. This gun had come from the Astral Wilderness, and perhaps these two people had fought there. He did not care, and besides, it was time to roll his die.

Lu Yin always looked forward to rolling his die the most.

He tapped the die and watched it spin before slowly stopping at four pips. He was delighted, as this was the exact roll that he had wanted to see.

The scenery before his eyes spun, and Lu Yin appeared in the Timestop Space. He casually waved a hand and threw out more than ten star essence to increase his time in the space to 130 days. With this, Lu Yin

was prepared to take his time cultivating. After all, running out of time was what he was the least afraid of.

As the star essence were crushed, nine stars began revolving around Lu Yin's body. It was the visible manifestation of the Cosmic Art, and he began his ninefold rate of absorption.

The rapid absorption rate caused the star essence's volatile star energy to form into a vortex centered around his body. Lu Yin's need for star energy after becoming an Explorer was several times greater than what ordinary Explorers needed, and so it would take far more star energy for him to complete a single cycle. The biggest question that he had right now was how his cycle would be affected by using the Cosmic Art's ninefold absorption rate. If it didn't speed things up substantially, then each of his cycles would take much, much longer than others.

Absorbing star energy was a matter about as interesting as dust, though Lu Yin could feel how the star energy was filling his cells, even if it was only a little bit. Only once the cells in his body were completely saturated with star energy would he complete a cycle, so it would be a rather long process.

It took the average person about a decade to complete a cycle, and even the faster ones would still take several years. The further one progressed in their cultivation, the more time they would require to complete a cycle. In particular, a Cruiser's cycle was several times longer than an Explorer's. If someone had a technique like the Cosmic Art that allowed them to absorb star energy multiple times faster, then some innately gifted geniuses might even be able to finish a cycle in a year.

If the star energy that Lu Yin needed to complete a single cycle was about the same as what was required by normal people, then between his ninefold absorption rate and his natural rate of absorbing star energy, it would take him a bit more than half a year to finish a cycle. However, after cultivating for ten days, when Lu Yin checked his progress, his face fell. According to the amount that he had absorbed so far, each of his cycles required multiple times the star energy of an average person, and it might even require a hundred times more energy.

Chapter 599: Upgrade

Why was the difference so exaggerated? Lu Yin thought about it for a few minutes, and regardless of whether it was when he had broken through to become a Melder, a Limiteer, or an Explorer, the amount of star energy that he had needed had always been multiple times the amount that others needed. So, according to this trend, it would be normal for him to require multiple times the amount of star energy to complete a cycle compared to a normal cultivator.

But according to his calculations based on his progress over the last ten days, even if he enjoyed a ninefold rate of absorption, the time that he needed to complete a cycle would still be ten times the normal length, which meant that it would take him a century.

How could it take a full century to complete one cycle? Lu Yin's face turned ugly. The more star energy that one absorbed during a cycle, the greater increase in strength they would enjoy when that cycle completed. This meant that Lu Yin's superiority would only grow more exaggerated since a single cycle of his would be the equivalent of others' ten cycles. However, the time to complete a single cycle was too long, and it would only take longer once he became a Cruiser. At that time, would it take him 1,000 years to complete a single cycle?

Lu Yin was not afraid of not having enough time, but this was just beyond ridiculous. If it took him one hundred years to complete just one cycle even with his ninefold absorption rate from the Cosmic Art, did it mean that there was something wrong with his body?

At this moment, he really wished to obtain just one thing: the true Cosmic Art. The nine stars that Lu Yin had cultivated were definitely not the peak of the Cosmic Art, and he had only reached the most rudimentary level. There should still be a higher leveled version of the cultivation technique, and it might even be possible for him to attain a hundredfold absorption rate with it. That would make his cycle time more reasonable, but the problem was that he could not obtain the true Cosmic Art at this time.

Lu Yin looked up at the sky and sighed, as he was now left speechless. He wondered if the Ten Arbiters took just as long to complete a single cycle and if the amount of star energy that they needed was similar to his. Regardless, they must have some way of doing this better, while he had nothing going for him. One thing that was stuck in his mind was that the further he progressed, the more star energy he would need to continue cultivating. This would especially manifest once he became a Cruiser or a Hunter, as he would require far more star energy. At that time, completing one cycle would take forever.

He remembered Mister Mu, but the Inniverse and Outerverse were separated, so his quasi-master definitely could not come.

No, he could not leave things like this. He had to find a way to increase his star energy absorption rate, or else he would be doomed.

Lu Yin took a deep breath and suppressed the feeling of desperation welling up. Then, he rolled his die again. He needed something that could deal with an Enlighter in case one unexpectedly attacked him.

The die stopped spinning: one pip. Useless. He then continued to absorb star energy.

After another ten days passed, he rolled the die again. Two pips: Blackhole Disassembly. Useless. He continued absorbing star energy.

After ten more days, he again rolled his die, and this time, the die stopped at three pips: Enhance. Lu Yin excitedly took out his last Money Bomb and threw it onto the upper screen before directly tossing out 20,000 star essence. The Money Bomb upgraded repeatedly until it reached the point where it could kill an Enlighter.

He put the Money Bomb away and then thought of what he wanted to upgrade next: that pike.

The pike that he had obtained inside the ancient centipede's body could intrinsically attack the spiritual force. It's power was strong enough to instantly kill an Explorer, but that was all. Lu Yin wanted to upgrade it until it could instantly eliminate an Enlighter.

Not every weapon was upgradable, and the quality of the materials that the weapon was made of also had to be taken into consideration, just like his gun in the past. The materials that the gun was made of had the potential to be upgraded to that level, but it was very difficult for a normal gun to be upgraded to the point where it could threaten Explorers. This pike was from an ancient era, and Liu Zhan had used

one to slay a Yin Guai. Thus, Lu Yin was confident that the quality of these materials should be of sufficient quality that the pike could eventually reach the level where it would be a threat to Enlighters.

However, the pike's spiritual force attack did not differentiate between friend and foe, which was troubling. Lu Yin still wanted to test out upgrading the pike. And because he had been reciting the Stonewall Scriptures for so long, he had long since built up a very strong resistance against spiritual force attacks. Back when he had just been a Melder, he had resisted the spiritual force of a Hunter, and currently, he should be able to withstand an Enlighter's pressure.

He put the pike on the upper light screen and threw out dozens of star essence. For a Monkey Bomb, it only took a few hundred star essence to upgrade it to the point where it could threaten a Hunter.

The dozens of star essence only caused the pike to drop down a small bit, and not much at that. Lu Yin was stunned, as it seemed that this thing required much more star essence to upgrade than the Money Bomb. Still, that seemed reasonable—the Money Bomb only had pure attack force whereas the pike also released a spiritual force attack.

He did some quick calculations before tossing out another 400 or so star essence. That caused the pike to completely drop through to the lower screen, being upgraded once.

He picked up the pike and sensed the power of the spiritual force attack that it carried. It wasn't too bad, and he could still handle it.

When Lu Yin had discovered the corpse that had been divided by five pikes, only the pike that had been stabbed into the ground could emit phantom images and kill people, and the one that he had obtained had fallen to the side. Hence, the spiritual force attacks that it emitted were not as intense, but it would definitely become stronger the more he upgraded it.

The next upgrade cost him almost 800 star essence and the third 1,500 star essence. The fourth upgrade took 3,000 star essence, the fifth 6,000, and the sixth more than 14,000. After that, when Lu Yin held the pike, he felt a sense of unease.

He had previously upgraded the gun seven times, and that had taken around 27,000 star essence in total. This pike had now been upgraded six times, and it had already used up 26,000 star essence. A seventh upgrade would bring the total to about double of what he had spent on the gun.

It ended up taking much more star energy to upgrade the pike than the gun.

The scenery in front of Lu Yin distorted a little, which was due to spiritual force encountering pressure and creating an illusion. He could not upgrade the pike any further, as he might not be able to withstand it himself.

When his star energy filled eyes looked at it, the amount of rune lines that it contained surpassed what he had seen from Han Fei, and Lu Yin was wondering how effective its spiritual force attack would be against an Enlighter. He stored the pike away and then let out a pent up breath.

Lu Yin now had 110,000 star essence remaining. Of his items, he currently had the universal armor for defense and the Money Bomb and pike for offense. This meant that there was only one aspect left for him to upgrade: retreat.

Right, could the collapsible spacecraft be upgraded? Lu Yin's mind buzzed with ideas, and he wanted to test it, but in the end, he decided against it. The collapsible spacecraft was, at best, a radiant-grade spacecraft, and only Auroras could upgrade themselves. However, that did not require the die's three pips: Enhance. Materials alone were enough to upgrade the spacecraft.

Speaking of materials, he still had a lot of polarium essence.

Lu Yin wanted to upgrade the Stellar Ruler, but that was useless since it could only be used thrice. As for the Enneadic Wings, he thought about it for a bit before deciding to go ahead and upgrade it. Within the scope of the greater universe, Lu Yin was not very fast, and if his collapsible spacecraft was destroyed, then even a Hunter would be able to catch up to him given his current speed.

He pulled out the Enneadic Wings and spent more than 20,000 star essence upgrading the item, only stopping once its rune lines were enough to rival what he had previously seen on Karthika.

This meant that the Enneadic Wings were now able to reach a speed that surpassed a Hunter, and Lu Yin himself boasted a defense that could resist a Hunter's attack. Right now, it could probably generate a barrier that could withstand an Enlighter, which should be enough for now. There were no Enlighters at present in the Outerverse's eastern weaves, so they could not threaten him for the time being.

He decided to save the rest of his star essence for cultivating.

Just a short while ago, Lu Yin had been satisfied after stealing 1,000 star essence from the Blackbeard Pirates, as it had been the most money that he had ever seen. Now, randomly upgrading one item could consume tens of thousands of star essence, which was an amount that not even an Enlighter would casually possess.

Of the Enlighters that Lu Yin had killed, only Karthika had carried tens of thousands of star essence on him, and not even Elder Wu had possessed so much. Lu Yin had already surpassed many others with his wealth.

The richer he became, the more powerful he became, and the richer he would therefore become in the future. He had stepped onto a virtuous cycle, and he wondered how many more star essence there were in the Outerverse for him to plunder.

Ah, he had almost forgotten that he still owed Madam Nalan 30,000 star essence. Although she had said that he did not need to return it, Lu Yin did not want to take advantage of her; a loan was a loan.

Right when he thought of her, she arrived outside of King Zishan's palace.

By now, Lu Yin's domain was able to envelope a humongous area, and he could wield it as he pleased. Besides covering all of King Zishan's palace, he could also easily cover the imperial palace.

Kayze, the sole survivor from the Dire Barbarian clan in the Outerverse, was currently stationed standing guard outside of King Zishan's palace. Lu Yin had kept him alive since he valued the man's innate gift, but Lu Yin did not feel comfortable leaving the man free. Thus, he had ordered Kayze to guard King Zishan's palace.

"I request that Mr. Kayze report that the head of the Nalan family is requesting an audience with his Highness, the Royal Regent," the enchanting Madam Nalan said to Kayze.

Kayze extended a hand to her. "His Highness welcomes you."

Madam Nalan nodded and then slowly stepped into King Zishan's palace.

Some information concerning the battles in Ironblood Weave had already been leaked to the rest of the Outerverse, and this information could no longer be concealed. Lu Yin's performance during his time in Ironblood Weave had also spread, and there were even rumors that Lu Yin had killed multiple Enlighters, barged into the Barbaric Border, and rescued the Hall of Honor's elders. Countless rumors spread throughout the Outerverse about him, and it was unknown if they were true or false, though one thing was clear: Lu Yin's performance had been amazing.

In the current situation where all of the Enlighters were restricted to Ironblood Weave, Madam Nalan already knew what sort of status and dominance Lu Yin commanded. At this moment, he could be said to be the indisputable number one in the eastern weaves.

She had always appreciated Lu Yin, and even after she had learned that Lu Yin had once been sentenced by the Ten Arbiters Council and that he had a deep grudge against one of the Arbiters, she had still leaned towards supporting Lu Yin. Those intentions had only grown firmer with the passage of time.

The universe would always place the strong at the top. Even if the Nalan family was wealthier, they would still be powerless in the face of the truly strong. She would therefore do her utmost to get along with Lu Yin and maintain a friendly relationship.

In King Zishan's palace's sitting room, Lu Yin walked out and waited for Madam Nalan. He had spent 220 days in the Timestop Space, and after upgrading the Enneadic Wings, he had continued to absorb star essence. Despite cultivating for more than 200 days, he was nowhere close to completing his first cycle.

It didn't take Madam Nalan long to enter the room with a charming smile. "Congratulations, Your Highness, for returning in triumph."

Lu Yin gestured for her to sit, and he looked at her as a trace of amazement flashed through his eyes. This seductress always gave him a new feeling every time they met, and she always managed to attract his gaze. Faced with this stunning Madam Nalan, Lu Yin could not act as comfortably as he had with Lilyrose. "You are flattering me, Madam. In fact, if you hadn't come looking for me today, I would have sought you out myself."

She smiled adorably and looked up at him. "Was Your Highness thinking of me?"

Lu Yin rubbed his nose and then passed a cosmic ring to the tempting Madam Nalan. "There's 30,000 star essence in there. I borrowed it from madam before leaving for the Ironblood Weave, so I will return the exact amount to you."

Madam Nalan's brilliance faded as she took the cosmic ring. She suddenly stood up and spoke coldly to Lu Yin. "Since Your Highness does not welcome the Nalan family, we will not force our stay. Thank you, Your Highness, for the assistance that you have provided us. If it is fate, then we will meet again in this universe." She then turned to leave.

Lu Yin was stumped and he hurriedly stood up to stop her. “Has Madam misunderstood something?”

She stared into Lu Yin’s eyes. “I’ve treated Your Highness as a friend, but has Your Highness ever taken this lady to heart? Or is it that Your Highness looks down on businessmen?”

“Of course not,” Lu Yin replied immediately.

She shook her head. “When Your Highness headed out to Ironblood Weave before, it was known that that place was a blackhole of death. Our Nalan family was unable to do anything to help, so we could only offer some meager resources to show our support. Our Nalan family is very grateful to Your Highness, so we also feel ashamed about what we could offer. Now, Your Highness is unwilling to even accept this small amount of resources. What could be the reason besides you feeling contempt for my Nalan family?”

Lu Yin stared at her blankly, and then he smiled in embarrassment as he stretched out a hand. “Thank you for coming to my help, Madam.”

Chapter 600: Plans For An Alliance

Madam Nalan smiled seductively and passed the cosmic ring back to Lu Yin. Their hands brushed against each other, and Lu Yin could acutely feel the softness of Madam Nalan’s skin.

He suddenly noticed that her hands were very beautiful. They were fair and flawless, as if they had been sculpted from white jade.

“Madam, are you here to check whether or not I broke my limbs?” Lu Yin joked, forcibly shifting his attention away from Madam Nalan’s hand.

Madam Nalan sat down and smiled at him. “That’s not wrong. You’ve managed to survive through Ironblood Weave, and I have heard many praises for your performance. Your Highness’ reputation is spreading throughout the Outerverse.”

Lu Yin reluctantly replied, “They’re all just exaggerations.”

“Many people spend their entire lives trying to become renowned, but Your Highness has already achieved it. I’m actually here to talk about the Nalan family’s plan to cooperate with the Great Yu Empire,” Madam Nalan explained.

Lu Yin’s eyes gleamed, as that would be a great thing for the empire. The Nalan family was known as the wealthiest family in the Outerverse, and no one knew just how much money they actually had. Although star essences were not commonly seen in the Outerverse, the Nalan family could still easily fork out tens of thousands of them, which showed how wealthy they were. They were nearly comparable to the tycoons of the Innaverse, and they were far richer than an empire, or even an entire weave of the Outerverse.

“Madam, how do you picture our collaboration working?” Lu Yin asked.

Madam Nalan smiled. “It would be very comprehensive, ranging from agriculture, industrial, and business support to weapons development, space travel, and recycling. As long as it is a field that the Nalan family is involved in, we would be willing to work with the Great Yu Empire.”

Lu Yin was stunned. "Madam, are you serious?"

Madam Nalan nodded her head. "Of course."

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Madam Nalan left an hour later, and Lu Yin fell deep into thought as he watched her leave.

Anyone in the Outerverse would want to work with the Nalan family, and even the major forces that ruled an entire weave would fight over the chance to work with them. The only thing that was motivating Madam Nalan to work with the Great Yu Empire was Lu Yin himself.

Initially, when the Nalan family had requested protection, they had mentioned that they would collaborate with the Great Yu Empire. However, Lu Yin had thought that they would only want to collaborate in some small capacity and would merely help stimulate the Great Yu Empire's economy. He had never expected that they would offer such a comprehensive collaboration, and this arrangement was far more useful than the Great Yu Empire's collaborations with Northline Flowzone or the Watermoon Villa.

The current problem was that the Great Yu Empire held the disadvantage in all aspects compared to the Nalan family. If not for Lu Yin's extraordinary abilities, then the Great Yu Empire definitely wouldn't be able to match up to the Nalan family.

Lu Yin decided that it was time to increase the empire's strength. He wanted this collaboration to be equal to both sides. Also, he didn't want the Great Yu Empire to fall under the Nalan family's control, as that wasn't his style of doing things.

Lu Yin quickly summoned Gavin, the minister of finance.

"The Nalan family wants to collaborate with the empire?" Gavin grew excited at this news.

Lu Yin nodded. "Go and arrange for someone to coordinate with the Nalan family, and remember to do so for all aspects of the collaboration."

"Yes, Your Highness. With the help of the Nalan family, the empire's economy will recover very quickly," Gavin said happily.

Lu Yin glanced at him. "I want to see growth, not just recovery."

"Understood," Gavin agreed.

"One more thing." Lu Yin looked at Gavin. "While you are working with them, try and network with the other weaves more, and then send some of our people out. You can go and discuss the details with Captain Shalosh."

Gavin nodded. "Yes, Your Highness."

Lu Yin tossed a cosmic ring over to Gavin. "Here's some stuff that I want to sell to the empire, so please evaluate the value."

Gavin looked confused, but when he looked into the cosmic ring, he saw more than three hundred tonnes of polarium essence, which left him stunned.

Polarium essence was extremely valuable, and even Elder Wu and Topmist had fought over it in the past. Generally, even an entire planet that contained polarium ore wouldn't yield this much polarium essence. "Your Highness, I'm unable to give you an estimate at this moment."

"For the 310 tonnes of polarium essence and the star crystals from the Nine Stacks Sect, I'll calculate the value as 50,000 star essence. This is a debt that the empire owes me, and it will need to be repaid in the future," Lu Yin said.

Gavin nodded. "Yes, Your Highness, I have made a record of it."

There had been a huge amount of star crystals in the Nine Stacks Sect, but they were only worth about 20,000 star essences in total. A major reason why Lei Long hadn't used any of the crystals from the sect was that they were way too bulky to carry around. However, Lu Yin also didn't want to leave the star crystals for the Nine Stacks Sect, so he had shipped all of them back to the Great Yu Empire. As for the polarium essence, Lu Yin wasn't sure of the price either.

The prices of most items would fluctuate due to market conditions, and so, the polarium essence might not actually be worth 30,000 star essence. Despite that, Gavin didn't object to the price that Lu Yin had given. Even if Lu Yin had stated the polarium essence was worth 300,000 star essences, he would have to agree to it since Lu Yin was the one in charge of the Great Yu Empire.

The main reason why Lu Yin had passed the polarium essence to Gavin was so that they could equip the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons with it and make them into a powerful force throughout the Outerverse. It was also time to change the requirements for joining the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons, as Lu Yin wanted to prioritize quality over quantity.

Before much more time passed, Gavin left. The polarium essence had been immediately sent over to Ban Jiu, the captain of the Twelfth Squadron.

A few days later, Lu Yin sat down at his typical seat below the throne for a morning meeting.

He didn't have many opportunities to attend the meetings, and most of the meetings were now being hosted by the ministers when he wasn't present.

Huan Sha and En Ya were already at the meeting. Although they were standing at the back of the hall, everyone knew that they would be more powerful than the Imperial Cabinet in the future.

"The Meck family is in chaos following the death of their patriarch. Following some discussion, we have decided to intervene in order to prevent further issues."

"Many medical companies in the empire have increased their prices due to the war in the Ironblood Weave, and all of the medications from Shamrock Enterprises have been sold out. After some discussion, we have decided to punish the medical companies that raised their prices."

"The Galaxy Bank has declared bankruptcy and will be taken over by the empire. We estimate that this will cause a certain amount of loss to the empire's budget."

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The ministers reported their updates one after another, and all in all, it took more than an hour to go through everything.

Too many things had happened during this period, but the ministers only chose to report the major incidents as most of the minor issues had already been settled by the Imperial Cabinet and the four ministries.

Lu Yin calmly listened to the reports and only felt one thing: chaos. The main problem was that he didn't have enough money. With money, he would be able to take care of the medications' high prices and placate the citizens. He could also create more jobs and relieve some of the pressure placed on the people by doing so. Madam Nalan's proposal to collaborate had truly been a godsend.

"Your Highness, I've finished my report," Garope respectfully informed him.

Lu Yin nodded, and his gaze swept over the ministers as he fell deep into thought.

Everyone stood and waited quietly.

Moments later, Lu Yin spoke up, "Actually, I have an idea. When the eastern weaves joined forces and sent reinforcements to the war in Ironblood Weave, they were able to gather nearly ten Enlighters and dozens of Hunters, but that wasn't the full power of those weaves. If we joined forces with the other weaves and combined our power, then what would happen?"

The ministers present were confused, as they couldn't understand what Lu Yin was hinting at.

En Ya's eyes glinted, and she looked at Lu Yin in shock. This was an ambitious question. There were seventy two weaves in the Outerverse, and no force had ever taken control of more than three weaves at a time. At best, a single force had held full control of two weaves at a time.

Lu Yin laughed heartily when he saw the expressions on everyone's faces. "It's fine. I'm just joking. We'll end the meeting here."

The ministers agreed and left the great hall.

En Ya stayed behind and moved forward after everyone else had left. "Your Highness."

Lu Yin looked at her. "What's the matter?"

"Does Your Highness really mean what was just said?" En Ya asked seriously.

Lu Yin answered after a moment's thought. "Maybe. Do you have any suggestions?"

En Ya answered, "Actually, Grand Marshal Shui had this idea in the past as well. He wanted to connect the seventy two weaves of the Outerverse and use their combined power to attack the Primal Zone in order to take back some control from the Celestial Beast Empire. At the same time, he wanted to launch another attack from Erudite Flowzone against the Celestial Beast Empire. Grand Marshal Shui once said that the Outerverse was too scattered and that each weave was negligible on its own. However, if the weaves were to join forces, then their combined power would be immense. It's possible that the reason why the Celestial Beast Empire hasn't sent an enormous force to the Primal Zone is because they were concerned about the possible retaliation from the Outerverse."

Lu Yin was interested in her words. "It would seem that most of my ideas are in line with Grand Marshal Shui's thoughts."

En Ya nodded. "Many of Grand Marshal Shui's ideas were rejected by the powers of the Innerverse, and the Hall of Honor didn't support him either."

"Times have changed. Since the Innerverse and the Outerverse have been separated, as long as Elder Lohar doesn't object to my actions, then I can do anything with the Hall of Honor's support. Nobody will be able to stop me," Lu Yin said. He had just received his new gadget the previous day, and there were currently six Honor Points on his profile.

Although it might seem like a small change to go from two to six Honor Points, Lu Yin's entire status had transformed. As long as he didn't do anything overboard, the Hall of Honor would stand on his side. Also, since the Innerverse and Outerverse had been separated, there weren't many people around who had more Honor Points than him.

En Ya's eyes shone, and Lu Yin had never seen her this excited throughout her entire time in the Great Yu Empire. "I am willing to help Your Highness rule the Outerverse."

Lu Yin laughed. "Rule the Outerverse? You're overthinking things. I just want the eastern weaves to unite. Since Grand Marshal Shui had this idea in the past, then do you have any suggestions?"

En Ya nodded. "An alliance."

Lu Yin's eyes lit up. "Draft a plan for the alliance. That's a good idea."

"Yes, Your Highness."

Grand Marshal Shui Chuanxiao was the best tactical mind in the history of humanity. The scope of his ideas was not something that Lu Yin could compare to. The Grand Marshal had wanted to unite all seventy two weaves of the Outerverse, but Lu Yin merely wanted to try joining the eastern weaves together, as well as a few other weaves if it was possible.

Uniting all seventy two weaves was almost impossible even without any Enlighters active in the Outerverse and the full support of the Hall of Honor. This was because the Outerverse was too vast, and it would take a tremendous amount of time just for the Great Yu Empire's troops to traverse the Outerverse, let alone unite all the weaves.

It would only be possible if Lu Yin had Mister Mu's ability to travel across half the universe in an instant.

One day, a shadow entered King Zishan's palace without even being noticed by Kayze. The shadow revealed itself when a bespectacled girl stepped into the manor.

The girl walked into the sitting room of King Zishan's palace and stood there silently.

Lu Yin soon joined her.