

The Mechanic 201

Chapter 201: Northern Continent

Han Xiao had unlocked two new abilities and three new talents. [Bat Habit] had been gained from reaching the max level of all abilities in [Night Stalker].

Without hesitation, Han Xiao levelled up all the new abilities to the max as well.

Field Controlling Vision Lv.10: Upon activation, +15% Fire Rate, +20% Range, +22% Field Vision. Lasts 13 seconds.

Cooldown: 12 minutes

Stamina Usage: 300

Lethal Critical Hits: Vital spot critical damage increases from 200% to 250%. Dealing four vital spot critical hits in two seconds has a 0.1% – 1.5% chance of trigger a lethal attack.

Proficient Combat: +5 STR, +3 END, +6% Melee Attack, +4% Parry Chance.

Proficient Shooting: +6 DEX, +8% Firearm Attack, +4% Fire Rate.

Bat Habit: Vision will not be affected by the night, able to detect surroundings with sound. When fighting during the night, +5% DEX.

He used about 12,000,000 points of experience to max the levels of these abilities, in which he spent the most points in [Medium Enhancement] and [Meticulous Repairs]. After all, they were the main class abilities of the second-tier class.

There were still a ton of experience points in the interface.

With all these abilities reaching the max level, Han Xiao's strength had increased by at least 20%.

The enhance and repair abilities were the main abilities of Mechanic class. One such ability was [Energy—Magnetic Enhancement], which increased machinery affinity by 33% when it reached max level. Han Xiao clearly felt that he suddenly understood machines more deeply, and the speed and quality of him building machines increased tremendously.

It was just right for him, as his class-up requirement was to build five purple-quality pieces of equipment with a rating of more than 60. Increasing his ability to build machines would help him meet the requirements.

Five high-quality gear in purple grade and the ratings had to be more than 60—it was quite difficult. The rating of equipment in Galaxy followed a very easily understood system. Legendary quality low-level gear would not give as many attributes as purple-quality high-level gear. A high level and high-quality gear would be much more valuable.

Han Xiao still had a large number of experience points left after maxing all his abilities. By choosing a suitable mechanical blueprint and maxing its level, it would greatly increase the quality of the final product and multiply the success rate by more than seven times.

Han Xiao contemplated for some time and decided to fuse blueprints first to have more choices.

With more than 100,000,000 EXP, he could splurge on fusing basic knowledge.

Of course, he was not randomly fusing them; he only fused the machinery that he felt would be reliable. After all, there were way too many combinations between the basic knowledge, and with every fusion, the experience points required would double. If he did not use them wisely, even 100,000,000 experience points would not be able to fill this infinite pit.

After continuously infusing tens of times and spending millions of experience points, Han Xiao received tens of new blueprints that spread across various types with different uses. He carefully picked three pieces of machinery for the class change mission.

[Compounded Magnetic Chain Split Blades], [Iron Fist—Mounted Heavy Mechanical Arm (Can Be Disassembled)], [Mini Maneuvering Equipment].

Not only did these three suit the requirements, but Han Xiao also felt they would be useful to him.

Compounded Magnetic Chain Split Blades was a weapon that was similar to the Magnetically-Controlled Retractable Armor. It had a magnetic round metal plate as the body, and a few detachable magnetic blades filling the core with magnetic energy would activate the magnetic chain. The blades would then be dispersed and hover around the core with spaces in between. If one blade was within a certain distance of another, they would repel each other, and if they are more than a certain distance apart, they would attract each other, which provided a medium range combat solution.

The controls of Compounded Magnetic Chain Split Blades were cumbersome and unique. By using energy to adjust the structure of the magnetic chain, the blades could be turned into different shapes. With the combination of certain gestures, the blades could be used for both attacking and defending in many forms. It needed practice, just like the Magnetically-Controlled Retractable Armor.

The blades could be put in different pockets and combined together during use, which was convenient for stealth purposes and suited the Viper. This was also superhuman equipment for a Mechanical Pugilist.

Iron Fist—Mounted Heavy Mechanical Arm (Can Be Disassembled) was a type of mechanical arm. Different from the lightweight mechanical arm, the size of it was very huge. It was many times bigger

than his arms. Its power source was the built-in motor and engine. As its size was very huge, it had a high requirement of the user's Strength. Han Xiao had to wear Viper to meet its requirements.

Han Xiao chose this because it could be disassembled. This meant that it could be used as part of Viper for enhancement if needed.

Mini Maneuvering Equipment looked like a belt. It could shoot out bursts of air that allowed the user to jump midair, and its fuel was very expensive. There was a fitting device built-in so that it would not fly off without the user. It would tire the user to a certain extent, but Han Xiao was practically immune to it with his amount of END.

The most important thing this device gave Han Xiao was agility. He would be about to make turns in midair and perform all kinds of tricky movements, drastically increasing his mobility.

He had chosen those three pieces of machinery to attempt making purple-quality equipment. He wanted to give his mechanical suit melee weapons so that it would cover the close-range weakness of the sniping style.

The other blueprints such as cannons, land mines, and bombs were not suitable for making a piece of purple quality equipment as there was not much room to improve.

He immediately maxed the level of the three blueprints, which cost around one million EXP, but it was nothing to him with all the experience points he had.

There's not enough materials on the plane. Han Xiao looked at his inventory. He had not restocked in the Western Continent. He pondered for a while and decided to make use of the max level [Medium Enhancement] and enhanced all of his current gear.

As he was keeping himself busy in the plane, it flew at a constant speed toward their destination, the Northern Continent.

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One day later, the plane landed at the coastline of the Northern Continent.

Han Xiao walked down the plane. He got goosebumps from the surrounding cold air; it was freezing in the Northern Continent.

Han Xiao rubbed his palms against each other and breathed out a fog of hot air, opened the map, and said, "There are four novice villages in the Northern Continent, too. The highest level players should also advance to LV 20 soon."

The clock was ticking. Han Xiao hurriedly asked the pilot to take off again as soon as the plane was refueled. He arrived at the first novice village in the Northern Continent very soon and was greeted with warm welcomes.

The players in the Northern Continent had been waiting for him for a long time. They had been reading about the players in the Western Continent showing off every day with envy and anticipation; it was finally their turn to show off.

Of course, the players in the Southern Continent were even more upset.

Han Xiao stood in place, and the players queued to give him money and experience points with smiles on their faces. The numbers on the interface kept growing.

Suddenly, a commotion broke out among the crowd. Hao Tian walked out of the crowd as the players around him stepped aside.

“I want to buy the Referral Letter,” Hao Tian said.

Han Xiao looked up. He recognized Hao Tian—a pro player who had around the same level of skill as Li Ge.

Hao Tian gave the money and took the referral letter, keeping an emotionless expression throughout. He took the mission and left without wasting any time.

At this time, Han Xiao heard the conversation between the surrounding players.

“Didn’t Hao Tian finish all the missions in novice village? I thought he left two days ago.”

“No, I saw him come back with my own eyes. He stayed till today.”

“Probably waiting for the mission from Black Phantom.”

“It’s not worth wasting two days for a pro player.”

“I would wait ten days if I could get the mission from Black Phantom.”

Han Xiao’s eye twinkled. *Hao Tian seems like quite a good choice.*

Chapter 202: Alumera (1)

Including Hao Tian, Han Xiao had already come in contact with many pro players and given them the missions.

The way to complete the mission was through a communication device. He gave the pro players his number and email, and the mission would only be completed once they sent over the details so that he could complete his own mission. If there were any mission items that needed to be handed to Hanes, he would have to take the plane and retrieve it himself.

As compared to doing them himself, ordering highly skilled players to help him complete these missions would save him a lot of time, and he could just sit back and enjoy the profit.

Among the pro players that came to accept the missions, many had been very strong players in his previous life, and Han Tian was at the top of that list. Han Xiao was rather interested in Hao Tian, but since he had said that he would only be amazed when the mission was completed, he was patient.

Han Xiao spent most of his time on the road as he was rushing between the novice villages in the Northern Continent. During this time, he used the max level [Medium Enhancement] and upgraded his gear and improved their attributes. He also tried to build the three pieces of equipment that he had chosen, and he was rather satisfied with the results.

He was able to achieve blue quality on the first try, which meant there was a chance to reach purple quality after some practice and familiarization.

There were already players that had reached LV 19 on the level leaderboards. With Han Xiao's pace right now, he would be able to finish all the novice villages in the Northern Continent before the first player reached LV 20.

As for Andrea, Han Xiao did not think that he would be able to make it, but he did not want to go to Andrea anyway as it was the headquarters of the Germinal Organization, which meant it was very dangerous for him. Also, the players had all been forced to leave the novice villages and were scattered around everywhere. All in all, the risk far outweighed the profit for Han Xiao.

In the Planet Aquamarine panel on the forum, players in the Northern Continent were the happiest. The second most excited were the players from Andrea—in their minds, after Black Phantom finished running through the novice villages in the Northern Continent, he would go to Andrea next.

Well, that is awkward. Han Xiao sighed.

...

The weather in the Northern Continent was cold. Its terrain mainly consisted of snowy fields and icebergs. Thin snow danced in the air, fog surrounded the mountain top, and a clear line separated the black green mountain body and the snow-covered white peak.

The third novice village was called Frost Pine Village. It was in an ice-sealed forest valley, where fierce beasts roamed.

The plane landed outside the forest, and Han Xiao crossed the forest with his Electromagnetic Hover-boots, following the radar. The beast roars from afar reminded Han Xiao that the Northern Continent was filled with beasts, and many of them were of a rather high level.

As I remembered, the Sharp Claw Ice Bears on one ice field are all high leveled, between LV 53 to 56, not including the elites or BOSS. I can meet the requirements to unlock [Lethal Shot] talent there, Han Xiao thought.

That ice field was quite far, so Han Xiao decided to head there after he finished with the novice village.

He noticed another thing as he looked at the map—the Alumera family's territory was not far from Frost Pine Village.

Not long after, Frost Pine Village appeared in his sights. He calmed his mind, slowed down, and walked over.

...

In the woods one hundred meters away from the Frost Pine Village, a dozen or so people who were all wearing combat suit, firearms, and daggers sat in a circle arranging their equipment.

They were a combat team from Alumera, following their order to capture some Inhumans in the Frost Pine Village and bring them back for research.

The captain, Keaton, was smoking a hand-rolled cigar with a vicious face. He pulled out a blaster and said, "Everyone knows the combat plan. Don't mess up!"

"Relax, it's just a bunch of Inhumans, piece of cake."

"If they dare to resist..." Keaton patted the grenade on his waist. "You don't have to be stingy with these little toys—blow them to smithereens."

The team started laughing.

"Also, these Inhumans look the same as normal people from the outside, so don't capture the wrong ones." Keaton looked at his watch and commanded the rest to stand up. "Arrange your gear. We move on my signal."

At this time, a human-shaped shadow passed the alley outside the woods. A member pointed over and said, "Captain, there's a passer-by over there. Is it an Inhuman?"

"Probably, there are many beasts in this forest—only Inhumans would be alone."

"Capture this one, and we will complete the mission."

They were eager to do it.

However, they waited for a few seconds then realized that the captain was not giving any response. They looked back and were hit with a shock.

The lips of the usual fierce and vicious Keaton were trembling in fear. His face was pale, and even the cigar dropped onto the floor.

"What's wrong?" A member was confused.

Keaton's gulped before saying, "The plan is canceled, leave now!"

"Why?" The team was surprised.

"That's not an Inhuman!" Keaton said in anger. "H—he's Black Phantom! He had a conflict with the family not long ago!"

Black Phantom!

Everyone in the team was stunned. They wanted to look over and confirm it but realized the figure was gone; the shadow had disappeared."

However, they heard the voice of a stranger appear behind them.

"I heard you were calling me."

Everyone was stunned. They turned around rigidly and saw a black shadow standing behind Keaton, looking at them curiously.

They felt a chill run down their spines.

Keaton was horrified. He did not notice Han Xiao move behind him. The voice from Han Xiao was almost like a clap of thunder that made his heart jump and sweat even in such cold weather.

Han Xiao raised his eyebrows. He had sensed them from afar. The reason that these armed men were this nervous in front of him was most likely that they knew his identity and had hostile motives.

“Are you going to tell me yourself, or do you want me to help you? You can try lying too.” Han Xiao bent his fingers. Seven blades flew out from the pockets on his waist and legs, floating in midair as they locked onto Keaton’s vital points.

Blue-quality Compounded Magnetic Chain Split Blades, their damage was based on the user’s energy usage, and they were able to form many weapon shapes while maintaining a very high attack speed. The equipment had an ability called [Revolving Slashes]. Once activated, all the blades would form a circulation like a clown throwing balls, inflicting multiple wounds at high speed. It was a great melee weapon before LV 60.

From the players’ perspective, this thing would be god tier equipment in the early stages. Han Xiao had spent more than a million experience points to be able to get this blueprint.

Keaton was terrified by the floating blades; he hurriedly listed the team’s identity and mission without leaving anything out.

When he heard that they belong to Alumera, Han Xiao’s eye twinkled. He easily understood why these people were afraid of him; he had helped Lu Cheng to attack Alumera’s territory back in the Green Valley Ville and stood against them, but when he saw the rumors on the Dark Net, Alumera only wanted to revenge Lu Cheng but did not mention him at all.

I should be their enemy—are they... scared of me?

Han Xiao was suddenly interested. He put back the Compounded Magnetic Chain Split Blades and said, “Go back and tell your leader that I will be visiting very soon.”

Keaton’s tight nerves loosened. He immediately ran away without daring to look back, and the rest of the team followed.

After running for a few hundred meters, out of breath, Keaton stopped and looked back. When he was sure Black Phantom had not followed them, he let out a sigh of relief. He was soaked in sweat like he had just gotten out of a pool, and his heart was beating extremely fast.

“Captain, what now?” Fear still lingered on everyone’s face.

Keaton swallowed his saliva and said, “We go and relay the message to the bosses.”

...

“Black Phantom is in the Northern Continent, and he wants to ‘visit’ us!”

The eyes of Darryl, the leader of the Alumera family, opened wide and round like an angry bear. “We have yet to find him, and now he dares to find us first. He’s totally disrespecting us. I’m going to kill him!”

The third in command, Se Qi, was a Sharnuk. He was huge and had dark skin. "Don't be so impulsive. He's not to be messed with lightly. He definitely has some backing and no fear if he dares to find us alone."

Darryl stared across. "Xiao Jin, what's your suggestion?"

Xiao Jin pushed his monocle and said calmly, "He only said 'visit'. If he wanted to attack us, he didn't have to tell us. We should make contact with him and see what he wants. Maybe he's not planning to engage combat."

Darryl frowned and said, "I will see him myself and see how he's going to explain killing our men!"

Chapter 203: Alumera (2)

Frost Pine Village was a poor novice gathering point. Poor meant there were many missions; therefore, although the players had low-quality equipment, they had accumulated a lot of experience points. Many players bought abilities from Han Xiao, and they were taking photos with him from time to time. He was like a celebrity; the crowd appeared wherever he did.

Han Xiao left Frost Pine Village in a plane after staying for one day and harvesting experience points. He brought along all his equipment and went to the Alumera family.

He did not feel a sense of belonging to the family of his original body, but he was unavoidably curious about it, so he wanted to ask around about it. Since Alumera was still pursuing his original identity, Han Xiao was very interested in making contact with them.

Alumera Family, a big warlord in the Northern Continent, they were partners with Theseus. Within the planet, they have 24 colonies of which five are large territories. They are very rich; they are registered as a legal financial organization in Theseus.

They are involved in businesses, politics, and many other fields, which are controlled by different factions in the family. The Alumera family is separated into four factions internally, which consist of the home faction lead by Darryl, the Xiao faction led by Xiao Jin, the red island faction led by the third chair Se Qi, and the more relaxed local alliance northern faction.

Alumera is a warlord organization made by the alliance of organizations from dead countries, the Home faction controlled the big picture, and the other factions are under them. They took in many loose warlords and became one of the strongest warlord organization in the Northern Continent. Then they accepted the request from Theseus to be part of the government forces and acquired government backing. They have not made any big movements recently and have mostly been settling tricky problems for Theseus, especially regarding Raylen.

The situation in the Northern Continent was different from the other continents. Unlike other nations that were peaceful, the conflict between Theseus and Raylen was very intense. Killing happened very often, and soldiers, agents, and superhumans battled in secret. Hatred was deeply rooted in both nations. Theseus and Raylen were both very invasive countries, and one mountain could not fit two tigers. For more than twenty years, they had not stopped trying to defeat and erase each other.

Only recently when they decided to work together for the expedition to conquer the Germinal Organization did they pause.

Alumera's headquarters are full of danger. They dread my identity and strength only because they have a huge influence, but I am their enemy nonetheless, so there might be a fight.

...

A large colony sat halfway up an ice-covered valley—Alumera's headquarters. It was a great strategic location as it was easy to defend but difficult to invade. There were only two routes into the colony—one was through the mountain, and the other was by climbing the cliffs at the side—both were heavily guarded.

The mountain rocks were black-green, the snow was white, and the wind was piercing.

At the juncture on the way up the mountain, a sentinel wearing a thick cotton coat was scanning the area as usual. He then suddenly saw a shadow in the snow far away.

"Someone's coming!" The sentinel warned his friend to stay alert. The shadow soon revealed itself fully and appeared in their sights. The sentinels straightened their faces—it was none other than Black Phantom whom the leader had ordered them to keep an eye out for.

Han Xiao's eyes twinkled. The juncture was heavily guarded just as he expected from the intelligence that he had gathered.

He wondered what Alumera's attitude toward him would be.

Before long, he was given the answer to that question.

After a short wait, the juncture opened, and a man surrounded by a team walked toward Han Xiao. He stopped in front of him and said with a fake smile on his face, "Mr. Black Phantom, welcome to the Alumera family. I'm Ummil, here to lead you in. Please follow me, the leaders have been expecting you."

Well, looks like the fight will not happen so soon, and from the way he was talking, they are probably planning a Feast at Hong Gate ¹.

Sigh, how troublesome, couldn't it just be solved by the simplest solution, violence? That wouldn't be barbaric; it's going back to the basics, skipping what was in between and starting the fight right off the bat. It would save everyone some time.

Time is money. Sigh, I'm already here anyway.

Han Xiao lifted the single shoulder backpack that was filled with machinery and followed Ummil up the mountain path.

The path wound among clouds, and the guards followed beside the duo as they passed one juncture after another.

Han Xiao kept a serious face all along. Ummil kept wanting to ask him questions but did not dare to because of the expression on Han Xiao's face. He contemplated again and again, then asked with a

laugh, "The leaders were very surprised when they heard you are coming. After all, there was some discord not long ago."

"You guys are very curious about why I'm here?"

"Yes, we are not exactly friends, but since you are coming, I believe you have a friendly motive," Ummil said.

"I'm here to look for trouble. I have yet to decide who to kill. How about we start with you?" Han Xiao asked.

"Hehe, with your strength, you wouldn't have to visit if you wanted to kill us mid-level cadres," Ummil said without changing his expression. "That's not a funny joke."

"Is that so?" Han Xiao scanned through the guards beside them. They were expressionless, their fingers were placed at the trigger at all times, and they looked cold, hard, and masculine. But the cold sweat dripping down from their sideburns and their short and rapid breathing showed that they were not as calm as they looked.

The guard captain secretly looked over and was immediately caught by Han Xiao. He looked away the next second with horror in his eyes.

"But they seem to find it funny." Han Xiao expression resembled a smile yet not a smile. He patted the captain on the shoulder, and he clearly sensed the captain's body tighten for a moment.

Ummil was smiling on the outside but was angry on the inside. *He's not here for a friendly reason. Not sure why he's here.*

Han Xiao squinted his eyes and asked out of the blue, "Ummil... right? What faction do you belong to, Home or the others?"

Ummil's expression became unnatural. He coughed and said, "I'm a member of the Alumera Family, that's all."

Han Xiao smiled and did not say anything.

They kept silent till the door of the territory appeared in sight.

Ummil was relieved. "We're here. The leaders are waiting for you in the hall."

The door opened, and hundreds of soldiers came forward, staring at Han Xiao. They seemed to have confidence in numbers.

Ummil was leading the way in front. He walked very slowly on purpose to spend more time in the middle of the armed forces with the motive of planting fear in Han Xiao.

Han Xiao understood what was happening, but he was not affected. Suddenly, he saw a floating ID outside the crowd. There were players here.

Makes sense. Alumera is not far from Frost Pine Village, so some players that left the novice village will have come here. Han Xiao narrowed his eyes. There are already players in Alumera, so why are they still capturing Inhumans?

There were many possibilities. Han Xiao did not think much about it and left the thought in the back of his head. His goal was Alumera; it did not matter if there were players present.

...

“What are these soldiers gathering for?”

Dozens or so of players discussed the situation softly from afar as they looked at the crowd. They all had a ‘Bamboo Rain’ before their names. They were members of the Bamboo Rain guild, a small casual guild with less than a hundred members who were all young people.

The guild leader, Bamboo Rain Fragrance, was a beautiful young girl with long hair. “They seem to be welcoming someone. Is this an unexpected event?”

“Let’s go and take a look. Maybe we can trigger some missions,” the somewhat handsome Bamboo Rain Fly said. Then he looked at the rest of the members inquiringly.

Of course, no one objected. This group of players from Bamboo Rain guild was the only players in this colony, and they had only found it by chance. There was not much information included on the maps of this place that were sold in the novice village.

The map on the player’s Interfaces was full of fog. The places would only be revealed if they went there themselves or bought a map for it.

They walked toward the crowd, and Bamboo Rain Xuan yelled with surprise, “That’s Black Phantom!”

The group was shocked. They took a closer look and confirmed they were right, then looked at each other in awe.

“Why is Black Phantom here? The people here seem to be hostile toward him.” Bamboo Rain Fragrance frowned and pondered aloud. “He just appeared in various novice villages a few days ago, so there must be a reason he’s suddenly here.”

Bamboo Rain Xuan’s eye brightened up. “This is an unexpected plotline! There might be hidden missions!”

“Lucky, I have yet to see Black Phantom. Now I can learn abilities from him without going to a novice village.”

“I remember there are some video posters looking for footage of him.”

They stopped in front of the hall as they saw Han Xiao entering it. The hall was a high-level area that was not open to them. They needed enough relationship points to enter, but Black Phantom could just go in. They were frustrated.

“Let’s all wait outside,” Bamboo Rain Fragrance said. “He might come out very soon.”

Chapter 204: Alumera (3)

The hall's structure reminded Han Xiao of the ancient kingdoms described in books. It was spacious with rows of chairs on both sides, and at the end was the master seat covered in the hide of a white bear. Lining the walls were guards on high alert.

The hall was filled with high ranked officials of Alumera. They turned to look at Han Xiao almost simultaneously, with coldness and hostility in their eyes.

Many of these people thought that Han Xiao had vicious intentions by coming here all of a sudden, so the majority of them disagreed with meeting the legendary killer who was possibly an enemy. They had heard of the things that Black Phantom did, and they knew that Han Xiao was elusive, so they had no idea what he would do. However, Xiao Jin said that since Han Xiao was a killer, it would be safer to meet him face to face.

There were guards in the halls as well, all of whom were ready to pull the trigger any time. Superhumans also hid in the dark, which gave the high ranked officials of Alumera some sense of security.

"Black Phantom." Darryl, who sat in the master seat, waved his hands casually. "Give him a seat."

A guard pulled a chair over and placed it in the middle of the hall like it was for an integration. Han Xiao knew that they were trying to plant fear in him. He had come alone, and Alumera definitely wanted to stand their ground.

Han Xiao did not care. He placed the enormous single shoulder backpack on the floor and sat down steadily. "Don't you want to introduce yourselves?"

"Stop acting," Darryl said coldly. "You've definitely already gone through our data in the Dark Net."

Han Xiao scanned the Alumera members in the hall and noticed something quite interesting. These high ranked officials were seated separately. The ones belonging to the Home Faction sat around Darryl, while Xiao Jin, Sen Qi, and the North Faction all sat separately. This detail showed that there was some strong conflict within Alumera.

There were also a few very strong hidden presences around. Han Xiao was guessing that if the meeting went bad, he would be attacked in a split second... which of course would not be a problem for him.

Most of Han Xiao's attention was on Xiao Jin and the members of his faction—he was scanning through them discreetly.

These were the family of his original body, and they had almost killed him.

Bang!

Suddenly, Darryl slammed the chair handle and yelled, "In Green Valley Ville, you attacked our territory and killed our men. What's your explanation for that?"

The atmosphere tensed up immediately. Those strong presences started to tense up as well, and the other factions were acting indifferent. Only the home faction was full of hostility.

Han Xiao remembered that he had killed one of Xiao Jin's foster sons, but Xiao Jin had a poker face. Han Xiao could not figure out what he was thinking.

"So what if I killed them? If you're not happy about that, fight me." Han Xiao's expression resembled a smile but not a smile.

Darryl could not believe that Han Xiao was so arrogant in his territory. He was almost shocked for one second, then it turned into rage. "You—"

Before he finished his sentence, Han Xiao suddenly said, "You worked with the Germinal Organization. I won't be the only one that comes looking for trouble with you—the Six Nations will, too."

The crowd was stunned.

Working with the Germinal Organization? Since when?

Darryl forced the shouting down his throat and suppressed his anger as much as he could. "What are you talking about? We have never worked with the Germinal Organization."

"Zero, whom the Germinal Organization is offering an enormous sum for, was a member of your family," Han Xiao replied. "How do you explain that?"

Darryl suddenly realized why Black Phantom attacked them for no reason—it was because he had mistaken them for having a connection with the Germinal Organization. The team that was searching for Han Xiao might have been discovered by Black Phantom when they passed by the Green Valley Ville.

Having heard that the Germinal Organization was Black Phantom's enemy, Darryl realized that he had found the cause of the questions he was searching for. He shook his head and said, "You're wrong. The wanted Zero is vice leader Xiao Jin's second son, Han Xiao."

Han Xiao frowned. He looked at Darryl discreetly with eyes that were filled with unspoken meanings.

Darryl continued speaking. "But Han Xiao is already not related to us. Furthermore, the Germinal Organization putting a reward for Han Xiao means he's their enemy; there are more reasons for us not to be working with the Germinal Organization."

It seemed like Alumera wanted to cut their ties. Han Xiao's eyes twinkled as he slowly lured words out of their mouth. He purposely acted as if he was speaking in a very serious manner and said, "I believe, with the intelligence of the Germinal Organization, they definitely knew Han Xiao belonged to you. You are the best clue they have. Why wouldn't the Germinal Organization contact you?"

Darryl's face was stunned. "They really didn't contact us."

"You think I'll believe that? Do you think the Six Nations' intelligence organizations will believe that?" Han Xiao said coldly. "There are too many suspicious parts to the story. I can only assume that you are helping the Germinal Organization find the wanted man, and there's even a possibility that that wanted man was sent by you to do things for the Germinal Organization."

Darryl frowned and said, "That's is completely not true. There's more to this."

"I would like to hear what more there is then."

Han Xiao had no fear. His attitude made Darryl clench his teeth. For the family's sake, they had to cut ties with the Germinal Organization very clearly. The war between the Six Nations and the Germinal Organization was about to break out, so if they were misunderstood, Alumera would be in a dire situation.

Although Han Xiao had come alone, Darryl did not dare do anything to him. After all, he was Black Phantom; with his identity and strength, the fact that he was there might even have been an order from the Dark Net. If they killed him, the Dark Net would become their enemy, and it would prove the fact that they were working with the Germinal Organization.

Most importantly, Black Phantom was unfathomable. The people in the headquarters had no confidence in killing him, and finding out if they could was not worth the risk.

Therefore, at this point of time, Darryl could only endure the arrogance of Han Xiao. He stared at Xiao Jin with a fierce look; he felt this was all caused by Xiao Jin. Therefore, he spun his eyes and said loudly, "Okay, Leader Xiao, you shall tell him the details."

Xiao Jin looked at Darryl faintly. He turned his head and said, "Xiao Hai, tell him."

A handsome young man walked out from behind Xiao Jin, his expression rather vicious.

Xiao Hai, the first and best son of Xiao Jin, partly in charge of the Xiao Faction.

He was someone with actual political power, and Xiao Jin had raised him to take his place.

"One year ago, I was guarding a convoy of supplies and was attacked midway. Han Xiao went missing. I have no clue what happened to him afterward," Xiao Hai said coldly.

This time, a leader from the Northern Faction said, "More details, please. Our guest doesn't seem to believe it."

Xiao Hai let out a grunt and said, "The attackers came for me. Han Xiao is my brother, so I made him look like me and divided their attention as bait—only then I could escape successfully. I went back searching with more troops afterward, but we weren't able to find him."

Han Xiao raised his eyebrows. "So, you let your little brother die for you. Was he willing to?"

"What do you think?" Xiao Hai was already annoyed.

The crowd chatted among themselves, eyes with all kinds of different emotions fixed upon Xiao Hai.

"That is what happened," Darryl said. "We can show you more evidence, and whether you believe it or not, we have no relationship with the Germinal Organization."

Han Xiao nodded. He had already received the information he needed—what happened to the original owner of this body and the attitude of his family toward him.

When he mentioned the original owner of this body, the people in the Xiao faction treated it like it was a stranger. This was especially so for Xiao Hai, who did not show even a shred of remorse toward killing his own little brother, and Xiao Jin had no problem with that.

In conclusion, the original owner of the body was not loved by anyone; everyone treated him like nothing.

You had a pretty hard life, Han Xiao thought.

The people in the hall suddenly realized something.

What happened to controlling the situation?

When did it become Black Phantom interrogating us?

This is our territory—what about our dignity?

Chapter 205: Assassination!

“You killed my foster son,” Xiao Jin suddenly said.

“This is a private matter chieftain Xiao,” Han Xiao replied. “Let’s discuss it privately.”

“Sure.” Xiao Jin nodded.

The crowd’s eyes twinkled. Black Phantom’s reply to the same matter was completely different.

Darryl showed unhappiness on his face but did not say anything.

Han Xiao turned his head to look at Darryl and said, “It’s late. You don’t mind if I stay the night, right?”

“Xiao Jin, take care of him, meeting dismissed.” Darryl stood up and walked out.

The crowd walked pass Han Xiao with different expressions on their faces.

A man walked up to Han Xiao, smiled, and said, “I’m Xiao Ming, a foster son of Leader Xiao. I will be taking care of you during your stay. Please follow me.”

Han Xiao looked around and realized that Ummil, who had brought him here, was missing. *The internal conflict in Alumera is really very severe.*

The tense atmosphere in the hall earlier on further proved his point.

With such thoughts in his mind, Han Xiao walked out of the hall. Suddenly, a dozen or so players surrounded him with excitement on their faces. They were all from the Bamboo Rain guild. Bamboo Rain Xuan enabled the recording functions.

“We want to learn abilities,” Bamboo Rain Fragrance said.

Han Xiao surely would not miss out on an opportunity to earn some experience points, so he casually opened the ability interface.

Xiao Ming, who was standing on the side, asked in surprise, “Do you know them?”

Han Xiao shook his head.

“Black Phantom seems to be very popular among the Inhumans.” The Alumera members who happened to pass by noticed this, and they were rather surprised.

The Bamboo Rain Guild wanted to trigger missions, but Han Xiao did not make any other interactions. He walked away after stopping for a few seconds.

“It’s an unexpected plotline, but there’s no mission.” Bamboo Rain Fly was confused.

“Seems like my recording has nothing of interest,” Bamboo Rain Xuan said in frustration.

...

Xiao Ming arranged a room for Han Xiao. Although Han Xiao’s attitude in the morning had made many of the high ranked officials very angry, he did explain the source of his hostility. Therefore, the atmosphere was not all that tense.

That night, Xiao Jin invited Han Xiao to his mansion with the purpose of discussing compensation.

Upon arriving at the place, Han Xiao realized that Xiao Jin’s children were all gathered around, including Xiao Hai and other brothers and sisters. However, the foster kids were not there.

Xiao Jin had the same expressionless face as he had in the day, unpredictable.

Han Xiao was looking at Xiao Jin and his children, and these people were looking at him, too.

“What compensation do you want.” Han Xiao looked at Xiao Jin and put on a smile that did not really look like a smile.

“It’s his bad luck that he died.” Xiao Jin’s expression was cold. To him, foster children were just assistants and tools.

“Then why did you invite me here?” Han Xiao raised an eyebrow.

“There are no bad sides to getting to know a famous killer.”

Han Xiao could not figure out Xiao Jin’s motive, maybe it was just to build a relationship, maybe there were other motives, anyway Han Xiao was interested in making more contact with the family of his original body owner so he could lure more information out of their mouth.

They chatted casually, talking about all sorts of things. Xiao Hai and his siblings said a word or two once in a while, and the atmosphere was peaceful. Xiao Hai was the leader of the siblings; one could feel a sense of adoration when the siblings talked to him, but Xiao Hai did not react to it, as if that was the norm.

One hour had passed without anyone’s notice. Han Xiao suddenly frowned and said, “I’m very interested in Han Xiao. Let’s talk more about him.”

The atmosphere suddenly turned cold. Xiao Jin put the cup down and said slowly, “He’s my son. He has always been incompetent, but I didn’t think he would become wanted by the Germinal Organization.”

“I thought he’s dead for sure,” Xiao Hai said. “No wonder they say scourges last for thousand years; he’s still bringing us trouble.”

Han Xiao pointed at himself and said, "You mean I'm trouble?"

Xiao Hai gave a cold laugh and said, "Are you not?"

With a light cough, Xiao Jin said, "It's getting late,"

"Indeed, it is." Han Xiao stood up and left.

Xiao Ming brought him back to his room. He passed a stack of documents to Han Xiao as he walked through the door. "This is Han Xiao's information. Father had told me to give it to you."

Han Xiao nodded and accepted it.

As soon as Han Xiao entered the room, he checked every corner of it thoroughly. There had been three monitoring devices before he left, and now there was one more. He shook his head and used a program to crack it once again. After he was done with that, only then did he start reading the documents, from which he gained a deeper understanding of the original owner of his body. He was basically a nobody, and he did not hear about any NPC called 'Han Xiao' in his previous life either.

"Sigh."

Han Xiao shook his head. He had made contact with Alumera to know more about the original owner of his body, and he had already achieved that. Whether it was Alumera's attitude or their internal problems, none of that mattered to him because it had nothing to do with him, and his so-called hostility was just a form of showing his strong stand.

Alumera was already sucking it up and did not want to become his enemy, so Han Xiao would be stupid to kill their people in their headquarters. There was no benefit to creating another enemy for himself for no reason.

Once Alumera knows I'm 'Xiao Han', I wonder how they will react.

Han Xiao put the documents aside, lay on the bed, and closed his eyes. He planned to leave the next day.

...

At midnight in Darryl's mansion...

"It's all because of that asshole Xiao Jin that Alumera has been sucked into this. That asshole has been building on his power with no worries at all. He's obviously trying to seize power. However, the North Faction is my ally, and Se Qi's Red Island Faction has always been neutral. What does he have to be up against me?" Darryl clenched his teeth.

When Alumera was created, it had been peaceful internally, but when the size of the organization started to snowball, conflicts started to happen. As the master of the house, the Home Faction gained most benefits and were in the middle of the conflict. Although all the factions followed the orders on the surface, they all had the ambitions to take over and seize power.

Luckily, after all these long years of partnership, they were all connected to each other deeply, so none of them dared do anything too over the line. A murder was nearly impossible to happen. Even if there was one, it was planned in secret.

Xiao Jin posed the largest threat, and Darryl was the one who secretly planned the attack on Xiao Hai, which sadly failed. They had only managed to kill Han Xiao, who did not matter at all.

Who would have thought that after one year, the Han Xiao who nobody cared about would become a wanted person with an outrageous reward from the Germinal Organization and bring the family such a horrifying enemy?

Thinking back now, Darryl was filled with regret.

At this time, Darryl's son, Lagos, walked in and said, "Father, Black Phantom has left Xiao Jin's mansion. The meeting lasted for one hour and thirty-seven minutes."

"Xiao Jin is becoming more unbridled. Now he even dares meet Black Phantom privately without my consent." Darryl was enraged.

"What do we do, just let Black Phantom leave?"

"Don't mess with him."

"But he dared to be this arrogant in our territory." Lagos was unconvinced.

"I said don't mess with him!" Darryl slammed the table in a rage and shouted, "Get out!"

Lagos clenched his teeth and closed the door after he walked out. The moment he turned his head, his expression turned vicious.

...

As the sky started to brighten, loud noises woke Han Xiao up, who was in a light sleep.

He jumped out of the bed and looked outside through the window. Alumera members were yelling and rushing somewhere.

"What happened?" Han Xiao asked in confusion.

Footsteps closed in rapidly, and dozens of soldiers surrounded the room with guns.

"Black Phantom, don't move!" one of the captains shouted.

These soldiers' mission was to control him. They were all in a state of nervousness that could pull the trigger wrongly anytime. Han Xiao saw the people outside running in another direction.

Seems like something has happened, but it's not about me. Han Xiao squinted his eyes and watched things unfold.

Not long after, the captain seemed like he had received an order. He yelled, "Come with us!"

Han Xiao wanted to know what had happened, too, so he followed the nervous soldiers. To his surprise, they went to Darryl's mansion.

It was already extremely crowded; the high-ranking officials from all the factions had come. They were looking furiously at Han Xiao, and the latter was rather confused.

Han Xiao only discovered what had happened after he walked into the mansion.

In the office, Darryl sat on the chair with his head facing up, a bloody blue hole on his left eye, penetrating through the back of his head. The blood on the wooden floor had already coagulated, and the metallic smell of blood filled the room. The dead body's hands hung from the shoulders, and the legs pushed against the table, holding him on his chair.

The leader of Alumera had been assassinated!

"Cause of death: gunshot. The bullet entered through the eye into the brain, penetrating and leaving through the back of his head. He would have died on the spot. From the size of the bullet hole, the killer used a high caliber handgun, and the leader did not show any sign of resistance. There are no clues at the scene that showed any signs of the killer ever being here."

Han Xiao suddenly understood why the others were looking at him that way.

Darryl died in the night, and being the killer who came without invitation, he was the most suspicious. Also, the killer used a high caliber handgun, and the assassination-style was phantom-like.

There were too many coincidences.

He was being framed!

Han Xiao blinked. He took out a cigarette from the pocket, lighted it up, and inhaled deeply, blowing out a smoke ring in the face of the surrounding nervous soldiers.

"Now this is interesting."

Chapter 206: The Real Killer (One)

The soldiers surrounded the place securely. The high ranked officials had different expressions, the home faction was furious, Xiao Jin's faction was frowning with confusion on their faces, Red Island Faction lead by Se Qi and the Northern Faction all had surprise on their faces, they couldn't believe it.

"Get him!" Lagos's face was twisted.

Xiao Jin frowned and stopped him, "there's more to this, Black Phantom visited us in bright daylight, there's no need for him to do such thing."

"What if that's exactly what he made us think!" One of the chieftains of the Northern Faction said.

"Then why did he have to visit us, it's more discreet to assassinate him." Xiao Jin said.

"Our guarding power is strong, he wanted to get in!" Someone said.

“He’s the killer, and you still want to find excuses for him?!” Lagos was emotional, he took out his gun and pointed at Han Xiao, Se Qi who stood on his side hurriedly stopped him.”

“Calm down, there’s no motive for Black Phantom to do this—”

“Motive?!” Lagos was enraged, he stared at Xiao Jin, clenched his teeth and said, “is there no motive?”

Xiao Jin frowned and said, “you’re overthinking.”

The Northern Faction and the Home Faction agreed they should first control Black Phantom who was the most suspicious, then get on to find more clues. Se Qi felt Black Phantom was too dangerous, and suggested to question Han Xiao on the spot, but was interrupted by Lagos who believed they couldn’t trust anything Black Phantom says, they were unable to come to an agreement.

The soldiers surrounded Han Xiao, many strong presences in the dark were locking their attention on him, and the high ranked officials also had their attention on Han Xiao even as they were discussing, they were ready to engage the moment Han Xiao does anything suspicious.

Han Xiao thought to himself, “the result of framing me to take responsibility for the assassination is a conflict between Alumera and the Dark Net, only the third party will benefit from it. Could this be the goal of the people behind all this? If I start a killing spree, it would also fall right into his trap, it was planned for me to be in such a situation where my actions are very restricted.”

Han Xiao could kill his way out anytime, he didn’t care about making Alumera angry, but if he did it, it would be falling into the trap of the people behind this, as escaping would mean he admitted he was the killer, and killing someone creates hatred, he also could not just let them capture him. It seemed like the plan made by the person behind this had worked.

“I’ve only been here for one day, and they could make the assassination look like I did it, there has to be someone who’s an expert in assassination that has been here for a long time, and my arrival had given them the opportunity.”

Unless they could find the real killer, no matter how many things showed that Han Xiao had no motive to do it, he would still be the most suspicious person without any solid evidence that proves otherwise. After all, no one can truly know someone else unless they can read their mind, logical assumptions could not be taken as evidence.

“Wait, evidence—” Han Xiao had a flash of insight, it hasn’t been long since Delo was assassinated, the crime scene was not checked thoroughly yet, the killer might have left some clues.

This time, the discussion between the high ranked officials had come to an end, Lagos yelled, “Black Phantom, disarm yourself and surrender!”

Xiao Jin added, “if you didn’t do it, we will investigate clearly.”

Han Xiao smiled, “you know that’s impossible, how about you guys disarm yourselves?”

Both parties couldn’t trust each other, there was no way they would take the risk of disarming themselves, it was a problem that had no solution. However, Han Xiao had a thought, “there’s no point of continuing this argument, I can stay temporarily, and you can send people to monitor me 24/7, I will wait till you find the truth.” He said.

Han Xiao was very curious about who was framing him, he felt it was quite interesting.

“Well, that is one way to do it.” Se Qi said immediately, he wasn’t wishing for a conflict.

Before Lagos said anything, someone in the crowd suddenly fired his gun, Han Xiao reacted quickly and activated the Magnetically-Controlled Retractable Armor, the bullet was deflected.

However, this had made the soldiers who were all in a highly nervous state lose their control and all fired at the same time.

“Fire!”

Conflict broke out in an instant!

“Someone fired unexpectedly on purpose!” Han Xiao’s eyes became serious, the scene was chaotic, but he saw the person who made the shot clearly, it was an ordinary soldier.

Bullets emerged from every direction, Han Xiao had no choice but to deal with the shootings first, the enhanced Magnetically-Controlled Retractable Armor had an outstanding level of defence, the bullets only made sparks on the armor and couldn’t penetrate through.

Energy flow through his body and went into a circular metal plate on his head, the Compounded Magnetic Chain Split Blades was activated, seven sharp blades flew out of the pockets and shot out like a storm. Many soldiers’ gun muzzle was cut off, they backed off in horror and bumped into other soldiers on the exteriors.

The firepower of the enemy started weakening, just as Han Xiao was about to go for the soldier who made the first shot, the superhuman guards hidden in the dark acted.

“Hong!”

Suddenly, a fire appeared in the crowd, not one, but four. Three Pugilists, one Esper that could turn his entire body into fire, all pounced towards Han Xiao at the same time.

Fists covered in fire smashed down hard.

“Bang!”

Cracks spread out on the originally standing floor, the walls started to crack open as well, Han Xiao made it in time and jumped up in the air. Suddenly, Han Xiao faced a heat wave coming towards him, the person covered in fire straightened his arms, a snake-like pillar of fire flew towards Han Xiao.

Usually, one has nowhere to escape to during mid-air, but Han Xiao was an exception. He immediately switched on the [Mini Maneuvering Equipment] on his waist, the boxes on the edge of the belt made a turbo-like sound and shot out a jet stream of air, the belt emitted a strong force, almost like an invisible hand pulling Han Xiao to the side.

The fire snake slid by his back and hit the wall, creating a large scorch black hole.

“Level 46, 48, 49, three Pugilists, and one Esper at level 45, all Grade D superhumans, these should be the high tier power in Alumeria.”

If it was before, he would have had some troubles, but now that all his skills were at max level, he was much stronger, it wouldn't be much of a problem for him even if he didn't wear his mechanical suit. In fact, he was more concerned about the soldier who fired first, but he realised that the young soldier was killed in the previous round of chaotic shootings.

Han Xiao felt a thump in his heart, he didn't believe this would be an accident.

“Seems like the people who framed me are deeply rooted in Alumeria, they saw me taking a step back and decided to attack me on purpose, to cause a conflict.”

With these thoughts, Han Xiao had more clues, he put the thoughts away and focused on dealing with the four superhumans and the soldiers. He spun his hands, the revolving blades covered him like a protecting storm, slashing almost ten times per second, inflicting wounds on the three pugilists who were just closing in. Everywhere he walked past, the weapons of the soldiers were cut into pieces, he used this sort of weapon in his previous life before, it didn't need much practice, he was a pro in it instantly. He purposely held back and didn't kill anyone.

Magnetically-Controlled Retractable Armor, Electromagnetic Skateboard Shoes and other equipment he carried around all the time, all went through [Precision Enhancing Modification], their attributes became much stronger. Han Xiao's own combat power had also peaked due to all his skills being at max level. Han Xiao didn't even need Viper-Modified to deal with these four superhumans that had a lower level than him, he only needed Compounded Magnetic Chain Split Blades as a close range combat weapon to defeat them.

Han Xiao's health had reached 3800 points, not far from a Pugilist of the same level, and he also had the Magnetically-Controlled Retractable Armor, he was very tanky.

On the other side, members of the Bamboo Rain Guild witnessed Han Xiao defeating a group of soldiers and four superhumans, Bamboo Rain Guild recorded them with excitement.

“That, is a recording that has the potential to go viral.”

Bamboo Rain Fly said in surprise, “I thought Black Phantom was their guest, but from what they are saying, it seemed like Black Phantom killed their leader. I made a scan just now, all four NPCs that are fighting Black Phantom have a danger level of [Extremely Dangerous], what they say in the forums are right, Black Phantom is at the top tier in terms of strength even amongst the NPCs.”

Bamboo Rain Morning Wind rolled his eyes and said, “you don't say, which NPC that gives main storyline missions are not strong?”

“Shhh—” Bamboo Rain Fragrance made a hand sign of asking them to keep quiet, she stared at the scene and said, “keep quiet and watch the storyline.”

...

The destruction power of superhumans far exceeded normal people, the entire mansion collapsed in the heated battle, the high ranked officials had already escaped in rage and nervousness. More

superhumans were on their way here, they definitely could kill Black Phantom, if these four guards were able to stall him that is.

Blades slashed open the fire, iron fists clashed against the armor. Han Xiao moved around with horrifyingly high mobility, the four superhumans could only barely hit him despite putting in all their efforts. Han Xiao purposely faked an opportunity for them to attack and lured one of the Pugilists to a close range, then used the Thermo-electrical Incisor Gloves to counter-attack and defeated one person first. He then used the blades to form a storm and slashed wounds all over the fire-controlling Esper, his Magnetically-Controlled Retractable Armor had very good heat insulating abilities, fire dealt very limited damage to him.

The two people left soon had an even harder time dealing with Han Xiao.

“Whoosh.”

The blades slashed open the flesh of the Pugilist and shot out through his body, causing blood to shoot out from the wounds, this Pugilist ended up twitching on the floor with heavy injury and was unable to move.

“Shit!” Lagos was shocked, Black Phantom defeated the four guards in much shorter time he expected before the backup could arrive. The scene was now filled with broken bricks and ruins, no one could stop Black Phantom anymore.

If he were to start a killing spree, many of the high ranked officials would die.

Whoosh! A blade hovered before Lagos, he backed up in terror, but the blades followed him like a shadow, till Lagos fell on the ground with afraid and anger on his face.

It was at this time Han Xiao kept the blades back, he wiped off the blood on his face and said coldly, “I can kill you people, but that would be falling right into the trap of someone else, our terms remain unchanged, I can stay till you find out the truth, but if you insist on capturing me, I don’t mind to gift you a few slashes.”

His fingers turned inwards as he was saying, the blades danced in the air and formed a flower shape, the motive of threatening was clear.

Chapter 207: The Real Killer (Two)

“You—” Lagos clenched his teeth in anger.

Before he could say anything, Xiao Jin cut in and said, “we accept your terms, I personally believe the assassination had nothing to do with you, it’s a conspiracy intended to spark conflict between both parties.”

The high ranked officials agreed in silence, Black Phantom was even stronger than the rumors said he was, he defeated the strongest people in the headquarters without even using his sniping style which he was known for. These people were not weak, but they paled in comparison to Black Phantom, they were not on the same level.

The backup finally arrived at this time, Xiao Jin immediately ordered the soldiers to keep their weapons, showing sincerity on their side.

Seeing so, Han Xiao kept his weapons too and walked towards where he resided in, the nervous crowd split up and opened a path.

Xiao Jin gave Lagos a faint look, then turned his head and ordered, "clean the scene up."

Lagos was filled with fury, one of the high ranked officials from the Home Faction helped him to get up but was pushed away instantly.

"He could've killed us, but he insisted he's not the killer, should be trustworthy." Se Qi whispered.

"Naive!" Lagos said coldly, "if he kills us, all of Alumera will become enemy with the Dark Net till the very end, he's doing this so we won't suspect him!"

...

Having returned to Han Xiao's residence, the interface showed a notification.

[You have triggered an urgent mission[The Real Killer]]

[Mission Introduction: You are framed and dragged into a conspiracy, becoming a chess piece used by the people behind this.]

[Mission Requirement/s: Confirm the real killer and accomplish the mission, you have only one chance.]

Reward/s: Random ability or talent x 1]

Han Xiao's eyes twinkled, "it's a puzzle type mission, with only one chance."

There were many types of missions, the puzzle type was rather common, some required the players to collect clues like a detective, sometimes the clue would be provided, but it was all rather vague, the final decision was to be made by the players.

There was no notification after quite a long wait, Han Xiao guessed this mission belonged to the latter type of puzzle mission, with Alumera's suspicion towards him, he probably would not be able to find out any clue.

"It's best to wait and see." Han Xiao thought.

At the same time, Bamboo Rain Guild triggered a different mission.

"[A Shocking Change in Alumera]: The leader of Alumera was murdered, Black Phantom who came to visit out of nowhere became the biggest suspect, but he claimed to not be the killer and suppressed objections with his raw strength. Alumera might seem to have submitted, but some factions still strongly believed Black Phantom is the killer, what information is hidden within?"

"There are five stands you can take on: Black Phantom, Home Faction, Xiao Faction, Red Island Faction and the Northern Faction, changes cannot be made after choosing."

"Reward/s: Rewards will be given based on different stands and contribution, the basic reward is 50,000 experience points!"

Bamboo Rain Fly exclaimed in shock. "at least 50 thousand experience points!"

50 thousand experience points were an extremely large amount for them, there really always were benefits wherever Black Phantom went.

"What position will you guys be choosing?"

"Black Phantom for me."

"Me too."

Everyone agreed, they didn't know Alumera very well, and Han Xiao just defeated all of Alumera's military power, it was obvious following Han Xiao would be the most reliable.

Players of Bamboo Rain Guild approached Han Xiao and expressed their willingness to help.

Han Xiao was surprised, he thought about it and guessed that these players probably received different missions, with a different identity, the mission requirements that were triggered would be different as well. Usually, in an area where something happened, missions would be triggered.

"Follow me then."

...

In a corner somewhere, two people were talking to each other."

"The conflict did not happen, our man died for nothing."

"The intelligence said Black Phantom was a serial murderer, but he held back this time, what a misstep."

"Luckily the clues have been destroyed, as long as the truth cannot be found, Black Phantom would still be the biggest suspect."

...

Next day, the Home Faction hosted a simple funeral for Delo, the atmosphere within Alumera became more and tenser in the next few days. Everyone seemed busy, when they looked at each other, their eyes were filled with unknown emotions.

However, Han Xiao had become almost invisible, it was like all the factions forgot he was even here, no one approached him except for the full 24 hours of surveillance.

After chasing the players of Bamboo Rain Guild away to seek information, Han Xiao stayed in the room with a calm mind, he had expected this to happen.

He was an outsider, and the biggest suspect, but Alumera didn't have the confidence to deal with him so they could only leave him alone. Even if Han Xiao wanted to look for clues, none of the faction would give him any, all he could do was wait.

But the wait was not meaningless, the factions had started their own investigation and plans.

Han Xiao was thinking, Delo died very coincidentally, what good would it do to frame him for killing Delo? Firstly, creating hatred between Alumera and Dark Net would only benefit the third party.

Secondly, there were other motives for killing Delo, and he was just used as a very good excuse since with his strength and identity, it was easy to frame. If the real killer framed him to hide, then his identity would most likely be a party that would benefit from this — which has the highest possibility to be other factions other than the Home Faction.

Han Xiao remembered that the internal conflict within Alumera was very serious, killing Delo could very likely be an act to seize power within the family, then framing him to be the biggest suspect.

But going back to the first possibility, the real killer would still be the third party, which also made sense in the second possibility — creating conflict between the Home Faction and other factions, leading to Alumera collapsing internally.

“Sigh, I don’t want to think anymore.” Han Xiao rubbed his eyebrows.

Anyway, it didn’t matter who the real killer was, he stood undefeatable, as long as he doesn’t make any move, only the real killer would become more and more stressed. There was no way this mission would be a long term one, the impact of Delo dying would surface in a very short time, and by then, there would definitely be someone who would unintentionally leave some clues.

...

In one mansion, the high ranked officials of the Home Faction gathered, the atmosphere was intense.

“Leader has died, who is going to be in charge now?” A tall and muscular man said, he is Delo’s younger brother, Todd.

“Me,” Lagos said coldly.

Todd forced a fake smile and said, “Lagos, I don’t think that is suitable.”

“What do you mean?” Lagos frowned and said.

“You should call me uncle.” Todd said in a more serious tone, “the lead—my older brother passed away, we are all family here, I should be the one in charge according to precedence.”

“Humph, only a few days since father has died, and you’re already seizing power, aren’t you too impatient?”

Lagos said in a mocking tone, “don’t blame me for not warning you but, without father’s suppression, Xiao Jin, Se Qi and others are all making their plans, the position of the leader is now vacant, who knows what they will do. They may look like they were filled with sadness and regret during the funeral, but they were probably laughing uncontrollably in their hearts.”

Todd laughed sneered and said, “don’t say it like that, I was worried you’d make mistakes because you’re inexperienced, but since you think you can do it, uncle shall not compete with you. Now tell us, what do you plan to do next?”

Lagos grunted and ignored Todd’s tone, “our top priority now is to find out who killed father,” he said.

Todd frowned, he felt the priority should be suppressing the ambitions of other factions and regain control of Alumeria, but it was inappropriate to express such feelings in front of the high ranked officials of Home Faction, therefore he followed with the topic and asked, "any clues?"

Lagos said coldly, "Black Phantom is the most suspicious, nothing he says can be trusted, I have already informed some people to contact the strongest killers and mercenaries, once they arrive, we won't have to be afraid anymore, we will just capture Black Phantom and interrogate him. I have spent a large sum this time, the people who are coming are all famously strong!"

"Maybe it really wasn't Black Phantom." Someone whispered.

Lagos stared over and said coldly, "then it has to be Xiao Jin, that asshole is very ambitious, he has been under father for so many years and he's definitely not satisfied with it. Right, I heard Black Phantom stayed in Xiao Jin's mansion the night the assassination happened, maybe Xiao Jin hired Black Phantom with a huge sum to assassinate father, then put on a show together to fool the others."

Everyone was shocked.

Chapter 208: The Real Killer (Three)

"If Xiao Jin really worked together with Black Phantom, then the situation is very bad. It would mean he controls a very strong force, he could even seize power with raw strength." Someone said.

Todd shook his head and said, "they won't dare to, if something happens in the headquarters and high ranked officials of all the factions are slaughtered, our men in other places would revenge the enemy till their death, Xiao Jin is not stupid. Also Black Phantom is an outsider, and according to the rules, an outsider cannot interfere with our internal changes.

Lagos sneered and said, "foolish, how would you know Xiao Jin didn't find a better place to go? Is there no organization behind him? His heart might not even belong to Alumeria anymore!"

...

With his eyes closed, Xiao Jin asked, "what's happening in the Home Faction?"

"Lagos is in charge of everything now, they are currently investigating Delo's death but has yet to make any progress. By the way, Delo's mansion was destroyed by Black Phantom during the battle, and so were the clues."

Xiao Jin paused what he was doing and asked, "who ordered to bring Black Phantom to the scene?"

"The team leader that went to keep Black Phantom in control is called Miri, he was killed by stray bullets during the scrimmage on the day."

"Stray bullets..." Xiao Jin shook his head, "what is Black Phantom doing?" He asked.

"He did not act."

"Intelligent choice." Xiao Jin nodded and said, "before the truth about Delo's assassination is unveiled, no faction is willing to approach him, anyone that does will become a mutual target of the rest."

Xiao Hai said, “the inhumans are working for him, I still do not know why he can easily order the inhumans.”

“Leave him alone, he can’t be the real killer.”

After a pause, Xiao Jin asked, “What is the Red Island Faction and Northern Faction doing?”

“They are working with the Home Faction to investigate for clues.”

Xiao Jin rubbed his temple and let out a sigh, “sigh, dogs that bite surely don’t bark...”

...

Se Qi sat in the office, he pulled down all the curtains and made a call and said in a very quiet voice.

“Major General, what should we do now?”

“What are your thoughts?”

“Delo is dead, the leader’s position became vacant, there must be a vote for a successor, I will be entering as a candidate, hope you can give me support.”

“Sure, I will use my relationship network to help you gain votes of the high ranked officials, when you control Alumera, remember how you got there, don’t forget our promise.”

“Definitely.”

Se Qi let out a sigh of relief as he hung up the phone, a vicious and hideous smile appeared on his face, the skin lines of a Sharnuk wrinkled together.

...

Han Xiao was patient, he stayed in the room every day while the players from Bamboo Rain Guild helped him to gather intelligence, it wasn’t much, but at least he was not totally uninformed.

As rewards, Han Xiao was not petty in giving missions to the players in Bamboo Rain Guild — then earning their experience points by opening his ability shop, he was making a fortune one way or another.

As mentioned before, as long as Han Xiao’s ability level is higher than the player, learning the ability again would increase its level. The Great Technician Han’s abilities were all at max level, it was more than enough for this requirement. Players in Bamboo Rain Guild continuously spent experience points in his ability shop, they were willing to pay the price and Han Xiao was willing to let them.

“My Basic Combat is at max level.” Bamboo Rain Fly triumphed in happiness, the other guild members all came to check out its attributes.

Bamboo Rain Xuan said in sadness, “mine is only at level seven.”

Bamboo Rain Fragrance smiled and said, “that’s because you sleep for so long every day, and are online for too short.”

These players did not restrict themselves in what they were saying, and Han Xiao heard everything. He had noticed something magical, when the players are talking to each other, the system would usually censor any content that had anything to do with it being a game, but he could hear it, it was definitely because of the interface.

Ta, ta, ta ——

A steady footstep closed in.

Peng, the door was pushed open, dozens of soldiers stood outside, Lagos stood in the crowd with his hands behind his back and said coldly, "Black Phantom, we suspect that you worked together with Xiao Jin to kill my father, now get up and come with us!"

"Where did you get the confidence from? | Han Xiao raised his eyebrows, Lagos kept a low profile for so many days, now that he suddenly engages, he must have found help."

As expected, Lagos sneered and stepped back, two people stepped out of the crowd, one man and one woman.

'I see." Han Xiao patted his pants and stood up, "seems like you spent quite a lot of money," he said calmly.

The man and woman were a married couple, Luann and Vanessa, legends of the mercenary society, with a position similar to Han Xiao's in the killer society. Their strength was also at the peak of the third tier in Planet Aquamarine, they lived all the way till version 2.0.

Lagos had people contact them secretly, many rejected as soon as they heard they had to fight Black Phantom, they didn't dare to become enemies with Han Xiao. Those who came had absolute confidence, he had investigated thoroughly this time, he knew these two people were on the same level as Han Xiao, and it would be most safe to hire both of them together. Black Phantom definitely could not defeat them head-on.

Lagos sneered and said, "when I capture you, I will make sure you spit out everything you know."

Han Xiao shook his head and said, "isn't it good to be alive?"

"Humph, quite arrogant I see." Luann was a muscular black man, he rubbed his fists and said in disdain. "I heard you are very good at sniping, but now I'm only three meters away, I won't give you a chance to even fire one shot, and how many of my punches can you endure? Be good and disarm yourself, or I will brush the floor with your brain juice."

A third voice appeared from an empty area, "It's been long since we met, Mister Black."

This voice sounded familiar.

Han Xiao raised his eyebrows, "Invisible Demon? You're here too."

Invisible Demon did not reply, murderous intent filled the air.

It was not two strong opponents but three. Han Xiao smiled as he shook his head, no wonder Lagos was so confident, he really spent a huge sum to deal with him.

Feeling the hostility from the three strong opponents, Han Xiao smiled, the change he was waiting for has finally arrived, it was an opportunity for him to showcase his absolute superiority in his strength.

The players of Bamboo Rain Guild didn't know what to do, they couldn't mess with any of these "Extremely Dangerous" NPCs.

Huuu——

A stream of piercing wind passed by Han Xiao, Han Xiao made it in time to activate his Magnetically-Controlled Retractable Armor, Invisible Demon's nails scratched on its surface and created fire sparkles. In a few months' time, Invisible Demon increased two levels and became slightly stronger.

Back then Han Xiao could not win Invisible Demon, it resulted in a tie.

But now, they were on completely different levels!

Han Xiao raised his hands, Compounded Magnetic Chain Split Blades formed a cyclone slashing through the air, numerous damage numbers appeared in the air, wounds opened and blood dripped down, and then disappeared in the next instant. Invisible Demon could retract his skin to hide his wounds.

Invisible Demon was shocked by the Compounded Magnetic Chain Split Blades and backed off hurriedly.

Before Han Xiao could make the chase, a wave of air pressure shot towards him, Vanessa pounced forward with her fists raining down hard. Han Xiao raised his hands to parry but they became numb, his STR was inferior to Vanessa, both Vanessa and Luann were Pugilists near level 60, their STR, DEX and END were all much higher than Han Xiao who was a Mechanic.

Suddenly, Luann caught up quickly, his two fists combined into one and turned into a black meteor covered in flames, hitting Han Xiao's chest armor plate.

With pain felt on his chest, Han Xiao's interface showed a high amount of damage, this was an advanced tier ability of Pugilist, it is a vibration hit that ignores part of the physical armor, players in his previous life called it "Hitting the cattle across the mountain."

Pugilist who learned advanced tier abilities were difficult to deal with, it had given Han Xiao some amount of pressure. Without a change of expression, Han Xiao backed up holding guns in both hands, high caliber bullets shot out rapidly, the power of his firearms increased furthermore as his shooting abilities reached max level.

Vanessa rubbed her hands and emitted a diffused sphere air shield, it deflected the bullets and disappeared.

"Shockwave Blast." Han Xiao frowned, another advanced tier ability, Pugilist was popular all the time, its abilities were flashy and comprehensive.

This time, players of Bamboo Rain Guild fired, although they clearly knew they were no match for the enemy, they knew they had to help now since they chose to side Black Phantom!"

“Careful about positioning, do not close in, Fly and Cool attack continuously, Xuan, don’t go too close—” Bamboo Rain Fragrance yelled and gave out commands, she had experience in leading a team during dungeons, she used the same strategy when they were attacking dungeon BOSS.

“Inhumans? Luann was annoyed, he covered his eyes with his arm, the bullets were deflected by his protective flames, unable to penetrate his skin.

Vanessa straightaway swung her leg sideways, air blade flew out like a whip and slashed all of Bamboo Rain Guild’s players in half through the waist, they turned into white light and disappeared.

Bamboo Rain Guild was fully destroyed straightaway, the difference in strength was too vast.

Within a short moment, Han Xiao picked up his equipment bag full of machinery and dashed into the room.

Luann was just about to follow but Vanessa stopped him, “careful, he’s a mechanic, there might be traps,” she said.

Luann nodded, he punched the floor strongly, cracks spread out from the center of the punch and the entire house started shaking. No matter what trap Black Phantom had placed, it would all become meaningless once the house was destroyed and the battlefield turned into an open area.

Lagos hastily brought the soldiers to back off far away.

“Boom!”

The house collapsed, ashes obstructed the vision.

Luann squinted his eyes and saw a shadow jumping out of the ruins vaguely, he immediately dashed forward like a warhorse, his fists punched forward like a hammer, leaving bright marks behind.

“Fall!” Luann yelled.

But the next moment, he heard the buzzing sound of energy and a cold metallic voice.

“Enhanced Mode!:

Bang! Luann felt like he had hit a metal wall — no, even metal wall would be destroyed by this punch, but it had only made this indestructible “wall” back off a little more than ten centimeters, and then the metal surrounded his fists.

Chapter 209: The Real Killer (4)

The dust dissipated, and the shadow’s true form appeared.

A heavy mechanical left arm, many times larger than a normal arm and made of a dense black platinum alloy, was holding onto Luann’s fists tightly.

Han Xiao, who was controlling this enormous mechanical arm, was already wearing Viper. The close-fitting black streamlined mechanical suit looked expanded like a human’s muscles.

Everyone was stunned.

“What is that?”

Han Xiao’s right arm that did not equip mechanical arm strongly grabbed Luann’s arm. Luann wanted to escape, but he realized that Han Xiao’s strength became almost as high as his. He was shocked as he could not escape for the time being.

Viper provided close to 80 points of Strength and 50 points of Dexterity. Han Xiao’s Strength, Dexterity, and Endurance were not lower than any Pugilist under level 60!

Luann was still reacting based on their difference earlier on, and it caught him by surprise.

Han Xiao’s heavy mechanical left arm buzzed and slammed Luann’s head heavily. Luann’s head was bashed into the floor, but the punches did not stop. They continually rained down on him, and the damp on the ground expanded rapidly.

Iron Fist—Mounted Heavy Mechanical Arm (Left)

Quality – Blue

Basic Stats:

– Damage: 85 – 88

– Defense: 26–30

– Power Level: 77

– Durability: 986/1050

Requirements:

Minimum Strength: 45

45 – 90 Strength: +45% Attack Speed

Greater than 90 Strength: +15% Attack Speed

(Stats provided by this equipment is not taken into account)

Additional Effect(s): +28 STR

Length: 1.24 m (Including exterior armor)

Weight: 85.5 pounds

Additional Ability: Bionic (Human)—Able to perform actions like a human arm, does not restrict the user’s arm movements, very flexible.

Additional Ability: Iron Fist Burst—Multiple energy cores (Engine and Motor) activate maximum output simultaneously to create a bursting heavy hit, dealing 170 – 213 points of blunt damage. 25% chance to ignore mechanical suit type armor. 24-second cooldown.

Additional Ability: Shock Resistance—Exterior armor is made of platinum alloy. Increases durability, harder to wear out.

Special Feature: Can be disassembled.

Remarks: This huge fist will bash your skull!

Since he was acting alone, Han Xiao had brought along all his ace cards along in his equipment bag. The heavy mechanical arm had been disassembled into parts to become more portable, and the assembly process was easy and quick, capable of being performed during the battle in a short time.

Vanessa was raging as she saw Luann pressed against the floor. She dashed forward hastily. Han Xiao did not dodge or back up. He battled Vanessa in close range. His fists and legs contained a huge amount of power, and the floor split open inch by inch.

Shockwave Blast was a mid-range ability that hardly dealt any damage to the mechanical suit as it lacked power. Viper's enhanced mode steadily gained the upper hand.

The two of them were extremely agile, so their fight looked like two blurry shadows in the eyes of the others. Only the constant explosions and destruction showed how dangerous these two were.

The black fists hit Vanessa's face multiple times; her nose was bleeding.

At the same time, Luann finally pulled himself up off the ground, his head bleeding all over. He growled and pounced over. However, when he was halfway there, Han Xiao suddenly swung his fists and pushed Vanessa to the side. His right hand pulled out the folded the Ghost sniper rifle behind his back and aimed at Luann.

The black muzzle gave an even more dangerous feeling than earlier on.

Luann's hair stood up all over the body.

Han Xiao pulled the trigger.

[Flaming Will]!

[Lethal Critical Hit]!

[Overload]!

This shot was his ever strongest shot!

It was not just the active abilities—the passive abilities had also made the firing power, critical chance, and machinery affinity much higher, and the firearms were also enhanced as much as he could. Everything was on a higher level than before!

This was the strength of every ability being at max level!

Bang!

A huge hole appeared on Luann's chest, and blood spurted out like a fountain.

After damage reduction, you have dealt 1,942 Damage to Luann (LV 58).

Extremely close to 2,000 points of damage!

Luann health was only between 4,000 to 5,000!

One shot, almost half of his health!

Luann kneeled on the floor, his entire body twitching. He raised his head and looked straight at Han Xiao with disbelief.

“Didn’t you say that you were going to wipe the floor with my brain juice?” An emotionless mechanical voice came from under the cold mask.

Han Xiao pressed Luann on the floor with his right hand. His left hand bashed Luann’s head, again and again. Luann was paralyzed by the shot and did not have his energy protective layer. Metal continuously kissed his skull, his flesh was torn open, and his bones were scattered into pieces.

The splashing blood colored the floor and the mechanical arm red.

Han Xiao’s jumped up high into the air with his mechanical arm and dropped straight down. The ground shook with a loud noise, and dust shot up into the sky. The ground was filled with white and red, and Luann’s eyes slowly lost their gleam.

You have killed Luann (LV 58). You received 175,000 experience!

[Lethal Shot]: Unlock Progress 43/50

“Luann!” Vanessa screamed in sorrow, rage, and hatred. Then... she turned and started fleeing.

Black Phantom was much stronger than expected. She did not want to die for nothing. She only had a chance to revenge if she stayed alive.

“That’s why I said, isn’t it good to be alive?” Han Xiao shook his head. He unbuttoned the heavy mechanical arm, and the enormous metal arm fell onto the ground with a thump. He then gave a command. The armor slid open on both sides of the ribs, and a row of concentrated small holes appeared. Dozens of arrow-shaped shadows shot out and landed around Vanessa, which then exploded and created a high-pitched sound wave.

These were all mini sonic bombs. Han Xiao had made them into even smaller arrow shapes and added a simple ejecting module onto Viper, which allowed it to shoot this kind of simple and portable disabling weapon.

The determining attribute for the sonic bomb was Endurance. Although Vanessa was a pugilist, she still could not endure dozens of sonic bombs. Thus, she fell to the ground in agony.

Han Xiao jumped over in a few steps then activated the Thermo-electrical Incisor Gloves and grabbed Vanessa's eyes. He then turned on Sunworm flamethrower. With screams of pain and the smell of burning flesh, Vanessa turned into a piece of charcoal in no time. Vanessa's struggling before death was all blocked by Viper.

Han Xiao let go of the body and let it fall onto the ground. He then activated all kinds of scanning modules. Through analyzing his smell, the scanning module highlighted Invisible Demon's position. He was in the area where the sonic bombs exploded, trembling in pain.

Invisible Demon was absolutely terrified by Han Xiao. It had only been a few months since they fought, and Black Phantom had reached a height that stunned him. He deeply regretted accepting this mission and very soon had the thoughts of backing off. But unfortunately for him, he had been blasted away by the explosion just as he was secretly escaping.

"Saved me some effort." Han Xiao broke Invisible Demon's arms and legs then took out a mini GPS and injected it into Invisible Demon's body roughly. He slapped him into unconsciousness and nodded in satisfaction. "I won't lose him this way."

The area became ruins. A large number of Alumera spectators had gathered, and their faces were filled with shock. They were all horrified by Han Xiao's actions.

The revived players stood far away with their throat feeling dry.

"This... So strong!" Bamboo Rain Xuan exclaimed. She had recorded the entire fight, and she had a feeling it would definitely go viral.

Black Phantom had never shown the mechanical suit. The already high strength that they had seen before was just the tip of the iceberg—this was his true strength!

No, maybe Black Phantom was still hiding more.

Bamboo Rain Guild was excited. They realized that they had discovered information that others did not know about. They were the only ones that met this unexpected plotline out of all the players.

Lagos' expression was terrified. His teeth were shaking, and his legs were trembling. The three people that he had high hopes for had been killed easily. They would most likely have been able to defeat Black Phantom if it was just his original strength, but who knew he hid such a horrifying ace card!

"How is this possible? All three of them were among the strongest superhumans and long renowned legends. I have consulted the experts. How did Black Phantom kill them so easily!" Lagos could not believe it.

Without anything to rely on one, Lagos entire body trembled as he faced Black Phantom with a strong murderous intent. 'Filled with regret' could not even begin to describe his emotions.

Han Xiao walked toward Lagos and tapped him on the shoulder. He said softly, "I have already given you a chance."

“You can’t kill me!” Lagos looked fierce on the outside but was horrified on the inside. “I’m the person in charge of the Home Faction. If you kill me, Home Faction will—”

Before he even finished his sentence.

Slash!

The blade cut across his throat, and blood splashed slowly.

No hesitation.

Lagos’s eyes widened. He held his neck and fell down. His body temperature lowered as blood escaped from his body, and he looked at Han Xiao in disbelief.

Han Xiao looked at the high ranked officials of the Home Faction. He played with the blade covered in blood and said calmly, “Do you have any problems?”

Chapter 210: The Real Killer (5)

The Home faction was furious as they looked at Lagos’ corpse, but they did not dare provoke Han Xiao. After all, a real-life example of what would happen if they did was right in front of them.

This time, Todd walked out of the crowd and said, “This was all Lagos’ idea; he deserved it. On behalf of the entire Home Faction, we absolutely won’t hold a grudge for this.”

The Home Faction was surprised. They did not expect Todd to stand out at this time, and he even admitted their fear toward Han Xiao.

Words said under such circumstances had to be taken with a pinch of salt, and Han Xiao did not agree or disagree with his words but asked, “You are?”

“Todd, Darryl’s younger brother, Lagos’s uncle, I’m in charge of the Home Faction now.” Todd forced himself to be calm as he spoke.

The Home Faction gave him a weird look. They were amazed by Todd’s ability to grab the opportunity to take over the Home Faction as soon as Lagos died, but Todd did indeed speak their mind. Therefore, they all kept silent and accepted Todd’s position.

The people that they had hired who had such great strength had easily been killed; Han Xiao’s strength was overwhelming. Everyone knew that if they still wanted to spark conflict, it would be no different from suicide.

One thought appeared in all the factions.

Black Phantom could not be messed with!

“Find another room for me,” Han Xiao said as he looked at the ruins and put his machinery away.

“I’ll arrange it for you,” Xiao Ming immediately replied as an order from Xiao Jin.

The high ranked officials exchanged looks after Han Xiao left.

“Black Phantom has overwhelming strength and doesn’t care if he becomes our enemy, yet he still insists to claim he’s not the killer. Maybe he really didn’t carry out the assassination,” Se Qi said.

“But he killed Lagos—that’s a new grudge,” the head of the Northern Faction said.

Todd stopped him and said, “Lagos did this to himself, and he deserved it. Our Home Faction will neither seek revenge nor hold grudges.”

The others looked at him with despise while selectively choosing to forget that they were thinking the same.

“Then what do we do with Black Phantom?” someone asked.

To let an undefeatable monster stay in the headquarter would make them feel very insecure.

“He just wants to get rid of the suspicion,” Xiao Jin said coldly. “Once the truth surfaces, he will naturally leave, so don’t mess with him.”

...

Upon arriving at his new house, Han Xiao woke up the captive Invisible Demon. He had planted a locating device in Invisible Demon’s body and could know where he was without seeing him.

“What do you want?” Invisible Demon was horrified.

Han Xiao took off Viper, returned it to his bag, and said with an interested tone, “I heard your invisibility came from a laboratory experiment accident and your skin mutated. If I strip your skin off, it must be worth quite a fortune.”

Invisible Demon was terrified and started to sweat all over. “Don’t—don’t do that.”

“You’re my prisoner now. Do you think you’re in any position to object?”

Invisible Demon had nothing to reply to with. Han Xiao stopped teasing him and knocked him unconscious, then injected a strong anesthetic, tied him up, and threw him aside. There was a reward from the Dark Net for Invisible Demon, and Han Xiao planned to take on the mission then turn in Invisible Demon alive, completing the mission immediately and maximizing the profit.

Han Xiao had shown an overwhelming level of strength through this conflict, so Alumera did not dare do anything to him at all. Although he had the absolute upper hand in terms of strength, he still chose to stay, which reduced his suspicion with many factions.

Also, Han Xiao was in a position where Alumera could not do anything to him, as Alumera was not willing to start another conflict with him. This whole framing conspiracy was to spark conflict between Han Xiao and Alumera, which had already almost completely failed. At least, Alumera did not dare turn against Han Xiao to his face.

But this was not enough. The person responsible for the framing had yet to be found. Han Xiao guessed that there were two possibilities—one being that the person had given up and decided to continue hiding, the other being that person was still trying to save the plan or even attack Han Xiao. However,

the possibility of the latter was not high since Han Xiao had already proven that he was not to be messed with.

The Home Faction kept a low profile since Lagos died. Todd did not have any hatred at all, and he was more concerned about what benefit he could get at the moment. Other than ordering people to investigate for clues of Darryl's assassination, he also actively contacted the other factions to earn support for the election of a leader successor.

Darryl's son had the highest chance of becoming the next leader after Darryl died, but Han Xiao had killed him, and now the successor's position had become vacant. All the factions were ambitious and planned to seize power. Thus, a heavy storm was about to arrive.

Everyone seemed like they were focused on the truth of Darryl's death, but they were secretly more concerned about the election of the next leader.

However, before the killer was discovered, the election would not take place.

Han Xiao was one of the main parties in this, but he was also an excluded outsider. However, he did not mind it at all. He stayed in the room and gathered information about Alumera through Dark Net's intelligence network and the Bamboo Rain Guild.

A few days after, Xiao Jin came knocking on his door. He told Han Xiao that he had found an important clue.

"Through checking the guards' verbal information and comparing it with the recording from the surveillance cameras, I have found some traces. On the night of the assassination, an assistant of one of the Northern Faction's high ranked officials left his house and disappeared for 27 minutes.

"This high ranked official of the Northern Faction is called Su Dinghua—45 years of age, a Northern Continent local, always kept a low profile. Actually, I have been paying attention to him for a very long time. A spy I sent into the Northern Faction discovered that Su Dinghua has secret connections with Raylen, and his assistant only changed a few years ago, the same year that he started to contact Raylen."

Many high ranked officials contacted other organizations discreetly, but all for their own benefits. However, Raylen had obviously turned Su Dinghua into a traitor.

Xiao Jin brought along quite a number of documents, which all clearly lead to Su Dinghua.

Han Xiao gave it careful thought. Alumera was Theseus's partner, and weakening Alumera meant weakening Theseus. To create a strong opponent for Alumera and spark internal conflict, Raylen would benefit from it as a third party, which was indeed a logical motive for Raylen.

The Northern Faction was the most inconspicuous, so they would be the most suitable party for any conspiracy.

"Were the other factions able to get this information, too?" Han Xiao raised the documents in his hands.

"Not sure." Xiao Jin shook his head. "I acquired the information of Su Dinghua secretly working with Raylen by accident, so the other factions probably don't know about it."

“Then why did you come to me?” Han Xiao asked.

“Raylen might have planted quite a few strong people around Su Dinghua. I was hoping you could help us capture Su Dinghua and his co-conspirators, and this is a good opportunity for you to get rid of the suspicion as well. I was thinking you would want to do it yourself,” Xiao Jin said with a sincere tone. “Rewards will not be a problem if you want them.”

Han Xiao stared at Xiao Jin for quite some time and smiled suddenly. “I will help you this time, at market rate.”

“Okay.” Xiao Jin nodded.

...

At night, Han Xiao started to act. Since he already exposed Viper, he wore it this time as well, but without the Heavy Mechanical Arm—a stealth operation did not require such a rough weapon.

Su Dinghua’s mansion was located in a rural area. Han Xiao took out his laptop and hacked into the local network to freeze the surveillance cameras. Then he avoided the guards and jumped over the wall into the mansion.

Su Dinghua was a high ranked official who had a rather low position compared to others. His guarding power in the mansion was weak, and with Han Xiao’s level and strength, sneaking in was a piece of cake.

When he quietly entered the study, the light was on. Han Xiao stood against the wall and scanned the room with magnetic scanning; there was no one in the room.

Han Xiao entered the room without making a sound. He looked through the room and realized that the building was made of normal brick and wood—it did not have any special metal that could prevent any detection device, and the structure of the room was clear and simple.

“There’s a hidden safe behind the painting on the wall beside the table.” Han Xiao’s eyes twinkled. Just as he was going to flip open the painting to open the safe, he realized something and stopped.

He carefully looked around the room, then left the safe alone and came to the table instead. He tried opening the drawers, but they were all locked. However, that was not a problem for him. As a Mechanic who could build firearms and robots, it would be a shame if he could not even open a lock.

Furthermore, Han Xiao was already experienced in lock picking.

The drawers were filled with paper documents, mostly Alumera’s internal information. There were some reports too. He dug through for a while and realized that they were all irrelevant documents. However, he found a slip of paper with a string of numbers written on it, which seemed like the passcode for the safe, and a small metal key that also looked like it was for the safe.

“Way too obvious.” Han Xiao shook his head. He closed the drawer and did not use the key to open the safe.

Hiding a safe behind a painting was too common. The key and passcode left in the drawer felt like it was done purposely; it looked like a trap.

There was a very high chance that the safe was either bait or a trap, which would trigger some sort of alarm, as one would usually remember the passcode to the safe instead of writing it down.

It could have been an incorrect assumption, but Han Xiao was just there to capture Su Dinghua—the safe could be opened any time after he captured him.

Han Xiao walked toward the living room. He heard a few guards that were chatting with each other, and after a strategic scan and a vital sign comparison, he noticed that these people were all around LV 20, which meant that they were not normal guards. They could be superhumans, and if they were not, it meant that they were normal people but very elite.

Seems like it was right. Han Xiao nodded. Su Dinghua's guards hid their true strength, so there was definitely something suspicious going on.

Han Xiao turned and went upstairs to the bedroom. Su Dinghua was resting, so Han Xiao went in straightaway and shot a paralyzing bullet at Su Dinghua, making him unconscious before he could scream, then tied him up with the blanket.

There were eight guards in the mansion along with Su Dinghua's assistant; Han Xiao was not planning to let any of them escape.

Returning to the living room, Han Xiao did not hide anymore—he broke through the door and entered.

"Who?" The guards pulled out their guns immediately.

However, with the mechanical suit, these four unprepared guards were defeated within seconds.

The commotion attracted attention. The radar detected other guards were coming quickly. Han Xiao broke through the wall with a loud bang and knocked out those guards one after another.

Su Dinghua's assistant was hiding the most; he was at around LV 40. However, he still could not last for more than ten seconds before Han Xiao broke his arms and legs and knocked him onto the ground. The difference in strength was too vast, an easy victory for Han Xiao.

Han Xiao's destruction power was like a demolition—the whole mansion turned into ruins, and the loud noise could be heard from very far away.

Xiao Jin was on standby right outside the mansion. He broke in as soon as he saw that Han Xiao had succeeded. Su Dinghua and his guards were all in the yard, and no one escaped.

Han Xiao stayed and stood to the side.

Xiao Jin did not avoid Han Xiao and started the interrogation in the yard. He poured water on Su Dinghua and the others to wake them up.

Su Dinghua knew that he had been exposed when he woke up.

"How did you know?" Su Dinghua was shocked and confused.

“I’ve known you were in contact Raylen for a very long time,” Xiao Jin said coldly. “You have changed your guards over the last few years—they are all strangers and sent by Raylen. You thought this was an opportunity when Black Phantom visited out of the blue and carried out the assassination, thinking that you did it very discreetly and destroyed many traces. Still, some clues were left behind.”