

The Mechanic 371

Chapter 371: Differential Treatment

Talented intelligent creatures could awaken Super genes. Through various training, the cells would create special power—this was energy. The energy was like a running river; cells and genes were like the stones under the river. As the river grew larger, after days and days of flowing, the genes would start to evolve, gradually becoming perfect. It was like compressing the million years evolution.

Grade A was a benchmark, also called Calamity Grade. It was a high-level power in the galaxies, and Supers fortunate enough to reach this grade were very uncommon. When the genes evolved to a certain level, it would meet an indestructible barrier ahead without exceptions. In other words, ‘there were no road ahead anymore’.

In the exploration era before the Galaxy Calendar, the three large civilizations had still been fighting each other intensively. The world had thought that all types of power were different from each other. That was until Professor Stuart Ona of the Federation of Light invented the energy rank theory. Only then did everyone know that ‘Energy’ was a similarity that all Supers shared. Then it was fused into a large system, forming today’s grading standards. Back then, grade A was seen as the finishing line of evolution, and no one broke through the barrier of grade A.

The war was a double-edged sword. Countless talented grade A Supers died, but at the same time, the war was also a catalyst. The potential of those who survived would be forced out to the maximum extent. Toward the ending stage of the war, there was finally one Super that broke through grade A. It was a completely different level, and it shocked the world.

The civilizations never thought the strength of an individual could reach such a level, a level that could match up to the strong armies of the three large civilizations. Although it was still small compared to the endlessly vast galactic battlefield, no matter how strong the group strength was, it was not as shocking as when an individual had this level of power. The existence of an individual beyond grade A was intimidation on its own, and this was one of the many reasons that lead the three large civilizations to stop the war.

When peace came, the existence of beyond grade A individuals still had a very deep meaning, and their position was very high. Gradually, the grades above grade A gained detailed divisions. One grade higher was grade S, and there were even higher grades. However, people still called Supers above grade A ‘beyond grade A’. It was a memorial in history and a respect for the strong.

In the current Galaxy Calendar, there were only four known beyond-grade-A Supers in Shattered Star Ring, all with fame, glory, and countless titles. Ames was mostly known as [Dragon Emperor], containing both the meaning of her throne made of Void Dragon skeletons and the creator of Floating Dragon Island, which was the most famous thing that she had done.

At this time, Ames was hovering in midair. Everyone on the dock felt pressure deep in their hearts. More Dragon Guards had arrived, surrounded the mercenaries, and pointed countless firearms at them. The members of the three large mercenary groups could not figure out Ames’ attitude toward them—there were scared.

The Silver prisoners stood aside, and Ames knew roughly what had happened with just one look. She said with an interested tone, "Silvers... I see, so you're the mercenaries hired by Silvers?"

Her voice was not crisp at all. It was rather husky and magnetic instead.

"Yes," Goa said, "Silvers were getting sold to Floating Dragon Island, so we chased here. We are very sorry for dealing accidental damages, but we hope you can let them go."

She wanted to make a final attempt. She could only hope that Ames would forgive them for the sake of the Silvers, since the Silvers were Universe Royalties and had a very strong background.

Ames only smiled faintly, completely not caring about the Silvers' status. "This is the Shattered Star Ring, not the Sea of Star Spirits."

Then, she controlled the throne and flew toward her residence in the heart of the Floating Island while leaving a sentence behind. "Bring all the mercenaries to me."

The Dragon Guards brought everyone to the center of the Floating Dragon Island, and the mercenaries had no choice but to follow. At least Ames did not kill them immediately, so there might still be hope.

However, they did not lighten up at all. Looking behind, the Silver captives, which they had gone through so much hardship to rescue, were being brought by another group of guards toward the slave market. Horlaide was in the team, too, and he had joy all over his face. The Silvers issue in Ames' eyes was just a small matter. She did not want to bother about it at all—it was just because she had heard the report of someone making trouble, only then did she decide to casually strike. The other issues were left for her subordinates to deal with, which benefitted Horlaide.

Horlaide had retrieved the Silvers finally, and regardless of whether Peggy was alive or dead, he did not even have to pay, making him the biggest winner.

The mercenaries' rescue originally made him very anxious, but now, he only felt it was funny. These people spent so much effort, yet it had led to him getting the biggest profit, what a complete joke! Horlaide felt very good. He sneered at the mercenaries and left with the Silvers.

The people of the three mercenary groups were very upset and downcast. Porter was straight forward—he had been cursing all along the way in his native language. Nobody liked the feeling of everything going to waste.

The team escorting them happened to be Theon's team. Theon pushed Han Xiao and sneered, "You people are done for. You dared to attack the Dragon Guards. Lord Ames will definitely use her great power and turn you people into powder!"

Having been pushed, Han Xiao turned around and glanced at Theon.

"What you looking at? Keep walking." Theon yelled.

Han Xiao was pushed again. The strength was like a weak breeze, not able to move him at all. Han Xiao shook his head and forgot about Theon. He pondered about the upcoming situation. From what he knew about Ames, as long as her subordinates were not killed or hurt, there was a possibility to turn the situation around. Although Ames was protective, willful, and her mood was very hard to guess, she could not be considered bloodthirsty.

The center of the Floating Dragon Island was Ames' residence, a huge fortress-like palace with dragon bone decorations everywhere. They passed one room after another until they reached the luxurious hall, waiting to be dealt with.

After some time, Ames floated in from the side gate of the hall. The throne stopped before them—she held her cheeks and said casually, "You attacked my subordinates. Although there was no injury or casualty, I need to punish you. Wilsander, what's our rule?"

Someone walked out from the side. He was almost like bamboo, making people worry that a slight wind would blow him away. He had a pair of horns on his head, red skin covered in lines, a tail, and bony wings behind his back. This was a hybrid as well; he had some kind of Demon gene.

This guy was called Wilsander, the commander of the Dragon Guards and Ames' direct subordinate. He stepped out of the crowd, narrowed his eyes, and casually stroked his beard. "According to the rules, all who fight back will be executed."

The people all became nervous.

Ames nodded and said, "Then the people of Sky Ring, Blades, and Purple Gold shall be imprisoned. Tell their army captain to pay a ransom."

"Ahem..." Wilsander coughed and said cautiously, "The rules say executed..."

"My words are the rules," Ames said coldly, showing her dominance.

Feeling wronged, Wilsander's eyes twitched. "Then why did you ask me?"

With an innocent look on her face, Ames blinked. "I was just asking randomly."

She basically did not do any management and had forgotten what rules she had set before. She only asked because she felt like it, and she changed it as she liked; she was indeed very willful.

"Contact your captain and tell them to make the payment, then I will let you go." Ames had a bit of a relationship with the three large mercenary groups. She occasionally hired them to do some stuff. The three armies never asked money for it, and every time, the captain personally did the things for her, all to create a good relationship with her. As the saying went, 'don't slap someone with a smile'. Ames did not want to make things difficult for the people of the three large mercenary groups.

Hearing this, Goa, Cerleni, and Porter heaved sighs of relief simultaneously. They did not know that Ames knew their captain—they only felt that they had escaped death.

However, Ames turned to look at Han Xiao with a playful face and said, "Now it's your turn. If you have nothing much to say, I'll start attacking."

Unlike the three large mercenary groups, this small Mercenary Group was a nobody. There was no need to give them special treatment.

The atmosphere became tense, and the emotions of the three large Mercenary Groups changed.

These mercenaries were not unaffected—they had fought alongside each other and had already made a connection with each other. They could not watch their comrades get killed in front of their eyes, and they all became anxious.

The air around became stagnant—it was Ames' force field starting to gather.

“Oi! This differential treatment is way too obvious!” Herlous felt like his bladder was shivering.

Chapter 372: Getting Employed (1)

“So, it has still come to this...”

Han Xiao had already thought up many scenarios on their way to. He had a certain understanding of Ames. The air of a powerful being revolved around her. With her level, most things that were unsolvable to most other people could be fixed with a snap of her fingers. However, she was not one to be fond of thinking, and she mostly just did whatever she wanted.

If they could, who would not want to live life like her? The power that Ames possessed guaranteed her a free life.

On the other hand, this also meant that she was not a very ambitious person. The other four powerful beings who had surpassed class A had all built up their own factions, with Ames' forces being the most carefree. She basically did not care about managing her 'faction'. Ames seemingly did not have any ambitions, so the other civilizations and major powers in the Shattered Star Ring left her to her own devices as they did not want to get into conflict with this neutral party.

The best way to deal with this kind of neutral character was to bait them with benefits. As long as they were treated kindly, and if could present to them with something of interest, then he most likely would not be in any serious danger in front of them.

Han Xiao just so happened to have something that might just pique Ames' interest.

As the force field slowly inched toward them and froze the air in the process, Han Xiao cleared his throat and said in a deep voice, “Please wait a moment, Your Excellency. I hope to offer a piece of information in exchange for the lives of myself and my group members. I believe that you will be interested in this.”

Ames lifted her finger, and the force field immediately stopped expanding, instead acting like a shapeless barrier that surrounded the group. Second Prince tried to poke at the barrier a few times and felt that the air just twenty centimeters away from the group had become rock solid.

Ames remained silent and looked at Han Xiao with amused eyes, as if telling him to speak quickly.

She was not fond of killing people, so she wanted to hear what this little mercenary had to say to save himself. One's struggle at the brink of death often made for the most entertaining show, and it might be able to cure her boredom for a short while. She did not care that these people were as good as formless ash in front of her and was willing to give her time to listen, just like how humans studied other animals.

Han Xiao prepared for a bit and then started his performance.

“It hasn’t been long since I came to the Shattered Star Ring, and I have mostly stayed in the Juberly Hub. One day, I met a person on the street. He looked like your usual Galaxy Human and didn’t seem to be too old. He was also dressed like an ordinary traveler. Just as we passed each other, he called out to me and said something made zero sense to me at the time...”

“What did he say?” hurried Herlous. He noticed that Ames was starting to yawn, seemingly losing interest in this story, and quickly tried to get Han Xiao to get into the main topic.

Han Xiao coughed and continued. “I was completely confused back then, as I didn’t know the man, let alone what he was talking about. But now, I finally got the meaning behind his words...”

“Oh my god, c’mon!” Herlous gritted his teeth. They were already at the point where they could almost see the reaper’s scythe on their necks, yet he was still trying to act dramatic? He still had a planet to save. He could not die there!

“He said, ‘When you meet Ames, tell her to stop waiting. I still don’t want to see her.’”

Bang!

The force field collapsed instantly, knocking the surrounding people out of the room before they slammed back onto the ground. They were still grimacing from the pain when they saw Ames lazily getting up from her throne. However, her face was no longer expressionless and was instead filled with both joy and anger. It was like she had finally received the news that she was waiting for, but it turned out to be bad news.

The people present were shocked as they did not know what could cause someone as powerful as her to suddenly lose control of her emotions and power.

Ames slowly floated down to the ground, and her black hair cascaded down to her legs. She stepped onto the warm and bony ground surface with her bare feet and slowly walked toward Han Xiao, with her power blasting out at maximum. She then questioned threateningly, “What did that person look like?”

The lower-ranked Dragon Guards were all knocked out by the force field’s collapse and were struggling to get back up on their feet even after they have recovered their senses. Han Xiao had to let out a deep breath to calm his nerves. Ames approached him with such a tremendous pressure around her that it was as if she could use the Conqueror’s Haki ¹. It was difficult to just open his mouth. “I don’t remember the details, but he looked like a poor person with messy hair, and he didn’t appear to be different from the average passerby... Oh, I remember. The most notable thing about him were his eyes. His pupils were sort of shining, like...”

He pretended to be unsure about it, as if the word was stuck on the tip of his tongue.

“His eyes are dark like the emptiness of space, while his pupils are like a bright star in the endless darkness, lighting up the whole universe despite its flickering light... Is that what you mean?” asked Ames.

“Yes... yes, yes. That’s it.” Han Xiao could finally let out a deep breath. Ames must have thought about the person that he wanted her to think about it. The situation was under control.

Ames seemed to dwell in her memories as she murmured to herself, “Why don’t you want to see me? Does our promise mean nothing? Didn’t you agree to find me again when I became a big name in space?”

The guard captain, Wilsander, was shocked. He had never seen this side of his boss. It was as if she had become an abandoned teenage girl in love, and he could hardly take it.

Ames was like a goddess in his heart. Strong, beautiful, and mysterious. He had been moved to his core the first time he saw her, and he had decided to give up on developing his own faction to instead work under her out of respect for her. He had stayed under her wing ever since, managing this chaotic dumpster day after day...

Yes, he was secretly in love with his boss. This was also his motivation for doing his work.

At this moment, Wilsander could not have been more jealous of those underlings who were blasted away by Ames’ sudden outburst. If he had been knocked out like them, he would not have had to witness this shocking scene.

“Who is that man that she’s speaking about? It can’t be her lover...” Wilsander felt bitter in his heart, but he also felt a strong sense of curiosity toward this mysterious person.

After Ames got back to her senses, she returned to her throne and stared at Han Xiao for a good while before saying slowly, “Since he has already chosen you to send the message. I will give you two options—disintegrate into dust or work for me.”

“I am more than willing to work under you,” said Han Xiao.

Becoming Ames’s employee was much better than getting a game-over on the spot. Ames’ past was full of mystery, but Han Xiao knew her secret. A powerful character like Ames had been a focus of the players’ attention in the past. The players were able to put together her story from various mission descriptions, and this information was then released onto the forums. Han Xiao basically knew more about her than she did herself, as he also knew about her future.

With the advantage of information, Han Xiao had finally chosen this plan to save himself and the others. The mysterious person that he had spoken of was a special person to Ames, and he held an important position in her heart. However, this person had gone missing a long time ago, and Ames had been constantly trying to hire mercenaries to look for him.

That person was someone with genuine foresight ability. Making himself the messenger for that person automatically made Ames think that Han Xiao was important to him, and his life would no longer be in any immediate danger.

Ames had also never told anyone about this, so she would never suspect that Han Xiao somehow knew about her past and was using it to his advantage. In her eyes, it was far more probable that Han Xiao was simply a random small-time mercenary that person had predicted would go there and so was used as the messenger.

Who knew that even someone as strong as Ames would not even suspect Han Xiao’s words?

Although the Great Mechanic Han did not like being a replacement, he would not let his pride get in the way of his survival. Whenever his strength was clearly not enough, he would not foolishly try to fight his opponent head on.

Even if he had once been someone who was worshipped by all, he would never let this restrict his actions. Han Xiao had only been able to escape from Germinal all those years ago because he was able to hold himself back. He had no problem of doing it again.

But of course, Ames was much better than Germinal. At least she was maintaining a neutral position, so Han Xiao would not be forced to burn any bridges with anyone. However, she was a million times more powerful than the Germinal Organization, and this meant that trying to escape from her clutches would be astronomically more difficult than getting out of the Germinal base. Even if Han Xiao tried all sorts of ways to make himself stronger, it would still undoubtedly be a long and arduous journey.

This was not an optimal scenario for him, but even he could not go against the universal law of the strong ruling over the weak.

Han Xiao sighed secretly.

He was afraid that for a good part of his future, he would have to tightly wear the label of the 'Dragon Emperor's Subordinate' around his head. That label was to be both a protective charm and a new responsibility.

You have made contact with a new Faction!

Floating Dragon Island: Cold (0/300)

Chapter 373: Getting Employed (2)

Ames seemed a bit lost and floated away after signaling for Wilsander to deal with the rest of the matters.

The mercenaries were shocked. Just what was happening? She was just about to kill everyone in the Black Star Mercenary Group a short while ago, yet now they had become her underlings? Were they really people in the same line of work?

"How come I didn't know about anything you said?" Herlous said quietly. "You couldn't have been lying, could you?"

"You don't know a lot more things," replied Han Xiao with a calm expression. "She is someone at the top of the food chain. Do you think it would be that easy to trick her?"

"That makes sense." Herlous took what Han Xiao said at face value. If Han Xiao could not even trick him, how could he trick the "Dragon Emperor" of the Shattered Star Ring?

Just as the guards were about to take away the other people from the three big Mercenary Groups, Goa shuffled close to Han Xiao and said, "We're getting locked up, and you're the only one who can move

around freely. Now that you've become Ames's underling, see if you can convince those people to let the Silvers go. You're now the only one left who can complete the mission."

Porter, Cerleni, and the others also all threw glances at Han Xiao as they were getting dragged off, telling him to improvise.

Those mercenaries had been rendered completely useless within an instant, and although they did not understand how Han Xiao suddenly became Ames's subordinate, he was now their only hope.

The Silvers rescue's all on you now, buddy!

Wilsander walked over and led the others out of the hall to go to another giant building.

"Don't worry. Since Ames has already recruited you, we're now colleagues. Ames treats all her subordinates decently, so you don't have to worry. I'm now taking you to go see the Head Butler. She will assign you with your duties," explained Wilsander passionately.

Han Xiao nodded. He was obviously familiar with the pros and cons of working under Ames. Most of her underlings were random fodder, and she only had three important subordinates. The first was the Head Butler, who was also her cousin. The second was Floating Dragon Island's logistics manager and a skilled Mechanic. The last was Wilsander. Although he seemed like quite a pushover right now, he had once been a big-name pirate who roamed the stars.

The three each took care of their own jobs and were Ames's trusted people. Some called them the 'Dragon Guard Trio'. Most of the players in the past who came to Floating Dragon Island received missions from these three.

Han Xiao went back and forth with Wilsander for a while to get close to him. He had a certain understanding of Wilsander and was able to quickly get on the latter's good side.

After chatting for a while, Wilsander could not hold back his curiosity any longer and held Han Xiao's shoulder as he asked, "Hey, Black Star. The person you were talking about earlier... What's his relationship with Ames?"

"I've only met each of them once. How would I know?" Han Xiao's eyebrows rose up as if they sensed something. "It seems like you have feelings for Ames..."

Wilsander did not become awkward at all upon hearing the remark and instead laughed aloud. "Haha. Although she has never answered my pursuits, my handsome appearance and bravery will surely be able to win her over sooner or later.

Handsome... Han Xiao carefully scanned the other person. If we go back the Demon Tribe's standards, then maybe your looks would at least be considered to be normal.

In truth, that person was not Ames' lover or anything of the sort. That person was her teacher. In the player's eyes, that person was an extremely mysterious travelling merchant. Chance encounters with him could give them the opportunity to buy unique items off of him, and they might even be able to trigger some legendary questline. That person actually did not want to meet Ames, so Han Xiao was not really lying to her. He even let her know about this news earlier so that she did not have to continue waiting for him all that time.

Ames' past was clouded in mystery, but it was not because she came from some extraordinary background. She had originally been a very normal girl. She had been abandoned by her family at a very young age and taken in by her teacher. She had then awakened her powers and built her foundations as an Esper under her teacher's wing. These two went way back, and the teacher had left her with a promise before leaving for an unknown reason—to find her again once she had made her name known throughout space. However, after she had rose up to her current heights, her teacher was still no way to be seen, giving Han Xiao chance to pull the earlier trick.

They arrived at a tall building. It was the Administrative Center of Floating Dragon Island in name and was there for people to conduct their daily business. When the group arrived at the rooftop, they saw a large office with ten or so assistants working their *sses off inside. The Head Butler was giving out documents behind a table. Ames' cousin had the appearance of an ordinary woman and was Ames close friend.

“Jenny, these are the new recruits. See if you got any jobs for them,” said Wilsander the moment that he walked into the room.

Head Butler Jenny did not even look up at and continued to deal with the documents. “Name, power.”

Her words came out so fast, as if she did not even have a second to spare.

“Black Star, Mechanic, grade B...” Han Xiao and the players each stated their basic information.

Right after they finished, Jenny said, “Black Star, go report to the Logistics Manager. They're in need of a new skilled mechanic there. The others will all join the guards. Your information has already been registered. Uniforms and badges will be given to you in two days.”

The players had become part of the guards, while he became a logistics worker. His mechanic skills just so happened to be good enough for the manager. He did not mind this arrangement, and the officer feature of the faction interface could finally be put to good use now that he was splitting up with the players.

After they left the hall, Han Xiao said in a quiet voice, “Herlous, you will be the temporary leader of the other members. Protect them and make sure that they don't cause any trouble.”

“I know.” Herlous nodded. “You be careful, too.”

Having Herlous as the leader should decrease the chances of the players doing something stupid in his absence... However, aside from the few idiotic players, most of these pro players could handle themselves well enough. Although they were slightly shocked by the sudden turn of events, they trusted Han Xiao and would take things one step at a time.

“Haha. I will take care of your team. They will get to form a squad of their own.” Although Wilsander did not look the type, he was actually a very easygoing person. Han Xiao had also been able to get on his good side from their earlier conversation, and so he was willing to lend a hand to help.

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Floating Dragon Island's logistics work mainly included the repair and maintenance of the device that kept the floating island afloat. Han Xiao went alone to the logistics department and was met with a

massive high-tech garage. This department had the lowest number of people compared to the other two on the island.

As Han Xiao stepped through the door, he saw a six-armed, human-sized, two-legged insect walk up to him. What was interesting was that this creature had a mechanic's uniform on.

"You must be Black Star. Welcome. We're currently very shorthanded right now, and it's nice that we finally got a new mechanic."

This arthropod was the Logistics Manager. Its species could only make clicking noises when they spoke, and the special communicator that he wore turned that voice into that of an old man's. His translated name was Haier.

Haier was a very high-level mechanic who had been working for Ames for a long time.

Han Xiao had already met the three top dogs on the island within the short period of time since arriving on the island, and he could already tell how carefree Ames was with choosing her subordinates. The Head Butler was her cousin, Jenny; the Guard Captain Wilsander was of Demon Tribe and even used to be a pirate; the logistics manager was an arthropod.

"Our work includes maintaining the island's boosters, anti-gravity device, life-sustaining device, and mineral collector. We also sometimes create and repair spaceships..."

Although Haier had a scary appearance, he was actually very kind and took Han Xiao on a short tour around the logistics department after his short explanation.

After learning about his work, Han Xiao was pleasantly surprised. Logistics work could actually be quite beneficial to him, and he did not even have to work that hard. With the interface, he could create a lot more blueprints from doing all the repairing and maintenance!

Moreover, the logistics department did not really set any strict rules or regulations on its employees, so many spent their free time working on their own machines. Although this was never explicitly stated, it seemed like they could also use the rare and unique materials on this island for themselves. Such as the Void Dragon's skeletons...

After the standard introductory procedure, Han Xiao officially became one of them.

For the next few days, he followed Haier to familiarize himself with the work on the island. He was quickly accepted as another member in the department. The players were also faring quite well on their end. Most of the other Dragon Guards were normal people, and they did not dare cause trouble with the team of Supers led by Herlous. After being dispatched on and completing a few missions, they slowly transformed from random outsiders into the enforcers on the island.

...

In the slave market, Horlaide was very excited when he found that the Silvers had been captured. He had been trying to find a client for these past few days. Many buyers had secretly offered him their prices, but he was not happy with all of them and was still in the middle of the bargaining stage.

That day, Horlaide received a communication request from the base.

“Haha. You’re still alive.” Horlaide made fun of the caller.

“I almost died.” Peggy had a raspy voice. He had nearly kicked the bucket after getting beaten up badly by Han Xiao and barely made it out alive and back onto his ship. He wanted his money. “The Silvers have already been handed to you. Where are you going to hand me my pay?”

“What pay?”

“What do you mean?” Peggy frowned. “Are you not planning on paying me?”

“No, no, no. You need to understand something. Your cargo was taken away by the mercenaries,” Horlaide slowly reasoned. “I had to work to get them back. Why would I pay you money?”

Peggy had an ugly face as he switched off the communicator. “Filthy merchant!”

The Silvers were a Super valuable cargo. He knew that he had no way of dealing with Horlaide. He was the one who had gotten beaten up and lost the cargo. Nothing could be done no matter how mad he got. A criminal lived by the code of the survival of the fittest, and even he could not do anything about Horlaide breaking their promise.

“That bunch of stupid mercenaries!” Compared to Horlaide, the mercenaries were the biggest reason that he had failed so badly. He hated them to his bones and gritted his teeth as he smashed apart the communicator with his palm.

Just as Peggy was getting angry all by himself, an ordinary-looking spaceship docked next to him.

“Ember, we’re here.”

Chapter 374: Your Friend DarkStar Is Now Online

This spaceship had specially been dispatched for a mission by DarkStar, and it had been re-outfitted to look like a normal traveler ship. A group of people walked off the ship and stepped onto the Floating Dragon Island’s docks. The savage inhabitants of the island who were at the docks glared at these seemingly unsuspecting common travelers.

The DarkStar people kept their heads low and headed into town. After making several twists and turns in the streets, just as they were about to pass by the alleyway between two houses, a muscle man walked in front of them and blocked their path. A group of brutes also appeared from behind them, pincering them.

“This isn’t the kind of place that ordinary people should visit. I suggest you guys pay up for that advice...” The pirate who acted as the leader of the ambushers said this as he calmly pointed his gun at the newcomers’ leader.

The other pirates also smiled creepily. However, their leader failed to make any more sounds after that sentence, and they started to feel like it was odd. One of the lackeys lightly shook the leader’s shoulder, and suddenly, the leader’s head came rolling off and fell onto the ground.

His clothes also fell onto the floor, and black-colored dust wafted off them.

The pirates' hesitation instantly changed into fear, and they turned ran. However, they could not get very far before they all disintegrated into dust particles, leaving piles of clothing on the floor.

The DarkStar's people could not even be bothered to spare another glance before they quickly went on their way as if they had long become used to this scene. This was their captain's ability, Ember. The ability could, to an extent, control carbon molecules, making it a huge control to all carbon-based organisms. As long as his enemies had even a speck of carbon molecules in their bodies, he could deal some devastating true damage to them by a thought of his mind. Even energy-protected Supers would be dealt with heavy damage by this ability. His Esper power's potential rating was an A+!

Ember was a member in DarkStar's plan to nurture a new generation of trump cards. The information in the Secret Message Bead had been bought from a research organization in another part of space at a very high price. DarkStar had already been working with the other group for many years, and this time, they each sent disguised parties, the carriers, of mixed species and races that 'coincidentally' came to the Shattered Star Ring to do business.

The Silvers were responsible for transporting the goods this time, but they got into an accident, and both the carrier and the Secret Message Bead were lost. This team was specifically dispatched the lost Secret Message Bead.

Ember brought his group to a hideout to rest. There were anti-detection devices already prepared in the room for them. He then sent out some of his men to search for information. The men returned before long, and the whole group gathered in the room for a meeting.

"We got the info. The Silvers are confined in a local slave market. We have already marked the location on the map. We should now try to get in contact with the carrier.

"So, what's the plan? Do we raid the slave market and rescue the carrier directly?"

"Only saving the Silvers would be too suspicious. If we're going to do it, we should break all the slaves out."

After everyone had finished discussing with each other, Ember slowly opened his mouth and said lightly, "Let's not use to resort to force yet. We are, after all, in the Dragon Emperor's territory. I will go look for the slave market people and try to buy the Silvers back."

...

Beside a large mineral burrowing device on Floating Dragon Island stood Han Xiao. He was currently carrying out repairs for the device with a group of workers surrounding him as they watched him work.

After screwing in the last nut, the device whirred back to life, and the workers were able to go right back into their work. Han Xiao turned and left while opening up the interface.

The machinery on Floating Dragon Island is all gigantic, and the level of technology used is also much more advanced. Although I still don't have enough knowledge to reverse engineer blueprints for them, I did manage to come up with the blueprint for the Dragon Guards' aircraft.

He had been secretly learning the fighter aircraft's blueprint over the past few days of logistical work. Its name was 'Dragon Butterfly Aircraft'. It was an anti-gravity hovercraft capable of atmospheric flight, and it was extremely fast and agile. Its size was average and allowed it to carry six to ten passengers. This was a blueprint that Haier had developed himself, yet Han Xiao had been able to learn it without anyone knowing.

The Great Mechanic Han had always been thinking about building a multi-passenger transport. With these new blueprints, he could finally overcome the technical difficulties that he had faced in the past, as well as greatly increase the capability of the transport that he had in mind. He constantly utilized the free time given to logistics workers to design the structure for his new transport.

After he returned to his personal garage, Han Xiao was faced with a giant sphere-shaped machine that was hung up in the middle of the room by several chains. His manufacturing speed had increased several folds recently in part due to the [Instant Deconstruction and Assembly] ability that he had obtained from the Silvers. He had already put in ten potential points to max this ability out.

The best part of working for the logistics department was that he had mountains of raw materials that he could use whenever he wanted. He did not even have to care about production costs. However, only Haier was allowed to use the more valuable materials, such as the Void Dragons' bones.

Han Xiao was incredibly envious about this. Void Dragons' bones were unbelievably hard, and even on their own, they were harder than all types alloys that he could currently produce. One of the more advanced blueprints for a higher-level battle suit required Void Dragon bones as the material for its core. That suit was even stronger than Amphiptere without the bones, and being imbued with the Void Dragons' special power made it several times stronger than Amphiptere.

That blueprint was not too hard to learn and could be obtained as long as one had the necessary knowledge. The hard part was gathering the materials required to build it. Floating Dragon Island was one of the only few places in the whole Shattered Star Ring that produced Void Dragon bones. If he could get his hands on enough of those bones, he could build himself new battle armor that would be upgraded from the 'snake' label.

Aside from the bones themselves, the liquid that could be extracted from the Void Dragon marrow was also extremely precious. However, Haier carefully watched over the stock of these materials. This was a clear show of the benefits that the Floating Dragon Island carried with it. Even without Ames managing the island's affairs seriously, it was still able to amass countless goodies.

Now that I have finally blended into the crowd, it's about time that I went to find Horlaide to talk about the Silver issue. I am also in a much better position now to make deals with the island's people.

Han Xiao knew that he could not trust the people from the big three mercenary groups and could only rely on himself for this.

Once again, Han Xiao visited the slave market. However, unlike usual, someone hurriedly called out his name just as he was about to stride in through the main gates.

"Black. Black Star! Please wait!" Theon rushed over while out of breath.

"Oh, it's you." Han Xiao gave him a glance from the side.

Theon's face was currently badly beaten up, with bandages all around it, and he looked like he had gone through a botched surgery. His subordinates who followed behind him did not look any better.

Theon coughed with a horrified look on his face. "Could you please stop your subordinates from bullying us..."

"What are you talking about? We're colleagues, man. To improve the capability of the Dragon Guards, I have tasked my group members with carefully organizing combat practices with you guys. How could you call us bullies?" Han Xiao said with a meaningful tone.

"I did wrong. I really did wrong. I will apologize however you want!" Theon sobbed in the open, and it was unthinkable how this was the same person who had been acting so high and mighty just several days ago.

Theon's pride came from the sole fact that he was part of the guards, and he had thought that he could look down on all the foreign visitors of the island. However, Han Xiao had suddenly become his 'colleague'. He did not even know that misfortune could arrive so fast without notice.

A few days ago, Han Xiao had been too lazy to teach this guy a lesson himself, so he had just thrown a few missions for the players. They were part of the guards anyway, and they were just about getting a kick out of beating him up. Even after Theon went to find the guard captain to complain about this matter, Wilsander simply turned a blind eye to it and could not be bothered to step in.

Theon could not stand being beaten up all the time like this anymore. However, he was not brave enough to just quit his job either. He was like an ant on a flaming-hot pan and had been waiting for technician Han every day over the past few days.

"Haha, why're you apologizing?" Han Xiao said cheerfully. "You were only following orders and didn't do anything wrong."

"How can I get you to forgive me?" said Theon with tears and snot all over his face. If he had known that this would happen, he never would have acted so unreserved like he did before.

"There's a saying that one's well-being is invaluable. How much do you think your wellbeing is worth?" Han Xiao's smile turned to a wicked one all a sudden.

Theon felt his body shudder at that sight, and he said through gritted teeth, "One thousand...."

The Great Mechanic Han was shocked and let out a gasp. "You price yourself that low?"

"Then it's 1,500..."

Han Xiao shook his head and clicked his tongue. "Looks like my friends need to help you establish a sense of self-worth."

"2,000! That's all I have in my account. It's my savings over all the years. I'm begging you, please! I only have this much..."

“Sigh. Let’s just consider it as me giving you a discount. Too bad I’m just this kindhearted, right?” Han Xiao then took out his communicator and pulled up the transaction menu before swiping his eyes over Theon’s underlings and chuckled. “How about you guys?”

His smile was basically that of the devil’s to the group of people. They were all horrified and made the transfers without a second word. After hearing the sound of the successful transaction, Theon felt his soul leave his body. Not only did he lose the portion of the money that Horlaide had secretly paid him earlier to get him to act, he had also lost most of his life savings.

Han Xiao was all smiles and sunshine once more when his purse was filled up with the 34,000 Enas from the guards. He swung his arms around as he turned and entered the slave market.

Theon’s team receiving the money in secret was one of the main reasons that the mercenaries’ rescue operation had failed right at the end. It was not Han Xiao’s style to just get a little revenge when he could. He would take back what he had lost because of Theon with full interest.

After he entered the slave market, he was led to Horlaide’s office by the workers.

Horlaide’s face scrunched up into a smile as he welcomed Han Xiao passionately. “Take a seat. Would you like anything to drink?”

“Don’t bother. I will be going straight to the point here. I’m taking the Silvers away. Name your price.” Han Xiao went into topic without any delay. Horlaide knew that he was the mercenary from earlier, and he also knew that he had now become a colleague, hence the passionate tone.

But Horlaide was considered someone who worked under the Head Butler. Since violence would obviously not be a wise choice, he came this time to negotiate.

Horlaide put on a fake smile and said, “What happened earlier was a misunderstanding. I’m sorry for any inconvenience that it may have caused you. However, what’s done is done. The Silvers are now on the market. Things are also not easy for me. I hope that you can understand.”

Han Xiao raised an eyebrow, as he smelled the smell of someone in the same line of business as himself. “Don’t bullsh*t, you already have a plan.”

Horlaide chuckled. “I’ve heard that your client cares a lot about their own. I believe that they will be very generous with opening up their purse. How about this? You help me convince them about the deal, and I will give you ten percent of the transaction fee.”

“How much are you planning to ask for?” asked Han Xiao.

“200,000... per person!” Horlaide raised up a single finger while smiling creepily. This price was, without a doubt, ridiculous. It was several times more than the market price. It was obvious then that the Silver client was the prey that Horlaide had laid his eyes on.

Chapter 375: Customers First

Han Xiao squinted and stared at Horlaide without saying anything. After a while, Han Xiao shook his head and said, “I won’t help you to persuade them. Keep the money.”

Horlaide was surprised. "Why?"

"Everything has rules." Although the reason Han Xiao became a mercenary was to earn cash, since he had already started this job, he would follow the rules in the industry. He had strong morals as betraying the employer was the worst crime that one could commit. Thus, he declined Horlaide's offer to trick his employer.

"Don't you want to earn money? That's the reason you choose to be a mercenary, right? Fifteen people could sell three million Enas. Let's say if you only get ten percent, that's still a lot of money that you can't earn while serving others. Because I'm your colleague, that's why I decided to share some of the benefit to compensate the reward you lost after your mercenary group failed the mission. Do you really want to let go of this opportunity?" Horlaide asked as he shrugged.

"Sorry, my creed is honorable. I don't do shady business." Han Xiao was not lured by the amount of cash. He did not want to follow Horlaide's intent. He wanted to have an image of being trustworthy. Moreover, he had accepted the mission from the Silver; however, it was not for money but to earn knowledge.

On top of that, the mission still had to depend on whether or not the Silver would reach an agreement on the negotiation. If they did, then what was the need for mercenaries? Han Xiao would not get any reward.

Horlaide made a duck face. "All up to you. I will talk with your boss myself."

Han Xiao took out the communicator and called the employer. The face of the Silver showed up on the screen. The Silver was surprised when they saw Han Xiao. After thinking for a while, they finally remembered that Han Xiao was one of their mercenaries. They asked in confusion, "Why did you call us? Where are the guys from Sky Ring? Oh right, where you are now? When are you coming back?"

Han Xiao shook his head. "There have been some accidents. We got attacked, and the hostages were sent to the slave market. The people from Sky Ring, Blades, and Purple Gold have all been captured, so I am in charge of the mission now. I found the manager of this slave market, and he wants to negotiate with you.

"Hehe, your comrades are in my hands..." Horlaide straightened his clothes, and he started to list his demands.

The Silver raged. "That's too expensive! We can't accept that price!"

"Sorry, you are in no position to talk back," Horlaide said back in a deep and firm voice. The hostages were in his hands, and he was confident that the Silver wouldn't abandon their people. Three million Enas was a lot, but the Silver's pockets was deep enough, so they could still squeeze enough money.

"We'll need time to discuss." The Silver ground his teeth, but he could not reject the offer.

"Call me after you reach a conclusion, but there is a time limit. A lot of our dear customers really want to buy your friends, so you are not the only buyer," Horlaide threatened.

Han Xiao turned off his communicator and left without any expression. Horlaide wanted to wave, but he did not move an inch, sitting on his chair.

As Han Xiao stepped outside of the door, a man wearing a mask was trying to get into the room. They brushed past each other's shoulders, and time froze at that moment. Han Xiao's hair all stood up, and he felt something sharp pointing on his forehead.

Both of them looked at each other as if they exchanged punches. The scene froze in place, the environment all lost its color, and only their eyes were visible.

The next second, color and sound broke the ice. They acted like nothing happened and kept on walking.

After several steps, Han Xiao looked back at the man. With greater power, he also had a better sense on the outside world. He felt endangered after getting close to a powerful being, and that was the feeling that the man in the mask gave Han Xiao. It was not only strength, but the aura of the man hinted the smell of blood of the dead. Only people with strong senses could notice this detail.

Han Xiao's instinct told him that the masked man was also here for the Silver.

I wonder where he is from...

Han Xiao shook his hand and contacted the employer.

The Silver was upset. "Why are the ones rescuing captured? Now what? Do we have to pay the money?"

"Don't rush to a decision," Han Xiao replied. "It seems that the hostages are still save. I will think of another way."

"... Okay. Remember, you must prioritize their safety."

After the call ended, Han Xiao grabbed his hair and felt a headache coming on.

"What should I do? The hostages are all with Horlaide. Right now, I am a member of Floating Dragon Island, so I can't draw attention. Um... There's only one way to force Horlaide to give up the hostage. I need to persuade Jenny and Ames..." He suddenly had an idea and hurried to formulate this plan.

At the same time, Ember, the masked man, also went to try and buy the Silver.

"How much are you offering?" Horlaide asked.

"Fifty thousand per person."

Horlaide shook his head and seemed disinterested.

Ember frowned. "This price is already fifty percent more than the original price. Why are you still refusing?"

"There's someone who's paying more," Horlaide replied.

"Seventy thousand," Ember added.

Horlaide still shook his head.

"A hundred thousand. That's my final offer."

“Not enough.”

“Then how much do you want?” Ember was patient.

Horlaide laughed. “The generous buyer is offering 210,000 per person. Of course, the deal is not yet settled. But... if you are able to pay more than 200,000, then that fact might change...”

“Okay. I will think about it.”

Ember nodded and left the slave market.

“Leader, how’s the negotiation?” his team member asked.

Ember took off his mask and calmly said, “Change of plans. We will take the hostages by force.”

DarkStar had the money to pay, but it was not worth it. Even if they settled on the price, there was a chance that the manager would increase the price again.

What kind organization was the DarkStar? They were the bad guys! If they obeyed such orders, what would happen to their dignity as villains?

...

On the planet of the Fawn Galaxy, there was conflict among the Silvers.

“They have already named a price. What are we waiting for? Let’s get the money!”

“Wait a second. This whole thing looks sketchy. Did the mercenaries work together with the slave market managers to scam us? Everyone in Shattered Star Ring is a greedy goblin. We need to prepare for this possibility,” someone in the group said.

“In the end, safety comes first. Sky Ring, Blades, and Purple Gold have all fallen, so how can we trust this Black Star Group? If they push over their limit and try to be heroes, they might bring more danger to the hostages. Let’s just give the money.”

“What if they don’t release the hostages after we meet their demands,” one man said in worry.

After some chaotic discussion, in the end, the captain stayed calm and made the decision. “The reason they failed last time was because they were outnumbered. I am going to trust them one last time. We will have the Black Star Mercenary Group try one more time, and if they can’t do it, I believe they will give us an accurate reply. Giving the money is our last option.”

...

A team of players rode an aircraft and scouted around an area.

Li Ge was on the aircraft. He dodged out of everyone’s sight and took out the Secret Message Bead.

“What is this thing?” Li Ge mumbled to himself. “The instructions say that there will be a bonus reward if I give this to a specific person, but there is no hint on who the person may be. I do have to activate it myself...”

Li Ge had a lot of experience in gaming. With items that did not have clear instructions, the player would have to take the initiative and show this item to different NPCs. If an NPC reacted differently compared to the rest, that should be the 'specific character'.

"Let's do this." Li Ge made up his mind.

Chapter 376: Steel Body!

Goa, Cerleni, and Porter's teams were all locked inside the Floating Dragon prison. They contacted their respective leaders and paid the bail. They could not leave before the higher officers went to pick them up and apologize.

During the time of imprisonment, everyone was disconnected from the outside world. They were bored to death. The only topic that they could talk about was Han Xiao.

"I wonder if Black Star saved the Silvers," Porter muttered.

"Even though Black Star is working for Ames, what can he do? There's no way he'll be able to save them." Cerleni was pessimistic about the situation. He shook his hand. "Well, I can't blame him. If I was in his situation, I wouldn't be able to do anything either. On top of that, he is with Floating Dragon. We can't be sure whether he will still be a mercenary or not."

"We have already asked him for this favor. Let's just trust him." Goa frowned.

Cerleni was frustrated. "I want to believe that he can do it since he is our last hope, but is there anything that he can do?"

"... I don't know." Goa sighed.

The mercenaries' morale was low. They tried to trust Han Xiao, but their brains told them that this mission had already failed.

...

"Are you looking for Ames? She's not here, left a few days ago." Jenny read the documents without looking up.

"Where is she heading?" Han Xiao was surprised. Ames always stayed on Floating Dragon Island.

"She said she was in a bad mood, so she wanted to fight someone," Jenny replied with a cold voice like a businessman. She adjusted the Data Storage Glasses and said, "She was displeased with the message that you brought back."

Han Xiao's eyes flicked. The only people that could match Ames were the three Supers of the same grade in the Shattered Star Ring... He hoped that there would not be any crazy news a few days later.

He planned to fudge Ames to release the Silvers, so he had to wait for her return. Han Xiao did not want to revolt when Ames was not home since there was too much risk. There was also no need to do that as the Floating Dragon Faction gave him quiet some benefits. Head Butler Jenny was tough unlike Ames, and Han Xiao barely even considered persuading her.

Since Ames is not present, according to the management rules, I am temporarily the highest officer,” Jenny said. “We strengthened the defense of Wilsander, and Haier is protecting the Gravitational Core. Everything is in order, so don’t you dare make other plans, or else you will regret it.”

Han Xiao understood the hidden message of Jenny. He had only joined the faction for a few days, and although the other members did not reject him, Jenny still kept an eye on people from the Black Star Mercenary Group. It was her responsibility as the Head Butler to clean up Ames’ mess. Jenny wanted to warn Han Xiao to not do something stupid.

Han Xiao smiled and ignored Jenny’s warning. He left the office, went back to the Logistics Office, and got his next job. Haier took half of the workers to camp around the Energy Core of the floating island. The rest of the workers were on standby in the headquarters while dealing with the daily maintenance tasks. Han Xiao was assigned to remain in the headquarters.

After losing half of the workforce, the workload suddenly increased. Everyone was extremely busy, and the Great Mechanic Han had to spend his time fixing aircrafts and equipment without doing anything else.

...

A few days later, in the Slave Market, Horlaide made a call to Han Xiao and asked, “Has your employer decided to pay the price?”

“Not yet,” Han Xiao answered while fixing a burrow collector.

“Hey, don’t waste my time. Tell them that I will only wait three more days, or else I will sell to other buyers.”

Horlaide was pissed and hung up the call right after he finished his sentence. He took a sip from a hallucination drink and got high.

“If the Silver is not playing, then the man in the mask is the next highest bid buyer...”

In his eyes, Ember was his plan B. No matter what happened, he would certainly end up with tons of cash. Thinking about the huge sum of money, Horlaide smiled even wider, thrilled. He chugged the drink and hummed a delightful tune.

At the same time, pairs of eyes were hidden in the shadows, staring at the Slave Market.

That was the day DarkStar would attack. Ember had made an infiltration plan to steal the hostage rather than have a straight on battle. They did not know that Ames had left, so they were being cautious. Ember’s Esper potential was Class A+, but he was still developing, so he was currently in Class B+. Against Ames, who could one shot him, even Ember had to swallow his pride and be meticulous on his operation.

Following the DarkStar Team were the Galactic Pirates. When Ember was undercover, he found a few new teammates. He made an empty promise that he would evenly split the profit while showing part of his plan, and that was enough to bait the pirates. The pirates could help them to cover DarkStar’s real purpose. If they were exposed, the pirates could also draw attacks from them and create chaos.

“Have you cut the power?” Ember asked in the communicator.

"I just infiltrated the Floating Dragon Island's main system. I'm planting the disruptive device now. I need two more minutes to temporarily cut off the electric supply to the district of the Slave Market. The surveillance system will be down, and the system won't detect anything. The whole thing will last for seventeen minutes. It should be enough for your operation."

"Good." Ember nodded.

For this operation, DarkStar was equipped with high-tech equipment. They had split the team in two, with one going after the electric supply and making it look like a technical problem. Although there would be some movements, it would not trigger the alarm. This created the opportunity for Ember to do his job.

As soon as the two-minute mark hit, the entire lights in the district shut down, and the place was plunged into darkness. Then the whole street turned noisy, with people wondering what had happened.

Ember closed his eyes and used his Esper vision. He felt the carbon particles around him and the objects that he had hidden in the Slave Market. He flicked his fingers and released his Esper power.

Inside the Slave Market, the stones on the corner of the wall cracked, and small metallic balls dropped out of the cracks. The balls then released a strong invisible sleeping gas, which filled the entire building. The gas only affected the nervous system, so it would not do any harm.

Flop, flop...

The workers of the Slave Market fell on the ground one after another. Horlaide was shocked at the sudden power outage. Before he could get up, he had already passed out from inhaling the gas.

Ember's Esper power could control carbon molecules to a certain degree. He could split and combine molecules to turn carbon into different states, such as from solid to gas. There were a lot of materials containing carbon, and with his current power, controlling a few rocks was a piece of cake.

Under the cover of darkness, the team infiltrated the Slave Market. The room was pitch dark, but the carbon remains were lying around, which showed the structure of the room. Ember quickly found the underground prison and confirmed that their targets were there.

Because of the power outage, all the locks in the Slave Market had deactivated. Ember and his team walked through the prison with ease as they opened the door. The prisoners all rushed out of the room with tears dripping down, as if they were being saved.

"Are you here to save us all?" the Silver asked with surprise as they walked out, thinking that they were the mercenaries rescuing them.

But they quickly found out that they had jumped out of the pan and into the fire.

The members of DarkStar all wore their masks. Ember said to the other thrilled pirates, "As promised, I only want the Silver. The other slaves are yours."

This time, a group of brutes walked out of the crowd and said, "It's not fair. The Silvers are the most valuable. Who do you think you are..."

Ember did not wait for them to finish. The expressions of the brutes turned sour and filled with pain. They opened their mouths, but no screams came out. Starting from the skin to the flesh, everything turned into ash, and their bodies collapsed in an instant.

“Anyone else want to talk?” Ember asked coldly.

Everyone froze. They could not believe their eyes, so they quietly obeyed the order and gave up the thought of getting the Silvers.

“Target acquired. Let’s get out of here and do the interrogation in a safe house.” The members of DarkStar quickly left the scene.

...

A few minutes earlier, when the power was cut, the logistics office received a report. The system gave the task of repairing the problem to Han Xiao.

“Emergency mission?” Han Xiao was repairing a burrow nearby. He dropped everything and headed to the Slave Market district.

Seeing that there were no lights nearby, Han Xiao turned on his detection radar. He suddenly stopped as he could not detect anything in the Slave Market. It was evident that there were disturbance frequencies in the area.

“Something’s fishy.” Han Xiao’s face turned serious as he realized that something bad was happening. He activated his jetpack and rushed toward the Slave Market. As soon as he reached there, he smelled the dense sleeping gas.

You inhaled strong anesthetic gas. Calculating the effect...

Your END is over 100 points. You are immune to hypnosis.

Your END is over 150. You are immune to drowsiness.

The place was dead quiet. He activated on his night vision and saw the workers lying around.

What is happening here? Did someone rob this place? Who has the guts to do this?

Han Xiao raised his suspicion.

At this time, sounds of footsteps came from the stars. Ember brought the Silvers up the stairs, and he saw Han Xiao standing at the doorway. “They found us!”

On the other hand, Han Xiao was even more shocked upon seeing someone rescuing the Silvers.

*Who the f*ck took over my job?*

Did our employer find another mercenaries? Are we on the same side?

Han Xiao could not determine the identity of the other man. Before he could say anything, Ember tried to control the carbon molecules in Han Xiao's body and turn him into dust.

Hum!

The Esper power went directly through the armor and acted on Han Xiao's body.

You received Ember's [Carbon Atom Deconstruction] attack.

You received 1146 True Damage.

You received Ember's [Carbon Atom Deconstruction] attack.

You received 988 True Damage.

Your Ability [Steel Body] activated. All True Damage is nullified!

Through the interface, Han Xiao saw the '-0' damage that filled his screen.

Nothing happened!

Ember's expression froze behind the mask. He could feel the carbon molecules in Han Xiao's body, but he could not move them like those of other people. He suddenly felt the molecules in Han Xiao's body tighten and become as hard as stone.

Looks like he's an enemy!

Han Xiao focused, and the armor covered his body. He entered battle mode and used [Wrath of Garrett] without hesitation!

Chapter 377: Seize the Opportunity!

The burning light beam burst like a golden spear breaking through the darkness, hitting Ember's face!

Boom!

Flames exploded!

Before the light had vanished, a shadow rushed out at swiftly. Han Xiao's reaction was exceptionally fast. The handle of the scythe popped out from the arm armor and slipped into his hand, expanding into a large black scythe with one swing.

The scythe and the shadow clashed.

Clank!

The sound of metal colliding!

A crystal-clear hand grabbed the scythe, and the two of them competed in strength.

Han Xiao glanced at the hand. The skin of Ember became like a diamond, and the blade could not slice through.

The ground below him moved, and the carbon element was extracted, turning into dust particles, climbing up his legs and rapidly hardening.

Han Xiao hastily jumped back in shock, dodging before the mud hardened, tearing apart the yet to form diamond.

Carbon elemental control? Troublesome power... The analyzer in the mechanical suit detected the material that was controlled—it was all carbon. Han Xiao was experienced, so he immediately guessed the opponent's power, and he felt it was quite hard to deal with.

This kind of atom controlling Esper power was very rare, its effects were usually very well-rounded—able to attack, defend, control, and even building materials. Many natural materials contained carbon, and the opponent's power happened to be the nemesis of carbon-based life.

Han Xiao was discreetly shocked. Luckily, he had the True Damage immunity talent, otherwise he would have died.

[Steel Body] had come from the Germinal Organization leader. Of course, at this stage, the leader's strength was not a big deal anymore, but that old man was a main character-type figure after all and a BOSS to boot. The effect of this talent was very strong, and it gave complete immunity to True Damages. True Damage ignored all resistance and could be very dangerous. Even the tankiest Pugilist would suffer from True Damage, and with this talent, it was insurance for safety.

Up till now, Han Xiao had gained two molding abilities in total, the other one was [Basic Strengthened Life], which gave him a lot of health. His health could even match up to Pugilists of the same level despite being a Mechanic. It was disgustingly tanky... and Ember was suitably disgusted right now.

[Carbon Atom Deconstruction] was a new way to use his Esper power that Ember had only obtained after reaching grade B—it was a lethal skill to low-grade Supers. It worked by directly breaking down the molecular structure of the opponent's body. The difference between the opponent's energy and level needed to be determined before taking effect. If the target failed to match up to a certain standard, the target would then take True Damage. Usually, anyone whose grade was lower than Ember's could not match up to that standard, but Han Xiao was different. Although his level was lower than his, he happened to have True Damage immunity.

“Run!”

Ember suppressed his shock. His trump card did not work, and his other powers were all ordinary combat methods that did not have enough destructive power. It was not the time to fight, and there was no time to think.

Hum!

The power field spread out. The ground and the walls rippled like water, and countless carbon molecules were extracted and reformed. The powder sized molecules surrounded Han Xiao like black silk then quickly hardened into diamonds with various shapes—spikes, barriers, cages, and so on—stalling Han Xiao.

Clank!

Spinning carbon dust was everywhere, moving around like waves, solidifying from time to time. The arbitrary shifts of material form were magnificent!

Han Xiao bared his teeth. The dust ribbon was dense, hard to predict, very swift, and kept attacking, so it really tested his reaction speed.

Amphiptere quickly planned the dodging route, allowing Han Xiao to maneuver around and dodge, barely avoiding the attacks one after another. The movement was very difficult to do—he was like an epileptic patient doing a street dance!

But it was very effective as well. Despite looking like he only barely made every dodge, he was very steady!

As Han Xiao was stalled, Ember took the Silvers and escaped out the doors. Han Xiao, of course, could not let the Silvers be just taken away like this. Just as he was about to give chase, the mechanical suit suddenly activated a warning, notifying that there was a high energy reaction behind his back!

He slid and dodged!

Boom!

All kinds of attacks hit where he originally stood, creating a large crater. Han Xiao looked back to see those pirates that had taken slaves for themselves firing at him. Dozens of Supers surrounded him with murderous intent.

“Quickly, kill the witness!”

“He’s alone, let’s attack together!”

Han Xiao was surrounded and could not withdraw. Ember and the others vanished from his sight. He frowned and had no choice but to deal with those brutes.

He was alone, so the opponent used their advantage of outnumbering him. He could not defeat them quickly. Han Xiao decided to use the communicator in his mechanical suit to call for help.

After fighting for a while, these galactic pirates realized that they could not defeat Han Xiao at all, and Han Xiao even defeated quite a number of them. Quickly, they started to get anxious.

“This guy is quite strong. Don’t waste time anymore, we have to go!”

“No, he saw our identity. If he reports it to the guards, we will be immediately exposed!”

These brutes had disagreements—half of them wanted to retreat, but just as they were about to leave, the roof of the slave market was suddenly blasted away. Everyone was shocked. They looked up in surprise, and a few Dragon Butterfly Aircrafts were circling in the air, shining their searchlight down. There were more aircrafts heading here from afar.

These guards were all players that Han Xiao had called. Taking advantage of their job, they arrived at the scene to back up very quickly. Herlous waved behind the high concentration glass.

All the brutes were startled! It was like a thief getting caught by the police during the act!

Han Xiao withdrew and backed off, leaving the area covered by the attacks as the tip of his mouth raised.

Want to gang bang me? I have backup, too!

All the aircrafts fired lasers at the brutes.

Boom boom boom!

Golden lasers poured down like a thunderstorm, and the pirates fell in swathes. They were terrified!

“It’s Dragon Guards! Run!”

“Split up!”

They were panicking and could no longer afford to care about Han Xiao. They scattered and fled, and the aircrafts split up to chase them.

Han Xiao did not chase after them immediately. The Dragon Guards were up in the air and could chase more efficiently. He did not want to act on the ground, so he was waiting for his Bat Wings to arrive. Ember escaped first and was already long out of his sight, but Han Xiao had not only watched him escape—he had secretly left a mark on him.

“Herlous, a group of mysterious people had snatched the Silvers away. I’ve marked them on the radar, and the intel has been sent to you. Don’t let them get away!” Han Xiao drew a glowing route on the map and sent it to Herlous. “They have a Super, grade B as well, who can control carbon molecules. He careful, maintain the shield. Don’t get into combat with him before I arrive!”

“Okay, I see them, following now,” Herlous replied.

At this time, Wilsander sent a communication and asked in a very low voice, “What happened?”

Han Xiao described what happened, emphasizing heavily on the fact that the enemy attacked Floating Dragon Island’s property with malicious intentions and that he was the star that stopped the enemies.

Look at how arrogant these people are, completely disrespecting you, Guard Captain. If you don’t go ahead and thrash them, aren’t you ashamed?

He was worried that Wilsander might not have heard the key point and repeated this part three times.

“Okay, alright, I got it.” Wilsander hung up the communication hastily, fearing that Han Xiao might repeat it a fourth time. However, Han Xiao had already achieved his goal. This phrase cycled in Wilsander’s head, and he could not forget it even if he wanted to. The more he thought about it, the angrier he got.

Exactly, who doesn’t know that us Dragon Guards control the entire city? Yet, these people dared to violate the rules. They’re completely disrespecting the guards. Are they challenging me? Today, these

people dared to rob the slaves. Tomorrow, they will dare to bomb the island. Unacceptable! If I don't thrash you people, what kind of Guard Captain will I be?

Wilsander thought for a while and turned furious. He ordered the guards directly under him to move out.

Ames happened to be out, so the guards were on standby all the time. They were at the highest alert level and were very efficient. Aircrafts soared through the sky one after another.

The residents and outsiders on the ground all looked up surprised. They had never seen all the guards striking at the same time. What happened?

Han Xiao looked at the mess around him and saw the unconscious Horlaide. His mood immediately improved. "You deserve it for wanting to trick me of my money."

He wondered, when Horlaide woke up and saw all his slaves gone and his home destroyed, what expression would he have. Thinking of the face that Horlaide had back then when he got the Silvers, Han Xiao felt warm inside.

He looked at the interface; there was a new message. It said that he had caught the criminals in the act, provided the intel, and stopped the enemies. His relationship points with the Floating Dragon Island had increased by 400, rising from Cold to Neutral.

Han Xiao suddenly thought of something. Making use of the time during the wait, he walked down to the underground prison cell, came to the secret door's location, bursting through the wall with violence, exposing Aroshia's cell.

Those brutes had not discovered this secret door, so Aroshia was still locked inside. Ember had actually noticed the secret door, but his target was just the Silvers, so he did not bother to tell the others about it.

Han Xiao tore the cell door open and reached out his hand toward Aroshia.

He still remembered that he had the [Visitor from Afar] mission, which required him to bring Aroshia away for six days. Hack then, he did not buy her because Horlaide asked for money, so now was the chance!

If he did not seize the opportunity like he always did, he would regret it!

He was not going to leave anything for Horlaide!

Aroshia looked up and stared at Han Xiao's hand. Confusion appeared on her face, and she did not move.

"Right, she doesn't have memories and curiosity." Han Xiao thought of Horlaide's introduction. He decided to simply go forward and opened her cuffs and collar. Then, he grabbed Aroshia's hand and walked outside.

As expected, Aroshia did not resist. She let Han Xiao pull her away with a calm face, like a boat floating along with the waves.

She stared at Han Xiao's face the whole time. Although she acted like a puppet, her eyes were very bright at this time like she was in deep thought.

Chapter 378: Confidentiality Failure, DarkStar Exposed

Hu!

The bottom of the equipment box shot out a blue flame and flew over from afar. The parts assembled automatically, and Amphiptere turned into Flight Mode.

"Report position." Han Xiao quickly geared up, grabbed Aroshia, and flew into the sky. He did not worry about Aroshia being hurt during the high-speed flight at all—she had extraordinary power inside her body. Even if she did not know how to use it, the resistance that she had still protected her.

Herlous sent the coordinates, and the Tactical Screen displayed a three-dimensional map, marked with Herlous' aircraft. The spinning speed of the turbos on Han Xiao's wings soared, shooting out a jet plume, turning from stationary to high-speed flight in an instant. No buffering was needed—the mechanical suit could eliminate most of the load, and Han Xiao could endure the rest.

Aroshia was held in front of his chest. Her hair was dancing, and her eyes were closed, but she was not hurt.

After Han Xiao derived the Dragon Butterfly Aircraft, he had made improvements to his Bat Wings, adding anti-gravity thrusting technology, substantially increasing their speed.

During the flight, Han Xiao contemplated the opponent's identity. Ember's carbon element control made him think of a theoretically existing remarkably strong Esper power—Particle Control. It surpassed the limit of a single element control, almost all mighty, able to form and deconstruct any matter. If the energy was strong enough, it could theoretically control the deconstruction and reconstruction of planets, form lives, or even change the particle construction and create antimatter. With preparation, it could complete particle collisions without any machinery, simulate all sorts of phenomena, or even carry out high concentration compression, creating black holes!

This type of Esper power relating to the origin of matter was too horrifying. It was like the Almighty Creator, listed in the 'Extremely Dangerous Esper Power Restriction Treaty' by the three Universal Civilizations. Inside was about a hundred theoretically-possible highly-dangerous Esper powers. For some powers, even existing was a sin!

However, individual pursuit usually conflicted with the masses. The highly dangerous Esper powers inside the treaty were ranked by someone, turning it into the 'Most Desired Esper Power List'. Luckily, most of these Esper powers never appeared.

Particle Control was always in the top five. There were not any witness reports, and it was rumored that it could not be individually awakened, only formed through fusion. Another rumor was that Esper power was a 'live creature' with consciousness, some types of energy field type life, expressed as a large stream of energy, floating across the vast universe. It was said that the host of that power had appeared before, but because that person could not withstand that enormous energy, the host died of gene collapse. However, there were no witness reports, so no one knew if it was true. After all, there were

countless rumors in the universe. Some people even spread the rumor that [Dragon Emperor] Ames was actually a man.

Although carbon molecule control was far from particle control, there were similarities. It was very iconic and unique. Furthermore, the name [Ember] in the combat information that he saw felt a little familiar.

Suddenly, Han Xiao had a flash of insight, and a part of memory surfaced in his mind.

“Code name Ember... carbon molecule controlling power... DarkStar’s strongest individual?”

Han Xiao was shocked and surprised.

From the little information that he had exposed from that short contact with, Ember had allowed Han Xiao to guess his identity. Ember wanted to keep it confidential, but he had already failed in front of Han Xiao.

The reason that Han Xiao could confirm the target was that the combination of the code name ‘Ember’ and that power in one person were too iconic. In his previous life, with the Mutation Disaster as the boundary, the fight between Godora and DarkStar turned direct. Ember made a name for himself then. His power was very hard to deal with, and the war forced out his potential. When he reached grade A, the strength of his Esper power made a huge leap, and he then became the strongest Super in DarkStar.

Millions of Godorans died at his hand. One quote that he was known for was very popular among the players in the DarkStar faction in that version.

“I was fated to become Godora’s nightmare, to make them reflect on their backward traditions with slaughter. The bloodline belief that they firmly hold onto goes against the ways of reproduction and nature, and it was this mindset that created us. After their confession, they will then swallow the fruit that they have created through the thousands of years of pure blood belief. On their ruins, DarkStar will rebuild Godora! By then, there will be no pure blood, no one Superior because of their bloodline. Discrimination will no longer exist, and no one will be inferior from the moment they are born! Hybrid is inclusion, progress, and equality; we will eliminate the decay. Let life and hope bless Godora, praise Gal.”

Of course, although this sentence sounded very epic, DarkStar marked themselves as revolutionaries. They believed that revolution needed sacrifice and the resolve to reach their goals by any means necessary. Other races like Sunils were heavily damaged because of that. In the eyes of Lawful Factions, no matter how good DarkStar made themselves look, they were still a chaotic and evil terrorist organization.

The ironic thing was, Ember was not a hybrid Godoran. He belonged to another race, but he had been raised by DarkStar from a young age, forming a firm hatred. However, this hatred had absolutely nothing to do with him. As seen from this, the indoctrination of DarkStar was certainly rather good.

Ember was still in the secret cultivation stage, not yet achieving his peak. Han Xiao was the first outsider to know Ember’s identity, and he was doubtful about it. DarkStar’s actions always had a purpose—everything that they did was to go against Godora—why did they target the Silvers?

Does DarkStar want to use this group of Silvers to threaten the Silver Civilization? Impossible, this is just a group of tourists. They don't have that much power. Even if they caught the entire Silver Parliament, the Silver Civilization won't be threatened, what does DarkStar want?

Han Xiao's eye moved around.

Could it be... these Silvers have other secrets!

The sight of aircraft appeared ahead. The hatch opened, and Han Xiao flew in, Herlous approached. "The target has no intention of fighting back. They don't have a fixed route, and I don't know where their destination is."

"Continue chasing."

Herlous nodded. He saw Aroshia beside and was shocked by her beauty. He said with surprise, "You are?"

"Don't ask, I'll explain next time." Han Xiao temporarily did not have time to deal with Aroshia's problems. He stared at Ember and the others through the window.

...

"We can't shake off this aircraft. The other guards are coming to help, so we'd better withdraw as soon as possible," a subordinate said hastily.

Ember's expression was very serious. The aircraft following them did not fire, making him feel an imminent pressure.

The plan had been very complete originally, and the root cause of the current situation was the witness that entered the scene amid the chaos. It would all have been fine if he had killed him in an instant, but not only was that witness a grade B Super, he was even immune to his Carbon Atom Deconstruction. Unbelievable! He had never failed when he used this against anyone weaker than him!

It was a known fact that Ames' organization was weak. However, the thinnest camel was bigger than a horse. There were very unique people under the Dragon Emperor.

The survival of the witness had messed up all his plans. That person was definitely one of the Dragon Guards, which was why he was able to call the guards there. Ember was speechless, and he could only feel that luck was not on his side.

Luckily, he found other criminals to act together, with these brutes drawing their attention. Floating Dragon Island would not know their identity of belonging to DarkStar.

They could not wait till it was safe to begin the interrogation of the Silvers. Ember made an eye signal, and the team members exchanged code words in the middle of escaping. It would increase the risk of being exposed, but they could not care so much anymore.

However, an accident occurred.

All the Silver were confused, and no one matched the code word—the carrier was not among these people!

The expression of the DarkStar people changed instantly. They were stunned.

Chapter 379: Slaves? I Don't See It

Ember's expression changed. He glanced at the expressions of all the Silvers, and the horror in their eyes did not look like they were faking it. They really did not know the code word.

His composure almost collapsed. Luckily, he thought of another possibility in time.

"Do you have any other friends?"

The Silvers did not dare to not answer. One of them said while trembling, "The—there were originally seventeen of us, but two people were thrown into the universe during the trip here. They are already dead."

The carrier died and was thrown into the universe?

The DarkStar people were stunned, not knowing what to do. The carrier's dried corpse could have floated anywhere by then. There was no way they could find it.

Ember was stunned as well, but suddenly, he thought of something. The slave traders definitely would have searched through the carrier's clothes. If the carrier did not hide the Secret Message Bead properly, the slave traders might have taken it. There was still a chance!

However, this would mean that they had rescued the Silvers for nothing, and they were targeted by Floating Dragon Island... Ember's face froze. He felt miserable.

If they had known earlier, they would have gone to find the slave trader first, but before this, he did not know what happened to the carrier. Rescuing the Silvers first was a logical assumption for their next act. The carrier belonged to a partner organization, and after they retrieved the Secret Message Bead, they would rescue him if they could. If they could not, they would just kill him, but now this step was skipped. That damn slave trader had completed their job, but the bead was lost. Furthermore, Ember initially only wanted to steal the people secretly. All this commotion was an accident.

In conclusion, he was extremely unlucky!

Truly frustrated, Ember waved his hand, and countless dust shot out from the ground, turning into a silk-like curtain, shrouding the aircraft chasing them, blocking its vision. This layer of dense black dust was made of graphite, so the image from the detection device immediately became twisted and blurry. The aircraft was blinded, and it hurriedly slowed down.

"I'll chase, Herlous, but don't follow me. He can kill you easily." Han Xiao stopped Herlous from jumping out of the ship. He did not want this cadre that he had spent so much effort obtaining to be killed, so he flew out alone.

Breaking through the graphite barrier, Han Xiao focused and looked over. Then suddenly, he was a little stunned.

Ember and his people had fled with their powers and vanished without a trace, only leaving the Silvers behind, who were hugging each other while shivering. They were meaningless to Ember now, so they had been abandoned. Not only did that make it easier for them to escape, it would also calm the Dragon Guards down.

At this time, the graphite barrier was dismissed and fell onto the ground. This meant that Ember was already far away, and the aircraft had left the area of his power.

“He ran so fast.” Herlous was surprised. As he was about to make the order of continuing the chase, Han Xiao suddenly raised his hand, stopped him, and said, “Don’t chase anymore. No point.”

“Why? Is it okay to let them escape?”

“Just say we can’t catch them.” Han Xiao’s eyes sparkled. “Didn’t you guys notice? These brutes have really helped us!”

They were stunned before looking over at where Han Xiao was pointing at to see the Silvers on the ground. Then, they realized, and surprise appeared on their faces.

That’s right! Our hiring mission is to rescue the Silvers!

After so many things, the Silvers had finally been rescued in a strange way. Furthermore, they were in Han Xiao’s hands. Han Xiao was not going to let go of this opportunity. The difficult part of rescuing the Silvers was Horlaide, and this part had been solved just like that. He almost wanted to thank DarkStar.

Han Xiao’s words were even more useful than the Guard Captain Wilsander. They all listened to him and stopped the chase. Very soon, the other players came in aircrafts, protecting the Silvers again.

Wilsander requested for communication. “The other brutes are all captured. The people you’re chasing are the only ones left. How’s it going?”

Han Xiao shook his head. “They escaped. There was a very strong Super.”

“Why are you guys the only ones with a problem? If this gets out, these outsiders will doubt the authority of us Dragon Guards. More and more people will challenge us, threatening the security of Floating Dragon Island, destroying the peace of the residents. The long balance will be broken, and the world will turn into chaos. I don’t even dare imagine it. When Lord Ames returns, my position in her heart will collapse.” Wilsander complained nonstop.

Han Xiao’s mouth twitched. *Don’t you have any idea? Your impression in Ames’ heart was collapsed from the start...*

He did not have the heart to break Wilsander’s fantasy; they would not be playmates if he did. Actually, creatures at their grade were the same as parameciums in Ames’ eyes, and her subordinates were just domestic parameciums...

Han Xiao cut off Wilsander’s complaints and said, “Don’t worry, I know who they are.”

At this time, a new idea surfaced in his mind. The reason that Ember did not have fears was because they kept things confidential. However, he did not know that his identity had been revealed by Han Xiao, and when his identity was exposed, he would definitely be very confused. Not knowing where he exposed any information, he would never be able to guess what was unique about Han Xiao.

Since he was the only one that knew about this intel, he could take advantage of it, revealing DarkStar's identity to Floating Dragon Island. Coincidentally, Ames had not been in a good mood recently. If someone beyond grade A targeted DarkStar, even Han Xiao would pity them.

DarkStar doesn't want to cause trouble? No problem, I will help them cause tons of trouble. I'm a man who wore the red scarf before after all. Helping people is something I should do.

Because of Mutation Disaster, DarkStar would definitely be his enemy, so he was very happy about this plan.

Furthermore, Han Xiao made a new discovery. *Even Ember was sent out. These Silvers definitely have a big secret, and DarkStar is trying to do something huge!*

He asked the still horrified Silvers, and after that, he caught a few key points. Firstly, DarkStar did not want to rescue all the Silvers but a certain one. Secondly, this person had definitely been in contact with DarkStar before, or they would not have exchanged code word. This person was likely a secret employee, and even his friends did not know his identity. Thirdly, one of the two Silver that died was DarkStar's target, so Ember had just retreated temporarily. It definitely did not mean that he had given up. Fourthly, this was probably not the first time that a similar operation had been carried out.

By connecting these points, Han Xiao smelled a conspiracy. It was so confidential and cautious—this thing was definitely very important to DarkStar. He was suddenly very motivated. If he could break DarkStar's plan secretly, not only would he anger them, he might even profit from it.

Furthermore, he was in the shadows, and the enemy was under the light. This was his biggest advantage.

The only problem was... he did not know what DarkStar wanted to do. There was a serious lack of intel.

...

The guards cleaned up the ruins of the slave market. Unconscious people were carried aside, and Horlaide's eyes opened slowly. He had finally awoken.

Horlaide looked up. He was still lost and confused. Then, he stared directly at the ruins before him, slowly coming to recognize this familiar outline. His mouth gradually opened wide, and his expression turned horrified.

Then, an almost deafening scream soared into the sky!

"Argh!"

The guards beside hastily covered their eyes and felt shocked. "Tsk, this high note is comparable to a Psychic Blast."

After he finished screaming, Horlaide fell flat on the ground. His heart was twitching, and he almost suffocated.

He still remembered the last thing that he had seen before turning unconscious. He had been sitting in his luxurious chair, sipping on a drink, and feeling excited about the huge sum of money that he was going to receive. Alas, now, his home was gone, and he had suddenly become broke. He had fallen from Heaven to Hell in an instant.

His composure collapsed! Horlaide's luxurious shirt was covered in dust. He was in a mess. He hastily grabbed one guards from the side and asked with a trembling voice, "What has happened? Why did my home turn into this!"

The guard described what had happened. Knowing the enemies had been captured, Horlaide's eyes sparkled, and he hastily asked, "Then what about my slaves? Where are they? Give them back to me now!"

At this time, a voice full of justice appeared from the side.

"Horlaide, don't worry. I will definitely catch back all the slaves for you, minimizing your damages!"

Horlaide turned and looked over immediately. He was very surprised.

The owner of the voice was Han Xiao, he walked over with wide strides, and behind them followed all the slaves, including the Silvers.

This group of slaves had all been rescued by the guards. Han Xiao had just discussed with Wilsander and received the authority over the slaves, so he had gathered all of them.

"These are all my slaves." Horlaide was overjoyed.

Han Xiao's face was filled with justice, he patted his own chest and said, "Don't worry, if the slaves are found, I will return them to you immediately. We are colleagues after all."

"Found? You have already brought the slaves, quickly return them to me." Horlaide was confused.

Han Xiao widened his eyes, looked around, and said, "Where are the slaves? Tell me, I will definitely catch them for you."

"Stop playing dumb, right behind you!" Horlaide was agitated.

"Behind me?" Han Xiao looked back with confused, then shook his head, and said, "Only those wearing cuffs and collars are slaves. I only see a group of free people. Where are the slaves you're talking about?"

Now Horlaide understood Han Xiao's intention. His expression changed instantly, and his lungs almost exploded out of rage.

Chapter 380: Released

The brutes had snatched the slaves, so they no longer belonged to Horlaide. Then, the slaves had been rescued by Floating Dragon. Han Xiao had unlocked all of the slaves' shackles, so no one could prove that they had once been slaves, and no one could object if he said that they were free people.

Horlaide could not defend himself. When slaves were lost, they could only be caught back, but he did not have the authority. The only way was to bribe and request the guards to do it. However, Guard Captain Wilsander was standing right by the side at this time, with no intention of intervention, clearly in favor of Han Xiao position. With approval from the Guard Captain, who would dare act?

Horlaide saw Theon among the guards. Theon trembled and hurriedly retreated to the back of the crowd. Seeing this, Horlaide knew that he could not rely on Theon—this guy was completely fearful of Black Star's people.

Looking at Han Xiao's calm expression, Horlaide was furious, but for the slaves, he could only endure that anger. No longer proud, he came to Han Xiao. With a voice that only two of them could hear, he said angrily, "Alright, you win. You only need the Silvers, right? They're yours. The other slaves have nothing to do with you. I can buy them back, give me a price."

Han Xiao had the upper hand, and Horlaide could only endure the pain and give up the Silvers. He was ready to make a huge sacrifice and exchange for other slaves, otherwise his business would be done for.

"I just said, there are only free men here." Han Xiao shrugged.

Horlaide got the wrong idea. His expression turned livid, and he said, "Don't go too far! You want all the slaves, but the Head Butler won't let you get away with it!"

"Take it all? Hehehe, don't you understand? They are not slaves anymore," Han Xiao said coldly.

"Are-are you insane?" Horlaide said in a shocking tone. He had thought Han Xiao wanted more money, but now he understood. Han Xiao was planning to let all the slaves go, really giving them freedom. It was too wasteful. He found it difficult to understand. What did Han Xiao want to get out of saving those unrelated slaves for free?

At this time, an aircraft landed. Head Butler Jenny and her people rushed to the scene. Horlaide's eyes lit up, as if he had found someone to rely on. He gave Han Xiao a stare and hastily ran up to Jenny.

"Head Butler, I—I hope to have my slaves back..." Horlaide explained what was going on and complained, "That newly joined Black Star wants to release my slaves, how can he do that? He's disrespecting you."

"I know." Jenny nodded lightly and walked toward Han Xiao.

Horlaide immediately felt confident, he followed behind and kept sneering at Han Xiao.

Jenny came to the front of Han Xiao and said, "Black Star, you did a good job. If you had not disrupted the enemies' actions, they might have succeeded. It would have been a heavy blow for the Dragon Guards' prestige, and it is just when the Dragon Emperor is not at home. You did well. I will add this contribution to your file, increasing your trust authority. People who make contributions will receive physical reward. You can ask for monetary reward or something else..."

She paused and added, "Although it's a little late... Welcome to Floating Dragon."

+300 Floating Dragon Reputation.

Current relationship: Neutral (700/1000)

Han Xiao nodded, not surprised by Jenny's attitude at all. When he was chatting with Wilsander earlier, Jenny had joined the communication channel as well. He had contacted Jenny privately long ago and achieved a consensus. Only Horlaide had been in the dark, still thinking that he had found a life-saving straw.

The more Horlaide listened, the more he felt something was wrong. Why did Jenny not sound like she was helping him but was praising Han Xiao? He suddenly could not sit still any longer. So, he carefully cut in and said, "Head Butler, about the slaves..."

Jenny glanced at him and said, "We only buy and sell slaves; we never catch them ourselves. Since they are free, let them go."

As always, Jenny handled official things the official way. Floating Dragon was a neutral organization, and they would at most partake in the slave trade as an intermediary business. They would not catch slaves themselves.

Since Han Xiao was the hero of this case, she would take care of this, giving him a suitable amount of privileges, agreeing to Han Xiao's actions. Moreover, the profit of the slave business was basic, and every year, Horlaide also corrupted part of the sales numbers. She had always known but just did not bother, so that day, she had no reason to speak up for Horlaide. (Boxno vel. co m)

Horlaide was stunned. A sense of indignation echoed in his chest, almost exploding it. Looking at Han Xiao's mocking expression, he said uncontrollably, "I suspect that the attack was led by Black Star in the first place in order to save the Silvers. Yes, it must be so. The brutes were all his hired helpers, and by the way, he also let go of a group of them. That group was certainly his people!"

The more Horlaide spoke, the more agitated he became. Although it was a flash of insight, he felt that it was a very logical guess.

Han Xiao raised his eyebrows and said casually, "We are colleagues, how can you frame me?"

Although Horlaide dumped the pot to him, which was a very malicious act, this guess did not make sense at all because they had an alibi, and it came from Jenny.

Jenny had been unsettled by this new guy, so she had arranged people to monitor them secretly, and this time, that became the most powerful piece of evidence! Therefore, Jenny was completely unaffected. She frowned and said, "That's it, Horlaide. You're attempting to frame your colleague for nothing. You're temporarily suspended, and when you've calmed down, I'll give you a new job."

Horlaide's heart turned cold. Knowing that the situation had not been fixed, he gnashed his teeth in hatred. Suddenly, he remembered that he had dealt with Han Xiao earlier with this method too, and Han Xiao took revenge with the same method. This time, he became the helpless party. A sense of weakness flooded his body. His eyes rolled, and he fell straight down, passing out once again.

Anyway, nothing could be changed, so he might as well sleep for a while longer. That way, he would not die from the anger from being laughed at by those around him.

Not caring about Horlaide, Han Xiao coughed and said, "Jenny, I..."

"You should call me Head... Forget it, call me by my name then." A strange look flashed by Jenny's face. Usually, only boss Ames, Wilsander, and Haier called her by her name because her style made her subordinates fear her. This was the first time that she had heard a subordinate call her by her name, so she felt a little strange.

"I know the identity of the people who fled. They are not ordinary brutes..." Han Xiao kept his voice low and said, "They come from DarkStar."

Jenny's eyes focused, and she said with a low voice, "When you're done with the things here, immediately find me to do a detailed report."

Then, Jennie hurriedly left with her people, leaving only the logistics group there to clean the ruins.

Han Xiao and others came to the side. All rescued slaves were staring at him with different looks on their faces. They finally had their freedom, and they did not want to lose it again. They were not sure how they were going to be arranged next.

Han Xiao stepped out of the crowd, looked around, and said, "My name is Black Star, leader of Black Star Mercenary Group. Remember my name. I gave you freedom, so you owe me. Maybe, if one day we meet again, I might need your help. Now, go."

All the slaves froze. One asked while trembling, "We... Can we really leave?"

Han Xiao waved his hand and signaled that they could go at any time.

A man carefully walked away, looking back every few steps. Eventually, after a few dozen meters, he found that no one had stopped him. He was overjoyed.

"We're really free!" The crowd could not believe that freedom had come so easily.

The slave that walked out first did not run away immediately. Instead, he turned around with a face of gratitude and gave Han Xiao a native sign of appreciation. He shouted, "Black Star, I will remember this name."

One by one, the slaves left with gratitude, showing Han Xiao a variety of etiquettes. Han Xiao did not feel much, but the players behind him felt a sense of accomplishment and comfort. They held their heads high and felt that they had done a good thing.

Herlous was the most empathetic. He patted Han Xiao on the shoulder and praised, "Beautifully done."

All members looked at the figure of Han Xiao with eyes full of goodwill, and at this moment, their approval of Han Xiao increased. To have the players love a character, in addition to strength, there was another condition, charm, and approval. Han Xiao had been creating a very positive image in the eyes of the players, and the act of releasing the slaves made his image increase once again.

Bun-Hit-Dog recorded this scene faithfully.

Han Xiao turned around. Surprisingly, there were several slaves of the same race who remained in place and did not leave.

“Why don’t you go?”

These few people obviously knew each other. They looked somewhat similar to one another, They exchanged looks, and one of them said, “Us brothers were once mercenaries, but when we followed a small mercenary group and carried out a mission, we were met with danger. Most of the members died, and only the few of us here were fortunate enough to escape. However, we were then caught by the slaver and imprisoned for more than a year. Our team has long been destroyed, and we have no place to go. We hope that you can take us, give us a job. You are our savior, so we are more than willing to work for you.”