

The Mechanic 471

Chapter 471: Shattered Light (1)

After becoming a War Mechanic, Han Xiao had five new abilities on his interface. Even without looking at them, he was familiar with the effects of these abilities.

[Application Level Machinery Affinity] had more Machinery Affinity bonus than [Advanced Machinery Affinity]. It was the core of the Mechanic class, so he definitely had to level it up. Since he only had 300 million experience left, he only leveled it up to LV5. Every level gave five percent Machinery Affinity, so his Machinery Affinity increased by another twenty-five percent.

[Waste Modification]'s prerequisite was one of the three abilities from the compression technology, [Basic Machinery Construction]. Their effects were somewhat similar. [Waste Modification]'s effect was if a machine was destroyed and became a pile of scrap parts, this ability could recover these parts and turn them into the original machinery. Of course, the machinery would have a twenty-five percent decrease in attributes and be one or two grades lower. Also, this ability could be used multiple times on the same target until the target's grade reached Gray or had a seventy-five percent decrease in attributes. This meant that this ability could be used a maximum of three times on the same target.

As the name suggested, this ability was a highly efficient waste recycling ability. Its effect was much stronger in actual battle than stated in the introduction. Furthermore, it was one of the reasons that the War Mechanic class had a 'War' prefix. It gave Mechanics many more tactical choices. In Han Xiao's previous life, only when the players reached their fifth and sixth main class level in Version 3.0 did the Mechanics first showcase their strength. The War Mechanic class was very complex and hard to master; its combos were difficult to use, and it required a very strong tactical mindset. The War Mechanic class was the most difficult class to operate among the five classes.

[Mechanical Force Overload] was a normal boosting ability, similar to [Surging Mechanical Force] and [Overload] but with higher numbers. The difference between them was that [Surging Mechanical Force] had no side effect, [Overload] decreased the machinery's durability, and [Mechanical Force Overload] would cause the machinery to enter a cooldown where they could not be used. It was not a very impactful ability. However, when it was used together with [Overload] on the same machine, the enhancement would increase by another forty percent, and the durability would decrease by thirty-three percent immediately. Han Xiao had used this ability a lot in the past, but he had only used it on the machinery that he was willing to sacrifice.

The most special ability was [Mechanical Force Combat Technique], which was still 'Locked' till the High-End Knowledge [Advanced Electromagnetic Forcefield] was learned. What was special about this ability was that it was not an ability that enhanced the machinery but the Mechanic himself.

The Mechanical Force was transformed from Electromagnetic Energy, so it was also electromagnetic. This ability allowed the Mechanics to still be able to fight even without machinery, just like how every Mage had a certain amount of melee battle capability.

The talent [Battlefield Wisdom] was a fixed talent of the Mechanic class. After entering battle, this talent would provide an additional one percent Intelligence every minute until it reached a maximum of fifteen

percent. Together with the talent unlocked in the previous main class stage [Machinery Analytical Comprehension] that provided one percent Machinery Affinity for every ten Intelligence, it allowed Mechanics to become stronger as their level increased.

During battles between players, a Mechanic's machinery continuously weakens over the course of a battle, and this talent filled the shortcomings of the Mechanics' capability in long battles. When the Mechanic class was fully shaped, it would become very comprehensive in all kinds of battles. One of the basic tactics used by Mechanics was to stall for fifteen minutes with mechanic traps till they gained the maximum bonus, then released all the machinery to deal explosive damage... also known as the Bladder Tactic.

Han Xiao only increased the Machinery Affinity abilities by a few levels and did not touch anything else, spending about 40 million experience. He was left with about 250 million experience, which he planned to save and spend slowly. He then spent the ninety-six Free Attribute Points on his interface all in Intelligence as usual.

Although he hesitated for a split second when he saw the number '1' on his Luck attribute, he did not spend any of it on Luck. Even though his Luck attribute was hard to look at, putting any points in Luck would not be of much use to him. Luck was related to item drop rate and some abilities, but he did not depend on luck for anything, nor did he have any abilities that were related to Luck. Furthermore, just a few points in Luck would be useless. If he wanted to take that path, he would have to at least put in dozens of points. Even then, it would still not make much of a difference. Hence, he continued to put all his Free Attribute Points into Intelligence.

After he finished allocating his Free Attribute Points, his attributes after Promotion were laid out clearly.

Level: 116

Main Class: Mechanic

Race: Void Prowler (Human Form)

Attributes: 163 STR, 349 DEX, 306 END, 872 INT, 102 MYS, 41 CHA, 1 LUK

Free Attribute Points: 0

Potential Points: 55

Health: 27,038

Stamina: 25,880

Energy: 7,700 [LVL 9]

Energy LVL 9 Bonus: +53 STR, +72 DEX, +80 END, +90 INT, +55 MYS, +7,520 Maximum Health, +60% Machinery Affinity

Power Level: 7,637 Ona

Grade: B

[You're a skilled Galaxy warrior. Even those with the same Grade as you won't mess with you easily.]

7,700 Energy Rank, yet to achieve B+. However, my actual combat capability is on par with Grade B+. The standard of Grade A is 10,000 Ona. At this pace, I should reach the Calamity Grade twenty to thirty levels earlier than the players at around level 140.

Han Xiao nodded with a smile.

I'm now level 116, and I still have one Mission Completion Card, so the only thing that I am short of is Experience. In order to rapidly gain Experience and quickly level up, harvesting the players is the best way. Therefore, as long as my plan is successfully carried out in the Mutation Disaster incident and I guide the Planet Aquamarine players to my faction, I will be able to reach Grade A in the next version!

After letting the cleaning robot clear the blood stains on the floor, Han Xiao walked out of the Simulated Combat Room. As soon as he returned to the hall, the people there turned and looked at him with surprise.

"Am I hallucinating, or did you... change?" Herlous asked suspiciously.

Sylvia walked around Han Xiao a few times, patted her chest, and sighed with relief. "I almost thought I mistook someone else for you."

"Is it that obvious?" Han Xiao's mouth twitched. His looks did indeed change after the Race Evolution, but he did not think it was a noticeable change at all.

"Your looks did not change much; its mainly the vibe that you're giving off. You seem to be more mysterious. Also, I don't remember you having this crystal on your forehead..." Herlous felt a shiver down his spine. "Strange, I'm feeling a certain pressure from you, but we should have about the same strength. What did you do when you locked yourself in that room?"

Of course, they did not know that Han Xiao could quickly complete his Race Evolution through the interface while it would take a very long time for others to fully complete the Race Evolution. The difference in the time that it took was incomparable.

"I'm stronger than before." Han Xiao smiled and waved his hand. "I won't explain the details. Anyway, I'm still me."

"Do you also have some special training tactic like Feidin?" Herlous asked.

Feidin, who was meditating, opened his eyes and asked, "Who's calling me?"

"Shut up!"

"Oh."

Herlous always had a problem with Feidin. He snorted, looked at Han Xiao, and asked, "Are we going to Noriosse next?"

Han Xiao nodded. "Yes. I've completed what I wanted to do. Ames asked me to go to Noriosse and find her teacher."

He was much stronger, but it would still take a very long time for him to reach Ames' level. Before then, Han Xiao did not mind having someone to rely on. After all, Galaxy was so enormous; there were too many strong individuals and organizations. Furthermore, Ames had saved him once, so it was only right that he helped her do small things like this as much as he could. Having a good relationship with a Beyond Grade A was definitely beneficial, not to mention that he was under the Dragon Emperor's command.

This time, Herlous intercepted Han Xiao and said, "Before going to Noriosse, I want to return to Planet Sunil and retrieve my armor, [Shattered Light]. Planet Sunil is nearby anyway, so it won't take long."

Han Xiao's eyes sparkled.

He had been interested in the Commander Class armor for a very long time. Back then, he did not have the ability to work on it, but now, he satisfied the requirements.

"No problem, we will go together."

...

The spaceship slowly landed on the plains outside the Forest City. This had once been the battlefield to fight against the Catastrophe, a place where blood spilled formed rivers. Now, it had been cleaned up and was an empty, burnt ground.

The six layers of defenses outside Forest City were already built. Pairs of armored guards patrolled the area, and vehicles drove into the forest to hunt from time to time.

As soon as they landed, many guards surrounded them and lined up to welcome them. Herlous had contacted the Sunil government before they arrived. When they disembarked the spaceship, those guards loudly yelled a phrase in the Sunil language, expressing their admiration to Herlous.

"Let's go, I have already contacted the officials, so we will be heading to the research lab to retrieve my armor." Herlous smiled.

They followed the soldiers and entered Forest City. Compared to a year earlier, there were not many changes other than the fact that there were even fewer people on the streets. It was probably because more youngsters had joined the military forces.

"Are you Herlous? Oh my god, my hero!"

This time, the pedestrians around them noticed Herlous. They surrounded him excitedly, and even Han Xiao and the others were pushed aside.

Herlous hastily put up a friendly smile and chatted with them for a while. As more and more people joined in, he could not handle their passion anymore, so he hurriedly squeezed out of the crowd. The few of them took a few turns and finally escaped from the crowd.

"You're very popular, I see." Han Xiao laughed.

Herlous was embarrassed. "The officials need a role model to boost the residents' confidence, so they replayed my stories every day on television and radio to praise me. Everyone in this city knows me."

"National hero, so cool." Sylvia's eyes were shining.

"Cool my ass, a hero's ending is always sacrifice," Herlous protested. He still remembered Han Xiao's 'foresight'.

When they sneaked up to the doors of the government in the middle of the city, there were no more residents around. Herlous approached and reported his arrival. Very soon, a few military officers walked out and greeted him. These were matters of the Sunils; Han Xiao had no interest in listening, so he paid no attention along the way.

After talking for a while, Herlous beckoned the others, and they walked into the restricted military site, following the officers. After passing by metal gates one after another, they came to a sealed research lab. It was very spacious and even had a garage that stored machinery in the process of being modified.

They came to an experiment room. Herlous' Commander Class armor was placed on the experiment table. Ten or so researchers were surrounding it and testing its parameters.

The officer walked up to the researchers and said, "This is General Herlous; he's here to collect his armor. These are the permits."

Han Xiao's eyebrows shot up. He poked Herlous' back and softly asked, "When did you become a general?"

Herlous grinned and replied softly as well. "It's just on paper."

The Head of Research was experimenting excitedly when he heard the officer. He glanced over Han Xiao and the others with an impatient expression, walked up to the gate, and said, "I thought we agreed on giving it to me for research. Why are you suddenly taking it away?"

"I heard you have already achieved some results, so I want to take my armor back," Herlous said. "It's very useful to me."

Unwillingness was clearly written on the Head of Research's face. "How can we return it to you? This armor is related to Sunil's top technology; it's a national treasure and doesn't belong to you alone."

"Er... but I was the one that gave it to the nation. I don't see what's wrong with me wanting it back."

"Aren't you a national hero? Are you not even willing to make such a small contribution?" The Head of Research frowned.

Herlous sighed. He gave a look to the officer beside him, and the officer took out the documents that proved that Herlous' request was authorized by the superiors. The researchers saw it and had no choice but to obey the order. They took the armor, placed it into a metal box, and handed it to Herlous.

"I got it, let's go." Herlous touched the box and smiled.

The Head of Research was trembling with rage. "If the armor is with us, we will definitely be able to achieve greater results and provide more help for the race. You're too selfish!"

Herlous' face changed slightly, but he did not say anything. However, just as he was about to leave, he realized that Han Xiao's footsteps stopped.

Han Xiao turned around and walked up to the Head of Research. He grabbed his head, forcing the Head of Research to look him in the eyes, and coldly said, "I remember when he followed me through difficult battles covered in wounds. I remember his misery when he lost an arm. I remember his agony when I planted a prosthetic into him. If not for your bullsh*t race, he could have a very comfortable life in the vast universe. So, what I don't understand is, how is he selfish?"

"Is it because he's a good man, so you dare to insult him ruthlessly, knowing that he will not hurt you?"

Han Xiao suddenly turned into Void Form. His pitch-black eyes stared at the Head of Research as he gently said, "But I'm not like him. If you dare speak another word of insult to my subordinate, I will stuff your head up your ass."

Chapter 472: Shattered Light (2)

"Yo—you're not human!" The Head of Research was terrified. His legs were soft, but his head was grabbed by Han Xiao, so he could not even collapse.

Han Xiao's Void Form only lasted a moment before disappearing. The Head of Research, who was staring at him, was the only one who saw his changes. Han Xiao's sudden change in appearance shocked the man.

Void creatures were not murderous, but their mysterious origin and strong powers could strike fear into the hearts of most intelligent species.

Han Xiao let go and allowed the guy to collapse onto the ground. He then looked around; the other researchers were all cowering in the corner and shivering. Those Sunils were just ordinary people, so the pressure that they felt from Han Xiao was because of his far superior level of life.

On the side, the military officers did not stop him and chose to ignore his actions.

"There's no need to hurt him. Let's go, Black Star." Herlous was quite touched. He did not want to bother about it initially, but he did not expect Han Xiao to speak for him or empathize with his words.

It was true. If not for the sake of his race, he could totally not care about them. As a Grade B Super, he could have a very comfortable life in the galaxy. Why would he need to take on the tough life of a mercenary? Those Sunil Supers who left were doing exactly that.

After following Han Xiao through so many adventures, Herlous had already come to view Han Xiao as a close comrade and reliable friend. Han Xiao was someone whom he could trust to have his back. Now that he was contributing to the Black Star Mercenary Group, it was not solely because of Han Xiao's promise. Images of them fighting alongside each other flashed through his mind, and Herlous felt a warmth in his heart.

The sun was setting. They left the restricted military ground and left the city, returning to the spaceship.

This time, Herlous grabbed Han Xiao and laughed wholeheartedly. “Haha, I don’t actually care about what others say. When I was opening a bar, I heard these things too many times... but I appreciate it nonetheless.”

“It was just frightening someone, small matter. People like you should be more respected.” Han Xiao shrugged.

In order to have the officers contribute willingly, building a spiritual bond was crucial. He also had to keep up his image. If he wanted to build an image as a reliable leader, protecting his friends was the most fundamental thing that he had to do. These main characters all had minds of their own. If his actions opposed their creed, they would have conflicts among themselves.

Han Xiao’s position was always neutral; everything that he did depended on the benefits and his mood, be it obeying the laws or stirring up chaos. Obviously, in such a situation where he could gain favorability just by expressing his attitude, he would definitely not miss the opportunity.

With a smile, Herlous raised the armor box in his hands and said, “Speaking of which, you have not experienced my combat capability in my final form, have you? Let’s have a go at it!”

“Now? Are you sure?” Han Xiao’s eyebrows raised. “Do you want to end this beautiful day with an overwhelming defeat?”

“Well, aren’t you confident?” Herlous was very certain. “Shattered Light is the Commander Class armor that my brother tailor-made for me. It can increase my strength by more than fifty percent.”

He sparred with Han Xiao frequently. Most of the time, he was crushed and could only be a training target. He had been frustrated about it for a very long time and had been waiting for the day that he could erase this shame and regain his pride.

He felt that today was the day.

He felt that it would be very difficult for Han Xiao to beat him after he got back his armor.

“Then I shall be gentler. After all, I’m the one that will repair your armor if I break it.”

Han Xiao smiled. He could use this opportunity to reverse engineer the Commander Class armor’s blueprint.

In a field under the sunset, the two of them stood two hundred meters away from each other. To them, this distance could be reached with just one dash.

Herlous wore Shattered Light. His face was covered by the helmet, and his armor was silver blue and intricate like a magnificent ancient knight’s armor. Two soft, pure white metal plates that looked like cloths extended from each of his shoulders, hanging behind his back like a cape.

Hum!

An enormous, powerful white flame shot into the sky, and rings of shock waves spread out from the center, stirring up dust. It looked incredible. The ten-meter-long Battleship Slicing Blade was entangled in sharp, silver wind. The Shattered Light armor enhanced his Pugilist Energy.

The troops in the camp far away felt this shocking energy wave. Guards rushed to the edge of the camp and looked over with shock.

“Much stronger indeed.” Han Xiao’s eyes sparkled. From what he saw with his eyes, the energy wave emitted by Herlous while wearing Shattered Light was more than thirty percent stronger.

Boom!

Herlous slashed down with his blade, and a thirty-meter-tall silver energy arc slit open the ground, charging toward Han Xiao like a tsunami. Han Xiao’s vision was instantly filled with silver light.

The compressed orbs expanded, and Void Dragon quickly attached itself to his body. Han Xiao stacked his hands together and aimed forward. With a surging gray light, the Void Jet Spray shattered the energy arc just inches away.

Swoosh!

The next moment, a sharp blade dashed past the remnants of the energy arc and slashed down. Herlous had followed behind the energy arc like an arrow shot from a bow. His attacks were precise and quick, closing the distance in no time and not giving Han Xiao any chance to deploy his machinery.

“A tactic I guessed correctly without even thinking.” Han Xiao moved aside and dodged with ease. The blade slashed into the ground; the impact spread out under the surface and turned the ground within a ten-meter radius into cracked rocks.

Han Xiao swung his hand, and a black electromagnetic scythe unfolded and appeared.

“I got this close, and you still have the energy to talk?” Herlous snorted. He twisted the blade handle. The Battleship Slicing Blade retracted to about one meter long, suitable for close range combat.

Clank!

In the blink of an eye, the scythe and the blade clashed with each other more than a dozen times.

The two of them moved around swiftly, and the impacts from their clash turned the ground within a mile into a mess. The impact waves from a battle between Grade B Supers could destroy an entire city. The Sunil soldiers spectating from far away continuously exclaimed with shock.

Such terrifying individual destructive powers had these young soldiers astonished and admiring.

Herlous’ powerful Energy was like a tsunami, striking one wave after another. When Pugilist reached this grade, their every move could cause huge destruction. Their body was their strongest weapon, especially for someone like Herlous who fought so aggressively.

Melee combat was the strength of the Pugilist class, but Han Xiao was not afraid at all. His various bonuses were not decorations. [One Against the World] alone gave him an eleven percent bonus in all attributes, and [Battlefield Wisdom] had started to stack up once the battle started.

Although I'm not afraid of melee combat, my strength is suppressed in this situation. Normal methods can't restrain Pugilists with such strong destructive powers. Han Xiao blocked the blade with his scythe and simultaneously activated [Repel—Thorns], reflecting a part of the damage.

Herlous' entire body suddenly shook as he was pushed away. His legs split open two fissures in the ground.

Swoosh!

Another compressed orb was activated, and two mechanical wings expanded behind Han Xiao. The wings released a hot wind, and Han Xiao levitated in the air. Although he could build anti-gravity devices, they were too large to become independent parts of the mechanical suit. He had yet to combine the blueprint for mini anti-gravity devices.

His ability to fly still came from the wings. Their power output was already enhanced, so reaching Supersonic speed was a breeze.

Clank!

Han Xiao opened his arms in midair, and almost a hundred compressed orbs shot out from the pipes. They landed on the ground and quickly expanded, turning into artilleries and many mechanical beasts.

The rain of bullets focused on Herlous; his armor was covered in countless fire sparkles.

Even though Han Xiao had yet to update and enhance his machinery and was still using gunpowder and electromagnetic artillery, his Machinery Affinity received higher bonuses after his Promotion, so their damage was increased too. At least it did not deal the minimum '1' damage due to not being able to penetrate Herlous' defenses.

Countless '-5' and '-6' damage numbers popped up continuously on Herlous' body, mixed with the odd '20' to '30' dealt by electromagnetic artilleries.

The damage dealt on one single instance was not high, but the horrifying attack frequency caused damage numbers to pop up from Herlous' body like a waterfall.

This time, Herlous growled, "This tactic... is not useful against me anymore!"

Chapter 473: Shattered Light (3)

Bang!

Before the mechanical beasts pounced, Herlous stomped the floor, cracked open the ground, and jumped into the sky.

The white cape on his shoulders suddenly started dancing. His Energy turned into power and gave these two soft alloys the ability to hover through some special method. Herlous had started flying! He jumped in the sky and charged toward Han Xiao.

Clunk!

The Battleship Slicing Blade collided with Han Xiao's armor, making Han Xiao fly back and roll in the air.

This armor can fly?

Han Xiao stabilized his position and squinted. A Pugilist that could fly would be a much bigger threat.

Han Xiao realized that Herlous had hidden this up his sleeves. If he had yet to go through Promotion, he probably would not have been able to beat Herlous in this state.

Not only was he not shocked, he was delighted. The stronger Herlous was, the stronger his mercenary group would be.

"Now this..." Under the mechanical suit helmet, Han Xiao grinned. "This is interesting!"

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On the ground, Aroshia, Feidin, and the others looked up at the intense fight in the sky.

"Herlous the Fraud can fly, too. Looks like it's the end for captain. A Mechanic that is forced into melee combat with a Pugilist is basically dead." The oldest Volga tutted.

"Teacher won't lose!" Sylvia's palms were sweaty, her knees weak, as she watched the battle closely.

The two of them were flipping midair. The mechanical beasts on the ground were useless, and the artillery could not hit Herlous due to his speed. Herlous' combat style was smooth, swift, and left no openings, giving Han Xiao no time to increase the distance between them. The way that Sylvia saw it, Han Xiao was clearly disadvantaged.

However, she had an indescribable confidence in her teacher.

The oldest Volga brother's eyes sparkled. "Want to make a bet? I bet that the captain will lose, and you will bet on him to win—what do you say?"

Sylvia was troubled. "My teacher says that gambling is a bad habit."

"Bullsh*t, he only says that because he can't win," the oldest Volga brother said. "Let's bet 300 Enas. Are you this unconfident in the captain?"

"Okay, I'll take it!" Sylvia clenched her teeth and agreed to the bet.

Hum—

Suddenly, a formless disruptive electromagnetic field expanded from Han Xiao's helmet. Herlous' mechanical suit vision instantly turned black, and he lost his sight for a second.

Herlous quickly opened his helmet and observed with his eyes. Seeing that Han Xiao did not get far, he immediately slashed Han Xiao's back sideways with his blade

"You want to run? Have you asked for permission from my blade?" Herlous laughed.

However, this slash cut Han Xiao in half without any resistance. Herlous was shocked.

Then, the two halves of 'Han Xiao' shook like ripples and vanished.

Void Mirror Image!

“What ability is this? Why have I not seen it before?” Herlous suddenly had a bad feeling.

With his opportunity, Han Xiao discreetly returned to the ground directly under Herlous. A new machine had appeared under his feet. It was a huge metal disc that was placed flat upon the ground. At the heart of it were three equilateral triangle shaped holes emitting a dim blue light—these three holes formed a larger hole, which was pointed at Herlous.

Hum!

Before Herlous could move, the triangular hole shot out a wide, translucent blue light beam that covered him. He lost control of his body and quickly descended. With a loud clank, he was tightly sucked and fixed onto this machine, unable to escape quickly.

This was a mechanical trap. It was initially used by spaceships to draw in objects and not used for combat at all. It was very difficult for it to hit a high-speed target, but if it successfully hit, it would be a very strong constraining method. Shamefully, in his previous life, Han Xiao had been the first player that used this in actual combat.

Han Xiao snapped his fingers. All the artillery aimed at Herlous, who could not move and fired. At the same time, he activated [Overload], [Surging Mechanical Force], and [Mechanical Force Overload] for all of his artillery before activating [Gene Liberation].

Although he only got the lowest 2.2 times damage bonus, it was more than enough to end this battle.

Boom!

Thick smoke from the attacks completely covered Herlous.

“Stop stop stop! I admit defeat! Stop hitting, my armor is going to explode!”

Herlous’ panicking voice came out from thick smoke. Han Xiao slowly walked to the side, stopped the artillery, and deactivated the trap.

Herlous stood up. The magnificent and cool Shattered Light was covered in burn marks and cracks. Herlous was heartbroken by how damaged it was.

Not long ago, he had totally held the upper hand, but he had never expected that one single flaw would cause him to lose in an instant. When did Black Star become so strong? Herlous could not beat him even by wearing Shattered Light. Why did the difference between them not grow smaller but larger instead?

He had thought that he could finally defeat Han Xiao and erase his shame, but now he was more frustrated.

“How much of your strength did you use?”

“Not all anyway of it. You mad?” Han Xiao grinned. As the weak spot of the Mechanic class was melee combat, he was most not afraid of that. After playing the Mechanic class for so many years in his

previous life, the people whom he had beaten who tried to force him into melee combat could stack up to a hill.

However, although Han Xiao did win, he still discovered some problems. These cheap styles that he had been using looked rather weak when he used it on an opponent who had the same Grade as him; he had to use the explosive abilities in order to win.

There's nothing wrong with the tactics. It seems like I need to build stronger machines.

Herlous was still grinding his teeth. He was used to being aggressive in battle and fighting the enemy head on, but he felt very restricted when he fought Han Xiao, and it made him feel uncomfortable. It looked like he always had the upper hand, but it was more like he was following Han Xiao's plan. The battle seemed intense, but only he knew how well Han Xiao dodged his attacks. He had only landed a few hits.

Herlous could not maximize his fighting skills as a Pugilist at all. So, all in all, it had been a very uncomfortable and restrained fight for him.

"Alright, stop moping. Not like it's the first time you've lost to me. Take it off, I'll repair for you."

Han Xiao patted Herlous' shoulders and comforted him.

On the other side, Sylvia's face was red from excitement. She extended her hand and chuckled. "300 Enas, a bet's a bet."

"My hard-earned money!" The oldest Volga brother whined in regret.

Regret of trusting that Herlous!

...

The spaceship took off and left Planet Sunil. In the machinery modification room on the spaceship, Han Xiao repaired Shattered Light. Since he satisfied the prerequisite knowledges, he successfully got the Commander Class armor blueprint after paying some Experience.

It was armor specifically for Supers, so its attributes were stronger and could enhance one's Energy. Other than it not having many functions, its performance was not much lower than his Amphiptere. Plus, in comparison, its materials were much cheaper, so the cost of mass producing it was much lower.

Han Xiao had already gotten all of the armor sets from Sunil—Enlistee Class, NCO Class, and Commander Class. He could sell these to the players gradually, which would basically be the first faction specialty. After all, Sunil would not sell their top armor, so the players would have to farm Faction Favorability if they wanted to buy from them. Han Xiao, however, was selling them for money.

Spending money could save time, and time was priceless. This way, the players would be buying their priceless time with money.

How worth it was that?

Noriosse was very far, located at the border of the Shattered Star Ring like one of the gates into the Star Ring. Even with the various stargates, the spaceship would still have to travel many days before arriving.

This time was more than enough for Han Xiao to build new, stronger machinery to make himself stronger.

Furthermore, he would have the time to think about what preparations he had to make for the upcoming Version 2.0.

The Promotion difficulty was over, so Han Xiao felt very relieved. He had solved it much earlier than he had expected, so it meant that he saved quite a lot of time.

After he completes Ames' mission, he would officially start making preparations for his plan.

It's just finding someone, so it won't take long.

Chapter 474: Shattered Star Ring's Door—Noriosse!

Many days later...

A metal planet was getting closer. It had no green forests, no gray ground, and no blue seas. Metal completely covered the planet's surface.

"Destination detected, hum... Arriving at Noriosse, hum... Surface temperature suitable, hum..."

In the spaceship hall, a round, chubby robot was speaking in a very mechanical voice. Its cylindrical body looked like a can, with two long, thin mechanical arms on both sides, and was about one meter tall. At the bottom of its body was a wheel that allowed it to move.

Suddenly, a big hand grabbed this robot's head and lifted it up. The robot seemed to be panicking, its two mechanical arms swinging randomly in the air. With its round robotic body, it looked strangely adorable.

"Got caught, hum..." the robot said.

This time, the man wearing a black shirt sitting on the sofa spoke.

"Put it down. How many times have I said, Herlous, don't play with my robot!"

Herlous shrugged and put the robot down. As soon as this little guy returned to the ground, it quickly rolled to beside the sofa and tried to hide behind Han Xiao's legs while shivering.

Han Xiao petted the robot's metal head gently.

Herlous scratched his head and said, "Can this artificial intelligence you built really fight?"

"Can't you remember its name? It's called Phillip!" Han Xiao said. "It's still semi-finished."

During the time the spaceship travelled, Han Xiao occupied himself. He had combined quite a few stronger blueprints, updated his combat machinery, and used the new [Advanced Artificial Intelligence Technology] that he had obtained to build Phillip—an artificial intelligence. Compared to the smart chips, the calculation speed, logical structure, and data capacity of an artificial intelligence was many times higher.

There were a few types of artificial intelligences, among which there were two types that were more special. One was giving the system its own virtual personality but still retaining its fixed logics, simulating an intelligent creature. The benefit of this was that artificial intelligences made this way would always obey orders. The other was giving the system a true independent mind; it would have imagination and would be able to think. It would only follow fundamental orders.

Clearly, the latter was smarter and livelier and would have the potential to become a Virtual Life or Mechanical Life. Of course, the risks were higher as well.

For the time being, Han Xiao only needed a good assistant, so Phillip was the former. The reason for it being semi-finished was that some logical orders were not set up yet. Its virtual personality still had flaws and needed to be improved. Nonetheless, running it was not a problem. Phillip could download data through the network, but it would not affect its fixed virtual personality. Han Xiao later built a robot body for it.

Regarding why its name was Phillip, this was the name of his pet turtle in his previous life. To lazy people that wanted a pet but did not like cleaning, turtles were the perfect choice. It would probably not die even if its owner died.

Han Xiao looked out at the planet that was closing in and said in a deep voice, "We'll be arriving soon. This is one of the interchanges into the Shattered Star Ring, and there will be many people from other Star Fields. It's unknown how many strong Supers will there be. We have to keep a low profile and not cause any unnecessary trouble. The goal is to find the Dragon Emperor's teacher. Ames is rushing back from another Star Field. Even if her carrier is very fast, it would still take quite some time. Until she arrives, we will look for clues on Noriosse."

Noriosse was at the border of Shattered Star Ring. This planet did not belong to any civilization. Very long ago, a large financial group had their eyes on the strategic location of this planet and bought it. Back then, this planet had just been a desolate planet with a serial number, its environment very harsh. That financial group had modified the planet, using countless devices to change its ecological environment and make it habitable. Hence, this place became an interchange to enter the Shattered Star Ring.

As there were no planets anywhere near Noriosse and even the nearest stargate was at least three days of jumping away, many travelers would choose to rest there to refuel, restock supplies, repair spaceship, and have some fun. Therefore, that financial group made a lot of profit and earned back their investment in less than fifty years.

The prospering economy there attracted many galactic residents. They smelled financial opportunities and opened stores there. Many commercial organizations started operating there as well. Countless travelers gathered in Noriosse, but Noriosse did not tolerate criminals like Floating Dragon did; their wanted status was effective there. Hence, almost no galactic pirates or wanderers went to Noriosse.

Nonetheless, the financial group that controlled Noriosse deployed many frigates outside its atmosphere to prevent galactic pirates from having their eyes on this prosperous area. They also set the harbor outside the planet, not allowing any spaceship to enter the atmosphere of the planet, not even the frigates. This was to prevent frigates being stolen by someone to enter the planet. Furthermore, the

financial group also deployed a large energy shield that shrouded Noriosse's atmosphere, guarding against long-range attacks that would destroy its surface.

All visitors had to leave their spaceships in the port. If any spaceship forcefully entered the atmosphere, the frigate would send out a warning immediately, and if the warning was not taken, they would fire on the spot. If travelers wanted to go to the surface city for entertainment, they had to take the ten thousand meter lift that connected the sky with the ground.

These were the security measures of Noriosse, extremely tight but made the travelers feel safe.

However, in the past, there had been galactic pirates that did not give up. Some tried to force their way in and were blasted into ashes by the frigates; some robbed on the surface and were captured by the security forces waiting for them at the lift. The situation that happened most was, when the galactic pirates robbed others on the surface, they were killed by the travelers that happened to pass by. No one knew who these travelers from other Star Fields were.

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon!

At a closer distance, five enormous metal space stations could be seen floating above different locations in Noriosse. These were five outer atmosphere ports. They were filled with all sorts of guarding turrets and surrounded by a large number of frigates.

The spaceship parked at the closest port. Han Xiao registered for spaceship storage and brought the others to the lift area. It was overwhelmingly crowded, and the queue was full of all kinds of species and creatures.

Aroshia looked up and said, "This place feels familiar. I might have come here before..."

This time, a notice popped up on the interface!

Han Xiao looked at it, and to his surprise, the progress of [Reboot]'s second round had increased by one.

Looks like Noriosse is one of the locations in Aroshia's memory pieces. She came here in one of her lives, and we coincidentally came as well.

Feidin looked around and said, "I felt at least forty Grade B presences around this place."

"No wonder we have to keep a low profile." Sylvia was a little nervous. She felt like she was a sheep that had entered a tiger cave. Luckily, her teacher, Herlous, and Aroshia were just as strong, making her feel more secure.

In Han Xiao's previous life, Noriosse had been a high-class area. If the players wanted to go to other Star Fields, they had to pass by similar interchanges. Of course, when the players could leave their Star Fields, their level was definitely not low.

After queuing for a while, it was finally their turn. The lift ticket inspector continuously collected tickets with a professional smile on his face, greeting every passenger with words of welcome.

When it was Han Xiao's turn, the ticket inspector suddenly smiled and said, "Welcome to Noriosse, Black Star."

“You know me?” Han Xiao looked at him with a slight surprise.

“I’m just relaying a message. Have an enjoyable trip.”

When anyone entered the port, the monitoring devices would automatically detect their identities. This was how the high-level managers came to know Han Xiao’s identity. The Black Star Mercenary Group was well known in the Shattered Star Ring, especially since their Floating Dragon background was not to be underestimated. Financial groups paid attention to those who were well known in every industry, so the managers gave the order to be more polite to the Black Star Mercenary Group.

The lift was very spacious—every trip carried hundreds of passengers. After waiting for a while, the lift started moving and very quickly slid out of the space station through the track. The wall of the lift was transparent, allowing the passengers to see the magnificent aerial view.

There were tens of lifts nearby like towels that extended into the sky, all operating. At that altitude, they were above the clouds, and the track below them connected the ground that they could not see any more. When looking into the distance, the sky was right before their eyes, turning from black to dark blue as it extended to the end of the horizon where the artificial Fixed Star was shining brightly.

“How beautiful! Phillip, take photos.” Sylvia’s eyes were sparkling.

Phillip’s mechanical eyes kept blinking to shoot photos. It was an assistant, so Han Xiao had given the other officers authority to order it when he was not giving it any order.

As they passed through the clouds, the view of the entire city entered Han Xiao’s eyes as he looked down. Countless aircrafts flew around at an altitude of two thousand meters—that was the highest that they were allowed to go. Buildings that pierced hundreds of meters into the sky stood in the city like iron spears.

This was a city entirely made of metal; there were not any vegetation in sight. However, it did not look lifeless. On the contrary, it was very vigorous and filled with colorful and bright neon lights. Large ecological devices provided fresh air for the city. Many devices controlled by the city management system were hidden under the metal ground.

The foundations of the city was made from a type of mass-produced machinery that the Noriosse financial group had purchased from the Crimson Empire. Once this machinery was thrown onto a planet’s surface, it expanded into a city like this, easily modifying the planet.

There were ten or so cities on the surface of Noriosse, connected by an electromagnetic railroad for high speed trains. Han Xiao and the others were heading toward City 4.

Looking at the approaching planet surface, Han Xiao suddenly frowned as his heart skipped a beat.

I feel somewhat uneasy. It feels like something is going to happen...

...

As the lift reached the surface, they walked out of the station with the crowd. The streets were crowded with various species.

Clank!

Phillip was knocked into by a passerby and spun a few times. Seeing this, Sylvia bent down and hugged the robot in her arms, preventing it from being kicked away.

“There are way too many people here. How are we going to find the person?” Herlous asked loudly as he pushed away a rather forceful creature that he suspected was a female in the sex industry.

Han Xiao had planned for such an issue. “As Noriosse is a very important traffic junction, many intel organizations have set up divisions here recording information of all travelers. I know what the target looks like, so as long as I ask at an intel organization, there will definitely be some clues.”

“You actually know so many things,” Herlous said. “That’s very reliable.”

They walked in the crowd for about twenty minutes before stopping at the door of a high building.

“This is it. The ninety-seventh floor is an agency of a regular intel organization.” Han Xiao looked up.

The gang took the lift up to the ninety-seventh floor. Its theme was very dark. The floor to ceiling windows were covered by black clothes, as if they were deliberately trying to create a mysterious atmosphere. After going in, the only receptionist stood at the door, and to the side was a narrow and long corridor. The space there was supposedly very huge, but everywhere else was filled up by black walls.

To guarantee the privacy of customers, this level was divided by walls into opaque rooms for discussing the details of their deal. The path between these rooms were like a maze. This corridor was the only entrance. There were many intersections inside so that the guests would not meet each other.

“I’m here to purchase intel.” Han Xiao expressed his intentions to the receptionist.

“One moment.”

The receptionist pressed the button on the table.

After a while, a human dealer in black formal clothes walked out of the corridor and said with a deep voice, “Follow me.”

Han Xiao and the others followed the human dealer into the corridor, took a turn at an intersection, and headed to the room.

A few seconds after they walked into the intersections, a birdman dealer led a customer who had just purchased intel out of another intersection and headed to the door, barely missing Han Xiao and the others.

“Thank you for your business.”

At the door, the birdman dealer bade farewell to his customer.

This customer was wearing a hoodie, and his entire body was covered by a black cape, blocking his looks.

He did not speak as he walked out and pressed the button on the lift.

The instant that the lift door opened, he looked down, and the light illuminated his face under the hood for a brief second.

Ember!

Chapter 475: Strange Godoran

Of course, Han Xiao did not know DarkStar's people were on Noriosse chasing a traitor and that they had bought intel from the intel organization.

He passed by Ember, and neither of them discovered the other's identity.

This time, the dealer took them to a room to sit.

"What intel would you like to purchase? Our organization has a very strong intel network, be it current matters or secret information, we have it all," the dealer bragged.

"I want to look for someone. Give me a pen and paper. I will draw what he looks like."

The higher one's Intelligence attribute was, the clearer their memory would be. Han Xiao quickly drew out a portrait of a human on the paper. According to the lifespan of a normal human, this person looked to be about fifty years old. He had an extended goatee, an angular face, and many wrinkles. The person looked like an ordinary middle-aged man.

"This person should have come to Noriosse before. I hope to know the time and place that he appeared here," Han Xiao said.

The dealer nodded. He took out a device and searched for a while before saying, "We have fitting intel—this is an ordinary man. We records all the travelers who enter Noriosse. We have been running a 'Person Searching' promotion recently, so this piece of intel only costs 100 Enas."

Sylvia tutted. Intel was indeed expensive. It cost 100 Enas just for the intel of a target marked as an ordinary person. 100 Enas was more than enough to travel across several Star Systems with galactic travelling agencies. Back when she bought intel on Han Xiao's whereabouts, she had spent quite a sum as well.

If she was a coward that did not seek revenge but hid, she would never have known about her father's true face and forever lived in false hatred. How pathetic would her life have been? She would also not have become her teacher's student because of that and never touched the territory of Supers. Thinking back, she could not help but feel gratitude toward Han Xiao for not killing her, or she would never have ended up where she was.

The dealer transferred the information as soon as Han Xiao paid the fee, and the others looked at it together.

"This person came to Noriosse thirty-eight days ago in a cross Star Field voyage that took off at [Ancient Star Desert] Star Field. He did not do anything irregular on Noriosse, and it looked like he's just travelling. Last seen sixteen days ago, south of City 8."

The detailed address was written in the intel—this was where the target had last appeared.

“Sixteen days ago? Is he still in Noriosse?” Han Xiao asked.

The dealer nodded. “We have people in the port, and there are records for every registered ID. He did not leave Noriosse, so he should still be in that place.”

“That might not be the case,” Han Xiao said.

Intel organizations were not almighty. If someone changed their appearance and used a pre-prepared fake ID, it would be very easy to fool them. Han Xiao could easily do it himself.

Furthermore, the Dragon Emperor’s teacher was an Oracle!

After experiencing the effect of the Destiny’s Child Character Summon Card, Han Xiao was familiar with the foresight ability. Prophecies were not all knowing. Plus, the future shown in the foresight would not be too far away in advance. If the target did not use his foresight ability, he would be no different from an ordinary person, so maybe he did not know that Han Xiao and the others were looking for him. However, that was delusional—the target should have known about it long ago!

Oracles were all difficult to deal with. If they did not want to get caught, it would be way too easy for them to hide with their powers.

Just like how the Germinal Organization could not find Han Xiao back then no matter what.

Han Xiao could not figure out what that person was thinking. If he wanted to see Ames, he would not have hidden. Although he still had the Destiny’s Child Character Summon Card, he did not intend to use it here as the results would not impact him much.

What was important was to carry out the ‘search’; the result was not crucial. After all, as long as he gave Ames some clues, he would have done his job.

Whether Ames could see her teacher or not, Han Xiao was not bothered.

Upon getting the clues that they wanted, he and the others left the intel organization. They headed straight to the train station and took the high-speed maglev train to City 8.

The train had many cabins, and the cabin that they were sitting in was for groups. Their seats were around a table.

The scenery outside the window dashed by. Herlous was playing cards with the three brothers again, and Feidin was observing how normal people played cards from the side. Aroshia was eating snacks, and Sylvia was playing with Phillip.

As they had gone to Noriosse just to find someone, their mood was relaxed as they chatted and joked around. Anyway, Black Star was the best at finding things—they had nothing to worry about.

Han Xiao crossed his arms and rested with his eyes closed.

This time, a voice from a strange man appeared beside them.

“Can I sit here?”

Han Xiao opened his eyes—a golden skinned man was standing beside him. He was carrying a backpack and smiling; it was a Godoran. However, his skin color was very light, meaning that he was not a pureblood Godoran.

Han Xiao's heart tightened, instantly alarmed. He had become naturally alert around all hybrid Godorans.

"Who are you?"

"Haha, it seems like I was too direct, allow me to introduce myself." This Godoran bowed elegantly and said with a well-mannered tone, "My name is Alvin. As you can see, I'm a Godoran. However, do not worry, I'm not an arrogant pureblood, just a normal Godoran and Galaxy Human Race mix. I apologize for disturbing, I just hoped to find some company on this short trip."

Han Xiao and the others were puzzled.

A stranger came out of nowhere and wanted to be friends with them. No matter how they looked at it, it was really strange!

Could it be that someone's charm had attracted this guy?

They instantly looked at Feidin then at Han Xiao.

Han Xiao pointed to the side and said, "There are empty seats over there. If you're just looking for a place to rest, please do not disturb us."

"No, no, please don't misunderstand me..." Alvin suddenly sat down and pushed Herlous in, as if he was going to sit there no matter what. He smiled sincerely and said, "I'm a traveler in Noriosse too; my friends stayed at the port, and I'm the only one who came to the surface. It's too lonely to travel alone, and I love to make friends. There's a saying in my home that goes 'Making friends with strangers is a man's way'."

"Hey, don't push me. We haven't agreed to let you sit down!" Herlous was displeased.

"Hmm? You're playing Wayne Card?" Alvin saw the cards on the table, and his eyes sparkled. He took out a deck of cards, slammed it on the table, and said, "Well, I happen to be a master in Wayne Card. I use the Light Territory card set and have yet to lose to anyone. Come on, dare to play a round?"

"How are you so quick to become friendly! Who wants to play cards with you?" Herlous was speechless.

Alvin laughed loudly with confidence and said, "Indeed, just playing is not fun at all. Let's add some stakes to it. 50 Enas for a round, do you dare play with me?"

"Haha, are you challenging me?" Herlous was provoked. He felt that his position and pride as the 'Black Star God of Gambling' had been insulted... although there were few people in the Black Star Mercenary Group.

At the same time, Herlous discreetly turned to look at Han Xiao.

Han Xiao gave him a hand sign, signaling that it was okay.

He had checked Alvin just now. This Godoran was very weak, and his energy sign barely reached Grade C's standard. He could crush him in a second, so it was not much of a threat.

He wanted to see what this Godoran was trying to do and what his motives were, so he allowed him to stay and observed him closely.

Chapter 476: Attack

Herlous received approval. He sat opposite Alvin, arranged his card set, and sneered, "Since you want to give me free money, I shall grant you your wish."

"Haha, it's still uncertain who will lose." Alvin laughed loudly.

His laughter could be heard in the entire cabin. The other passengers looked over.

The two of them started the round, which quickly became intense. Alvin was very quick to familiarize himself with others and spoke in a tone as if they were already very close friends. After the initial awkward stage, the atmosphere soon became harmonious as they chatted and joked with each other.

Han Xiao stared at Alvin from start to finish, preventing him from having any ulterior motives. At the same time, he discreetly activated the metal detector and wave detector in case he had some devices on him.

However, Alvin did not make any strange movements at all; everything that he had on him was normal. He was just playing cards excitedly along the way, shouting and joking, seeming very forthright.

Two hours later, the train arrived at the station.

Alvin took a deep breath of the fresh air, turned around, and slightly bowed toward Han Xiao and the others. "It was a short trip, but the time spent was amazing. It will be engraved in my mind as a beautiful memory. I sincerely thank you guys for your company. We are friends now. I hope that we will have the chance to meet again in the future."

Then, he waved, turned around, and left with his bag.

"Strange guy," Sylvia murmured.

"Such an amiable guy," said Feidin with a smile.

"He's probably just an honest passerby. We might have been overthinking," Herlous said.

Han Xiao glanced at him and did not comment. Although he still did not know Alvin's motive, he rarely believed that anything was coincidental. Even if this guy called Alvin did not do anything abnormal during the trip, he still did not let his guard down. He patted Phillip's metal head and said, "Captured his looks?"

"A total of 372 photos, hum... There's one for every angle, hum..."

"Let's not care about him for now. We shall go search for our target." Han Xiao nodded and walked forward. Then he casually asked, "By the way, I did not see earlier, did you guys win money in cards?"

Herlous scratched his head.

“That guy is quite good; he won a few hundred from me... I lost a lot, so I let Feidin help me. He won a few rounds, and then we arrived. In conclusion... hmm? It happened to be a tie. No one won or lost any money.”

Han Xiao’s footsteps suddenly paused, and he rubbed his chin.

“Alvin, never heard of this name before... interesting...”

...

As Han Xiao did not know Alvin’s motive, he put the matter to the back of his mind, followed the clues from the intel, and found the last place that the target appeared.

It was a narrow, rural street surrounded by tall buildings. Between the tall buildings, there was surprisingly a comparatively short villa. Its construction style fitted the aesthetic of humans—smooth, symmetrical, and with a yard. It looked like a private mansion.

The alloy door was sealed shut, so the inside could only be seen through a small window in the door. There was no one in the yard at this time.

Han Xiao looked around and noticed a button beside the door, likely the doorbell for visitors.

“We’re here to search for someone, not to kill... ahem, sneak in. It’s best to knock. The target has foresight anyway. If he wants to see us, he will walk out himself.”

After pressing the doorbell, they waited at the gate. They were used to climbing over walls, so now that they had to walk the front gate, they felt uncomfortable.

After a while, Han Xiao pressed the doorbell a few more times, but still, no one responded.

“There might be no one in, or the person inside doesn’t want to open the gate. What do you say, break in?” Herlous shrugged.

“Since no one responded, we shall go in and take a look before...”

Boom!

Han Xiao’s sentence had yet to finish when a loud bang suddenly came from above. He was way too familiar with this sound—it was the sound of a cannon being fired. Han Xiao could analyze the cannon’s model with just the sound. “Dodge!”

Everyone there was a Super, so their reaction speed was extremely fast. They immediately jumped away from their initial spot.

Boom!

A chain explosion happened on where they initially stood, and black smoke filled the air—this was the effect of an exploded rocket.

Looking up following bullet trajectory, it was from one window in the building opposite the villa. Quite a few vertical creatures were extending their heads out of the window and looking down. One of them was still holding the rocket launcher.

The next moment, ten or so creatures jumped out of the window and fell right onto the ground from dozens of meters high!

The thick smoke dissipated in the wind, showing the true face of those creatures—a group of stone creatures. They had four arms, two legs, and one head, wearing simple and plain battle suits, and had some firearms in their hands. Some even had melee weapons like mechanical axes, war hammers, and the like. They gave off a mercenary vibe as they were on the verge of attacking.

Han Xiao and gang were just looking for someone; they did not expect to be attacked, so they were surprised.

“Why did you attack us?” Sylvia asked.

“Someone paid us to teach you a lesson,” a stone man said.

Teach us a lesson?

Sylvia was about to reply, but suddenly, her face changed, and she yelled, “No, Phillip!”

Han Xiao looked over following her voice. Around the feet of these stone mercenaries, broken parts were spilled all over the floor.

Phillip had been too slow and could not dodge the earlier explosions. It had been blasted into pieces and become a pile of scrap metal.

At this time, these stone warriors struck. They growled with a weird voice and charged toward Han Xiao and the others.

Han Xiao tutted. He pulled out a compressed orb from his necklace, threw it onto the floor, and it rapidly expanded into the black Amphiptere mechanical suit. However, he did not wear it—it stood beside him.

This time, Han Xiao said with a deep voice, “Beat them up!”

Hum!

The eyes of the Amphiptere mechanical suit suddenly lit up!

This mechanical suit moved on its own. It swung its leg sideways like a black lash, whipping the foremost stone warrior on his chest.

Pa!

The huge strength blew him away and smashed him against the wall, shattering a huge pile of pebbles. It was unknown whether it was from the wall or from the stone warrior’s body.

“Order effective, hum... Combat Mode activated, hum... The enemy is blown away, hum...”

The empty Amphiptere mechanical suit was in combat mode, and Phillip's voice came out of the helmet.

Phillip was an artificial intelligence, so it lived in computer systems. Machinery was just what he controlled. When the shell was destroyed, it would not be damaged with it. Its core was behind layers of protection. With the computing speed of an artificial intelligence, it could simultaneously control dozens more mechanical beasts than before. Furthermore, with the combat simulations in the database, it could improvise on the spot and battle independently with a high standard!

This meant that Phillip could replace him and pilot the mechanical suit, and it could pilot more than one!

The smart chips before this had limited computing speed, comparatively weak combat capabilities, and could not react quickly. These were the most necessary attributes in the everchanging battlefield, so the smart chip could only be used as an assisting feature in combination with Han Xiao's nerves connection. However, with the new smart system built with [Advanced Artificial Intelligence Technology], like the improvement from gunpowder weapon to electromagnetic weapons, it was a complete update and enhancement!

Han Xiao's Hound Style had very limited effectiveness against enemies at the same Grade, but together with the strong mechanical suits operated by an artificial intelligence, it would make an entirely different level of impact. His mechanical suits were high quality mechanical weapons, so this made up for his shortage of robot warriors! Even if it was against someone at the same Grade, it would still last very long!

All High-End Knowledges were useful. The artificial intelligence technology that had powerful computing speed was one of the prerequisites of completing the Army Style!

Han Xiao turned around to Sylvia and said, "Go back and copy the theory for smart chips five times."

Sylvia's face immediately dropped, completely downcast.

Buzz!

Mechanical Force gushed out from Han Xiao's fingertips and entangled with Amphiptere mechanical suit, providing it with his bonuses.

There was no need for him to fight; Phillip controlled the mechanical suit and dealt with the enemies. It analyzed all the movements of the enemies and accurately dodged all their attacks. Its heavy punches cracked the rock skin of the stone warriors, making suppressed loud noises.

Dong, dong!

Pebbles spurted everywhere!

"Don't hit too hard. We can't randomly kill people on Noriosse."

Han Xiao leaned against the wall and watched the one-sided battle. His eyes flickered. "Furthermore, these stone men were probably hired by that Oracle to wait for us. It looks like he indeed knows that someone is looking for him. Humph."

Chapter 477: DarkStar Traitor

Clank!

With a set of effortless punches and less than two minutes, the Amphiptere mechanical suit controlled by Phillip defeated those stone warriors. The rocks lay down on the ground and whined weakly.

They were just Grade C, so the mechanical suit enhanced by Han Xiao easily crushed them.

“No! My smooth skin!” The head of the stone warriors looked at his cracked body and wailed. In terms of stone man aesthetics, the quality of the stone on their body’s surface was the same as their attractiveness. The most beautiful ones were, of course, diamonds, crystals, and minerals of the same sort. Even if it was normal stone, if it was as smooth as a mirror, they would be considered handsome.

Even if they could digest stones to heal their wounds, it would take a very long for them to recover.

This enormous sized guy’s moaning made Han Xiao feel like beating him up again.

“You’re not even stronger than us, yet you want to teach us a lesson? Where did you find the courage?” The oldest Volga looked at them disdainfully.

Han Xiao was a little surprised by how weak those stone warriors were. It was impossible for their employer not to know how strong Han Xiao and the others were. What impact would it make for him to send these weaklings? Was it just a warning or welcome gift? Could he have guessed incorrectly and the stone warriors’ employer was not their target?

Matters involving Oracles were always a headache. Han Xiao did not want to dwell on it; he grabbed the stone warrior and questioned him directly. “Who is your employer?”

Accordingly, mercenaries would not sell the identity of their employer. Han Xiao was already prepared to interrogate then, but to his surprise, these stone warriors gave him an expected reply.

“The employer wanted us to come here today to deal with the person that pressed the doorbell of that villa and said that our lives wouldn’t be in danger. If we got defeated, we should tell you a location to find a person there, and there will be someone there that knows his whereabouts,” the stone warrior said nervously. “He also said that you will forcefully ask for the employer’s identity and told me to relay his exact words. ‘You guessed right—it is me indeed. Don’t think I don’t know you used my name fraudulently. Play a game with me if you want to find me’.”

Everyone’s expression changed slightly.

“Damn Oracle!” Han Xiao clenched his teeth.

Herlous slapped Han Xiao’s back heavily and laughed loudly. “Hahahaha, you met a colleague!”

“Colleagues hate each other.” Han Xiao snorted and asked for the location. The stone warrior said the next location while shivering—north of City 8. They had to cross the entire city to go there.

Han Xiao stood up and pondered. The intention of the Oracle to hire these stone warriors was actually to leave some clues and lead them to the next location.

The target had intentionally left traces sixteen days ago then used his foresight ability to peek into their whereabouts, knowing that they would be arriving at this place today. Hence, he hired these stone warriors. The ability to foresee was not omnipotent or omniscient; it could not be used randomly and needed some attached strings, which was why the target deliberately left clues for the intel organizations.

He could certainly break the prophecy and kill these stone warriors. The problem was whether that would be in the Oracle's calculations, telling the stone warriors there would be no danger to provoke Han Xiao's rebellious thought, while his true intention was to make Han Xiao kill these stone warriors, which would attract the security forces. Would there even be a possibility that the counter thoughts that Han Xiao was currently having had been seen through by the Oracle? Could he have used Han Xiao's personality as the foundation for telling these stone men that they were definitely safe?

"This is exactly why I hate Oracles." Han Xiao felt a headache.

Despite knowing the powers of the Dragon Emperor's teacher, this feeling of restraint and following the opponent's plan unwillingly made Han Xiao very irritated.

Oracles were good at using their powers to plot. To Oracles who were strong enough, intelligence had no meaning. When someone dealing with an Oracle thought that they were being smart, what they did not know was that the Oracle had used their 'smartness' from the start. One never knew what the Oracle really wanted one to do.

Luckily, Han Xiao had his advantage. He knew the target's powers and ability very clearly, so he could judge his mindset from an Oracle's perspective. It would not guarantee that he would escape the target's calculations, but it would at least ensure he would not get tricked unknowingly. Furthermore, from what he knew about the target, although the target had a bad character, he rarely meant harm.

This was a good piece of news. After all, although Oracles were not physically powerful, being their enemy would be something very, very, very troublesome!

"What's next? Should we go where he said?" Herlous asked.

"Let's see what game he is playing."

Han Xiao snapped his fingers, creating a Mechanical Force spark. Amphiptere quickly turned into a compressed orb and attached itself to his necklace.

At the same time, Mechanical Forces spread out like electric currents, connecting the broken robot parts with each other. Suddenly, these parts levitated and gathered, then quickly assembled. Some distorted parts recovered to their original shape under the Mechanical Force. In the blink of an eye, the pile of waste parts turned back into the round robot body.

Basic Machinery Construction and Waste Modification!

The tiny round robot started moving again. Phillip waved its mechanical arms, slid beside Han Xiao's feet, and reported, "Self-checking, hum... performance decreased by twenty-five percent, hum... storage data backed up, hum..."

Sylvia's eyes were sparkling so brightly that stars almost jumped out. "Teacher, I want to learn this!"

“You want to run before you learned to walk?” Han Xiao glanced at her. He retrieved the mechanical flying bugs that he had discreetly sent out earlier to detect the inside of the villa, confirmed there was no one inside, and turned away. “There are no more clues here, let’s go.”

They left this rural street, leaving a group of wailing stone men behind.

...

At the same time, in a secret location in Noriosse City 4, many DarkStar members were gathered in a dark room. They often liked to host secret operations in dark places like that.

“According to our intel, the traitor appeared simultaneously at the center of City 7, northeast of City 6, and City 4’s train station. His ability is to have five doppelgangers. One of them is in our hands, the whereabouts of the other three have been exposed, and the last one has yet to be found. That should be his original body that he hid. His doppelgangers can’t be too far away from his original body, or they would vanish. The exact distance is unknown, but it won’t be further than a planet. Hence, he’s still on Noriosse,” a DarkStar warrior said.

In the corner of the room, a Godoran was tied tightly to a chair. This Godoran was covered in blood, and it was unknown how much suffering he had gone through. He looked exactly like Alvin, and he was sneering.

“What are you laughing at?” a DarkStar soldier yelled.

“Hehehe, you will never catch my real body.”

Alvin was indeed the traitor that DarkStar was tracking down. His Esper ability was creating doppelgangers, and the one that had been caught by DarkStar was one of the doppelgangers.

If Han Xiao was there, he would most likely be reminded of Black Spider, who was imprisoned in Bell of Death Island on Planet Aquamarine. Both of them had doppelganger-type Esper abilities, but the specific effects were different. Black Spider’s doppelgangers were puppets—he could only manipulate them to carry out simple tasks, and his consciousness could only exist in one puppet at a time but could be transferred. As long as one doppelganger lived, he would not die. He was very difficult to kill.

Alvin was different. Up to five doppelgangers could exist at one time, and every one of them could fight on their own. His consciousness was divided into five—these doppelgangers were all him, and one of them was his real body. As they shared senses, if the doppelganger was injured or died, the pain would be fed back to the consciousness in his real body, and his mind would be damaged. Furthermore, the doppelgangers would shatter if they were too far away from the real body, which was the same as dying and would also deal a certain amount of damage to the real body’s consciousness.

So as long as they had control of one doppelganger, they would be able to determine the approximate area that the real body was in—Alvin was still hidden on Noriosse.

“Captain Forsyth,” a soldier suddenly said, “the latest intel shows that the doppelganger in City 4 is taking the train to City 8. Lieutenant Sherman did not follow the plan and attack...”

“Okay,” Forsyth replied indifferently. He was a hybrid Godoran, a Grade B Super of DarkStar. He was also the captain of this team... on the outside.

Forsyth looked at the intel for a while more then walked out of the room. Outside was a long corridor. He turned two corners, walked into an empty room, and pressed a disguised button on the wall. The wall silently slid open, and behind the door was a secret room.

He went inside, and there were only two people there, Anur and Ember.

To pursue this traitor, not only did DarkStar dispatch a large number of elite soldiers consisting of seven Grade B Supers, they even dispatched Anur and Ember who were two Calamity Grades. This was a huge operation!

DarkStar abhorred this traitor. Alvin had leaked part of DarkStar’s information to Godora, leading to one Grade A member, Vivira, falling into a trap during mission, getting captured by Godora, and being imprisoned in Rainbow Prison. Moreover, Alvin had more information on his hands. If it was revealed, Godora would come to know even more about them. This was a huge hidden danger.

DarkStar would not allow traitors to live. Now that the team had trapped Alvin on Noriosse, it was a game of cat and mouse. Sooner or later, they would find him. Therefore, the information would not be leaked for the time being. If Alvin wanted to live, he could only rely on the rescue, and if he gave out all that he knew to Godora, he would have no value to Godora anymore. Hence, he could not say anything until Godora sent someone to save him.

DarkStar was also very clear on this point. Because of Noriosse’s specialness, neither DarkStar nor Godora would not dispatched battleships to surround the planet. This consortium had a very deeply rooted network and complex connections with several Star Cluster level Civilizations. If they wanted Alvin, they could only send their Super warriors to act on the planet.

“Your Excellencies.” Forsyth bowed respectfully and said, “We have new information. A doppelganger of the traitor took the train toward City 8. Sherman did not follow the plan of attack.”

“Why?” Anur asked with a deep voice.

“He accidentally met the Black Star mercenary group on the train!” Forsyth said. “Alvin sat down with them, and Sherman didn’t have the confidence to attack.”

“Black Star?” Anur frowned and looked at Ember on the side. He still remembered how obsessed Ember had been with Black Star. Anur said with a deep voice, “The task is more important. We’re hidden in the dark, so there’s no need to provoke him.”

When Ember heard this name, his face did not change at all. To him, this name seemed to have become meaningless. His emotions did not fluctuate at all, and his tone remained indifferent.

“Rest assured, he’s nothing to me now. The traitor is our goal; as long as the Black Star does not interfere with our affairs, he can live.”

“That’s right.” A sense of satisfaction flashed within Anur’s eyes and disappeared in a split second.

“Sherman’s decision is very correct,” Anur said. “Behind the Black star is the Dragon Emperor, so there’s no need to cause more problems. Alvin was lucky to have accidentally met this gang of mercenaries, but his luck will not keep going. Have Sherman continue to track him...”

“Looking at the time, Godora’s reinforcements should be arriving very soon. Alvin’s doppelgangers share their senses, so all his doppelgangers know that you’re tracking him. Tell those acting outside to be cautious, don’t fall into his trap.”

Chapter 478: There Is One Type of Book That Will Never Be Obsolete in Any Era

Han Xiao and the gang took the low altitude transport aircraft to the north of City 8, the popular commercial street that the stone mercenaries’ clue pointed to. It was crowded, noisy, and wide. In the middle of it was a fountain square, surrounded by shops of all kinds.

Following the address, they came to the door of a shop. This building was colorfully painted, and vibrant magic lanterns were installed on both sides of the open door.

Herlous looked up at the shop’s name, and his face twitched.

“Universal Love Bookstore... what kind of name is this?”

“Go in and see.”

The layout of the shop inside was surprisingly very simple. The floor was made from smooth, brown wood, and there were rows of glazed wood shelves filled with books. These books exuded a rich magic vibe; they seemed to be high-grade magic books. The store was filled with the fragrance of books. In a place like Noriosse, Mages were almost the only ones left still using books. This was clearly a bookstore for Mages.

According to the clue, there was a person there who knew the whereabouts of the target. Han Xiao looked around, but because there were so many bookshelves, he could not see if there was anyone inside. He patted Herlous on the shoulder, telling him to call for someone.

Herlous was about to open his mouth when he suddenly noticed a problem. “Wait a minute, why don’t you do this little thing yourself?”

“You have a great physique and a loud voice,” Han Xiao said with no expression on his face. “It’s mainly because I’m lazy.”

“...”

Herlous stared at him before letting out a thunderous shout. “Is—any—one—in!!”

Swoosh!

A sound came from deep within the bookshelves. The person inside was shocked and accidentally bumped the shelves, causing a pile of books to drop.

“On—one moment, I’m coming...”

A male human in a Mage's robe walked out limping while still hissing from the pain on his foot caused by the books that had fallen. When he saw Han Xiao and the others, he put up a warm smile.

"I am the owner of this bookstore. Do you like single or multiple people? Beautiful or rough? What race do you like? Oh, you are all humanoid species. I have humanoid creatures of all skins tones here!"

They were confused, and Sylvia asked, "What are you talking about?"

The mage store owner blinked, then gave a look of understanding and said, "I see, we have hybrids too. Be it insects, beasts, machinery, or anything you can think of, I have it here. I'm sure it will suit your taste!"

The more Han Xiao heard him talk, the more he felt something was wrong. "Aren't you selling books?"

At this time, Aroshia opened a book on the shelf, and the others looked over. The magic book was filled with illustrations, and the pictures were moving like they were alive. This was a kind of magic often used to make videos. Like movies in a book, every picture was a fragment.

It looked very high-end, but the content was...

"Ah!" Sylvia's face suddenly turned red, and she hurriedly turned away, but she could not help but to peek at the book.

"Th—this..." Herlous was bewildered. His world view was impacted.

Aroshia was amused. "So, this is the material life reproduction process..."

"Unknown information discovered, hum... Ongoing data acquisition, hum..." Philip's mechanical eye was wildly flickering, capturing every frame of the picture.

The Volga three brothers took out a huge pile of books from the bookshelf extremely quickly, placed them on the counter, and asked, "How much? I'll take all of them!"

"Stop it." Han Xiao closed the book in Aroshia's hands and threw it aside. He stared at the Mage owner and said with a deep voice, "I'm looking for a guy with foresight ability. He should've left you a message."

The Mage shop owner's smile suddenly turned stiff. He become disappointed and mumbled, "Not here to buy books again. I have already made the decoration so formal, how are there still no guests? Is it really necessary to be this afraid of letting others know about this kind of thing?"

The Mage glanced at Han Xiao and the others, adjusted his clothes, and stood straight. His temperament suddenly changed. Now he looked like how a Mage should look like. He said, "Let me introduce myself. You can call me Yi Xuan; I'm a Teleportation Mage. This bookstore is just a side job; my main business is operating a portal service."

In some of the magic focused planets or advanced civilization planets, there were always Mages that ran teleportation businesses. They sent the customers to another location on the same planet, saving their time. The further the distance transported, the higher the consumption and difficulty was. Hence, most of it were same planet teleportations, rarely to other planets. If the coordinates were not set correctly,

the customer would be thrown into space. Only Mages that were strong enough dared to do extremely long range teleportation.

Back then when Ames demolished the DarkStar mothership, she had used teleportation magic and arrived instantly from several Star Systems away. The caster was another Beyond Grade A individual who she fought with to kill time. That person had accurately located Floating Dragon Island from several Star Systems away with no deviation. Their magic power was unbelievable.

“You are a Teleportation Mage?” Han Xiao asked. “So, was the target that I want to find sent to another place in Noriosse by you?”

Yi Xuan shrugged and said, “He paid the fees, so I teleported him. It was a normal transaction.”

“Where did he go?”

“Ha, I will not give away clients’ privacy.” Yi Xuan chuckled. “By the way, he also left me a message to convey to anyone that wants to find him.”

“What did he say?” Han Xiao frowned.

“He said, he wants to play a game with you. As long as you steal the Heart of Crystal Fire, he will meet you.”

“Heart of Crystal Fire?” Han Xiao kicked Phillip lightly and said, “Search it.”

“Searching, hum... Found, hum...” Philip’s mechanical eye suddenly emitted light in the air to form a translucent projection screen. On it was information about the Heart of Crystal Fire.

Heart of Crystal Fire: A ring made by a rare crystal born in lava, a very exquisite luxury. Legend says that it is immune to high temperature and burning. It was once sold for a high price of 7,930,000 Enas to the leader of the Noriosse financial group, Rockfess, for his wife. When Rockfess and his wife appeared in public, his wife is always wearing this ring.

“Sev—seven million and nine hundred thirty thousand!” Herlous spat blood. Spending so much money to buy a lousy ring just to please a woman?

This could buy numerous battleships!

His world view was once again shaken.

Han Xiao’s expression also changed. “He wants me to steal a Super financial group’s leader’s wife’s price jewelry, huh? Is he trying to use us, or is he trying to make a fool out of us?”

Stealing some precious jewelry from the wife of the leader of the financial group that controls Noriosse in Noriosse?

The Dragon Emperor’s teacher clearly wants to ridicule me!

“Don’t ask me, I just took the money and pass the message.” Yi Xuan shrugged. “Rockfess’ wife is in Noriosse, but don’t expect me to send you there directly; I don’t want to be as your accomplice.”

Squinting, Han Xiao said with a low voice, “I have no interest in completing this ridiculous request anyway. Where did you send him?”

“Haven’t I already told you?” Yi Xuan said impatiently. “I will not disclose the privacy of customers. Also, don’t think about bribing me, I have my professional ethics.”

“Then don’t blame me for beating you up.” With a ferocious expression, Herlous raised his huge fists and stepped forward. He planned to scare this Teleportation Mage.

His hand was just about to touch Yi Xuan’s collar when a change happened!

Hum!

A light door suddenly appeared right in the gap between the two of them. Herlous was shocked. His reaction was very fast, so he stopped his forward momentum immediately and was about to retreat. To his surprise, a red tentacle suddenly extended out quickly of the light door and wrapped around his body. A huge force blasted from the tentacle and pulled Herlous into the light door as Herlous disappeared.

Then, a whirlpool-like sound appeared in the air. The light door rotated around the center point, narrowed, and quickly disappeared without a trace.

“Herlous!” the oldest Volga exclaimed in shock.

The face of everyone suddenly changed.

The atmosphere was stiff for a moment.

Yi Xuan glanced at everyone proudly.

“What that person said was exactly right. When the people that are here find that they can’t get the information they need, they will threaten me. Humph, you didn’t expect this, did you? I’m prepared!”

Han Xiao was very calm, but he held his forehead in frustration. When Herlous acted, he was already aware that something was not right. He wanted to stop him, but before his mouth opened, Herlous was already caught. Pugilists being able to move too fast actually had its disadvantages!

Sure enough, the target guessed this situation, so he reminded the Mage in advance to trick them. When the target made the over the top request to steal the Heart of Crystal Fire, it became a ‘trigger’ to his prophecy. Furthermore, even without the use of his prophecy ability, their reaction could be guessed. He knew that there was a great chance that they would refuse the request and find another way from the Teleportation Mage, and threatening was clearly highly likely. Hence, he did this to put them in a dilemma.

“Teleportation magic, such an irritating ability...” Han Xiao discreetly sighed. Herlous was unluckily caught, so getting him back was a pressing matter.

The atmosphere was intense. This time, Yi Xuan pointed to the door, and with a tone of having everything under his control, he said, "I'm trained in teleportation magic and always maintain it at a state that can be triggered anytime. Before you can touch me, I will be able to teleport away, so don't even think about threatening me.

"Your friend wanted to attack me, so I will let him suffer for a bit. In two hours, I will send him back and throw him at the northern entrance of City 8 where you can find him. Now, I have no interest in fighting with you. If you're not going to buy a book, please get out of my bookstore, you are not welcomed here!"

Chapter 479: Blink

The red tentacle seemed to belong to a monster, and it looked like Herlous had been thrown somewhere that they did not know of. If they wanted to bring him back, they could only find a solution from this Teleportation Mage.

Teleportation magic was very powerful, but there were many restrictions when players used it. The requirements to learn it were very high. Furthermore, most teleportation spells could only be used in non-combat state or needed some kind of guide, and they could not be interrupted halfway. Basically, it could only be used as a travelling method.

"There are strong people everywhere. Noriosse is really so scary." Sylvia swallowed her saliva nervously.

"Should we fight?" the second oldest Volga brother said gravely. "There are many people around here. If a fight breaks out, the security team will soon intervene. I can sense his teleportation magic is at the state that can be triggered at any moment. He will leave before we move, and we absolutely can't follow him through the light door. If he closes the light door halfway, we will be cut in half."

Yi Xuan interrupted and said, "Your friend is right, so quickly get out of my..."

Before his sentence finished, Han Xiao activated his mechanical suit and rushed out without saying a word like a bolt of lightning.

"You really don't understand what I said do you, you're still not giving up and want to attack me? I've already read your plans. You are so violent!"

Yi Xuan did not panic at all. He sneered and activated the standby teleportation Magic. A light door suddenly appeared behind him, and he stepped into it in an instant.

At this time, the mechanical suit warrior that wanted to attack him was still a distance away from him. With his casting speed, he would be able to close the portal before the opponent got close.

Just then!

A big hand suddenly appeared in front of his eyes like it appeared out of nowhere, and before Yi Xuan had time to respond, the hand passed through the portal and strongly grabbed onto his face.

With a palm covering his eyes, Yi Xuan could not see anything. At that moment, he finally panicked.

What happened?

The next moment, a huge surging force came from the hand. Han Xiao, who was in his Void Form, pulled Yi Xuan out of the portal!

Because Yi Xuan's body had to cross the light door again, he had no choice but to quickly stop his already prepared spell to close the portal, or the person that would be cut into half would be him!

The situation had instantly reversed!

With a surging Mechanical Force, the Void Dragon mechanical suit that was now an empty shell behind Han Xiao split into its parts and covered Han Xiao again.

He swung hard, throwing Yi Xuan out like a cannon, breaking rows of shelves on the way. Torn paper fluttered all around.

Bang!

Yi Xuan slammed into the wall, which broke. His head was bleeding. He had yet to recover from the dizziness when he suddenly felt a weight on his body.

Han Xiao followed him like a shadow, pressing his hands against his back and locking it with his knees, while his other hand pressed his face on the floor and instantly subdued. Yi Xuan was unable to move!

A heart-stopping energy was gathering in the arms of the mechanical suit as if it would erupt any time. Then, Yi Xuan heard Han Xiao's banter.

"What did you just say? Say it again."

Blood flew down from Yi Xuan's forehead, wetting his hair. His eyes were wide open and filled with intense horror, and his face was covered in disbelief.

He did not expect this life saving method that he had used countless times to fail!

What Han Xiao used was his Race Talent—[Void Travel].

In the almost static Void Vision, the movements of everyone were halted. No matter what escape method Yi Xuan had, it did not make a difference. Han Xiao easily got close to this Teleportation Mage, then deactivated Void Vision and returned to reality, directly closing the distance between them and catching the opponent. In the eyes of the others, Han Xiao clearly appeared before Yi Xuan out of nowhere.

"Ho—how did you..."

Han Xiao increased the force in his hand and said coldly, "Let my companion out, and don't play any tricks, unless you want your brains to splash all over your bookstore."

"I—I give up, don't misfire!" Yi Xuan hastily did as he was told. His life was threatened, so he did not dare mess around. A few meters away, a teleportation light door slowly appeared.

...

Fifteen seconds earlier...

Hum!

In a red sky, a light door suddenly appeared. Countless red tentacles rushed into the sky and into the light door. The next moment, Herlous was pulled in.

With little time to react, he forced the tentacles open with arms, drew the Battleship Slicing Blade from his back, slashed horizontally around his body, and cut all the tentacles in half. However, he was in midair, so he fell right down. At about thirty meters from the ground, he could see the maroon ground.

Bang!

Herlous slammed onto the ground.

He looked up at the sky, and the teleportation door had already disappeared.

“It was a trap. This is not good. I can’t go back myself.” Herlous was angry and frustrated. “What is this place. What were the tentacles just now?”

He looked around. On the red plain, there were no creatures, only black holes on the ground.

Herlous’ face suddenly changed, and he jumped up right away.

Boom boom boom!

The next moment, a large number of tentacles broke out of the ground from where he had just stood. There were hundreds of them, and they all went directly at him.

“These tentacles seem to belong to a creature hidden in the ground. How big is the size of this monster?” Herlous was sweating on his forehead. He was just about to attack again when a red stream of light suddenly appeared in the edge of his line of sight.

Swoosh!

This red stream of light bolted past all tentacles in an instant. The hundreds of tentacles stopped simultaneously. At the position where the red light passed through, a smooth cut appeared on all the tentacles, and they were all cut into two. The half that had been cut off fell onto the ground, and the tentacles retracted back under the ground.

The red light made a circle and stopped in front of Herlous, showing its true identity.

“It’s you!” Herlous was surprised.

“Hmm? I’ve seen you before.” The other person obviously knew Herlous and was surprised as well.

Before the conversation could carry on, a buzz from a spell appeared in the sky, and the portal appeared again.

“Ha, it seems that captain is done with that Teleportation Mage. That was really efficient.”

Herlous’ eyes brightened as he laughed out loud. He had a lot of trust in Han Xiao. After being thrown here, he believed that Han Xiao would bring him back very soon.

As expected, the petty tricks of that Teleportation Mage were nothing in front of the captain. He did not even last for a minute.

“Great, I can finally get out!” The other person was surprised as well.

...

In the bookstore, the portal was open, and they stared at the light door. Not long after, Herlous flew out, but he was not the only one; another person followed him out of the light door.

“There are other people inside!” Sylvia exclaimed. “Who are you?”

Han Xiao looked over and was stunned.

“Wilsander?”

This person was shockingly the Floating Dragon Island Dragon Guard Captain, Wilsander!

“Hey, it’s been a long time.” Wilsander was boney and depraved looking as always.

“Why are you here?” Han Xiao said with surprise. “And coming out of the portal?”

Wilsander dry coughed and pointed at Herlous. “I got in the way he got in.”

Han Xiao’s mouth twitched as he figured out what had happened.

It turned out, in addition to himself, Ames had also sent Wilsander to find her teacher. Then Wilsander was played by the Dragon Emperor’s teacher as well. He found Yi Xuan and encountered the same problem as them. As a big time galactic pirate once, Wilsander’s mindset was to do things with violence. Hence, he was thrown somewhere else by this Teleportation Mage.

Han Xiao did not expect to meet Wilsander here. “When did you get here?”

“A few days ago, not much earlier than you.”

Wilsander looked at Yi Xuan, who was pressed down on the ground by Han Xiao, and his face suddenly turned furious. He rushed over, the pair of wings behind him suddenly unfolding, shining with a bright red glow on their edges. With overflowing murderous intent, he yelled, “You dare to trick me! I’ll kill you!”

The wings slashed down quickly, and Han Xiao hurriedly reached out to hold onto Wilsander’s demon wings firmly.

“Don’t act in the heat of the moment. Noriosse doesn’t allow random killings. Plus, we have to dig out clues about the Dragon Emperor’s teacher from his mouth.”

“Fine.” Wilsander felt that Han Xiao’s logic was sound, so he put the wings back. Suddenly, he realized that something was wrong. His face suddenly changed, and he turned around and looked at Han Xiao with uncertainty.

With his Grade B+ strength, how could Han Xiao withstand his attack this casually and easily?

When he first met Black Star, he had been far from that strong!

Not bothering about Wilsander, who was discreetly being shocked, Han Xiao questioned Yi Xuan. "Tell me, where did you send my target to."

"I—I don't know," Yi Xuan said with a trembling voice.

"Huh, you sure are bold. It seems that you really aren't afraid of death!" Herlous clenched his fist. The sound of bones cracking came from his fists, and an eager expression could be seen on his face. "I have yet to settle things between us."

"N—no, you misunderstood," Yi Xuan wailed. "I really don't know. He asked me to use the random portal, and the coordinate range is the surface of Noriosse. Since the position is random, I don't know where he went."

Han Xiao frowned, turned around, and said, "Feidin, do me a favor."

Feidin nodded. He walked forward and placed his finger on Yi Xuan's forehead. His Psychic powers penetrated into Yi Xuan's brain, and he told the Teleportation Mage to repeat what he had just said. Then Feidin closed his eyes, only opening them after a while. He shook his head, saying, "He's not lying; this is true. He honestly doesn't know the whereabouts of the target."

They looked at each other and were all a little beaten. They had thought that they finally had the upper hand, but the clues ended again.

Sylvia bit her lips and said angrily, "I got it, this is exactly his intention. Even if we successfully force out his whereabouts, we will still come to no result. He deliberately used the random portal to let us see some hope before upsetting us. This guy is so annoying!"

Wilsander swung his tail, irritated. "Is following his request to steal the Heart of Crystal Fire the only thing that we can do? This is the only clue."

Han Xiao was frowning heavily. Suddenly, an idea flashed past his eyes. He quickly suppressed his smile and said with a serious tone, "I'm not going to bother about his request. Since this is the case, we won't find him anymore. Anyway, what we've done is enough."

"Are we going to give up?" Herlous clenched his teeth, he was not very satisfied with the result. He really wanted to catch this Oracle and give him a good beating!

"There's no need for us to follow what the target wants us to do. Ames is going to arrive soon. As long as we tell her this clue, our job is considered complete."

Han Xiao stood up and clapped his hands. He took out a healing agent, threw it to Yi Xuan, and walked away.

"Yo—you're just going to give up like this?" Yi Xuan stood up, surprised. He had thought that he would inevitably get a beating.

"Exactly, why not teach him a lesson? I was tricked so badly by him," Herlous added.

Han Xiao rolled his eyes and said, “Come on, at least he did not throw you into outer space. He didn’t want to kill you, and that saved his life.”

Then, the Great Mechanic Han turned around, looked at the mess, and said, “But I’m not going to pay the repair fee.”

“I didn’t want you to.” Yi Xuan smiled bitterly. He did not plan to provoke Han Xiao ever again. Han Xiao had some kind of instant teleportation ability, so he would not be able to run no matter how fast his teleportation spell was. He was only good at teleportation spells and knew almost nothing about attack spells. Since even his core ability was useless, how would he be able to fight at all? He just wanted to wait for that group of people to leave and never return.

...

They left that strange, weird bookstore. There was a new member in the group of people, Wilsander. He thought that he would rather work together with his colleague than act alone.

On the way, Wilsander pulled Han Xiao aside and said in an apprehensive tone, “Are we really going to give up on the target? Will Ames be angry about that?”

“There is no need to; the target is definitely still on Noriosse. When Ames arrives, it will take no time for her the search through the entire planet given how strong she is. Hence, we don’t need to hurry to find him. As long as the Dragon Emperor arrives, he will have nowhere to hide,” Han Xiao deliberately whispered, as if he did not want anyone to hear.

Chapter 480: Eternal Oracle, Aesop Hurricane

Three days later, in Noriosse North Space Port, where countless travelers came and went, an ordinary space human female was slowly walking, carrying a backpack.

In fact, this was someone in disguise. In actuality, it was the target whom Han Xiao was looking for—Ames’ teacher who had once adopted her in her childhood and guided her to awaken her Super talent.

His name was Aesop, and his power was foresight. However, as compared to his rare prophetic ability, his race was even rarer.

Aesop had been born before the Galaxy Calendar started. He was an Eternal, a being who lived for countless years.

Long before Han Xiao had contact with the Teleportation Mage, Aesop had already foreseen that Han Xiao and the others would refuse to participate in his ‘game’. The prophecy itself was vague because the future was full of uncertainties and could change at any time. If the future could not be changed, the prophecy would be meaningless. Generally, prophecies with no goal usually only led to a fog. A theme was needed for the ability to be activated, which would be the ‘trigger’ that would limit the future possibilities.

The more experienced the Oracle was, the more factors they would set up to limit the future. The variety of clues and mischievous arrangements that Aesop had left were all plots that he used to limit the possibilities.

The future was in the superposition state, and the 'trigger' could make the future 'collapse'. In simple terms, when people are not hungry, they could do all sorts of things, and when they were hungry, there was one action that would become determined—they would eat. Aesop deliberately left the trail for this purpose so that people who searched for him would follow the clues that he had left. If a bead on the ground was rolling in all directions, when the bead fell into a groove, it would only move back and forth. This meant that the 'future' turned from a free answer question to a multiple-choice question with limited options. Only in that way would his prophecy be able to see the future.

Prophecies could not see too far into the future and had no combat capability. The ability itself was not powerful, so it all depended on the user. Being an Oracle required intelligence!

At this time, Aesop had already purchased a seat on a long-haul flight. Even if he did not use his prophecy ability, he had already seen through Han Xiao's goal. It was nothing more than to stall for time so that when Ames arrived on Noriosse, he would have nowhere to run.

"Too young." Aesop thought that it was funny. With such an obvious intention, only a fool would not be able to see it. They refused his request, yet they thought that he would be stupid enough to stay on the planet. Why would he?

Putting himself in Han Xiao's shoes, Aesop felt that he would lie about agreeing to find the Heart of Crystal Fire in order to stall time, which would be at least better than rejecting it directly. However, no matter what Han Xiao chose, the result would be the same—Aesop had actually never planned to stay there. Even if Han Xiao had lied and agreed, he would still have left.

"If he agreed to my request, my following arrangements would get them into trouble. They would be chased off this planet by the Noriosse financial group. Even if they reject my request and intend to delay me, after I leave, Ames will also be unable to find me. She will be angry at this group officers who quit halfway and 'missed the golden opportunity', which will also give them a hard time.

"From the moment you got the clue I left from the intel organization, the result was already determined."

Under the mask of disguise, Aesop smiled. "You used my name; I give you a little punishment. Fair and square."

"Is that so?"

Suddenly, a man's voice came from behind, and a hand tapped Aesop's shoulder and stayed there.

Aesop's face suddenly changed. He froze and slowly turned around.

A stranger stood behind him. This man tore off an extremely thin mask on his face, exposing Han Xiao's face.

"Mister Aesop Hurricane, damn good morning to you." Han Xiao smiled.

"How did you know I'm here?" Aesop was shocked. His eyes changed slightly and flashed with wonder.

He did not ask why Han Xiao was here; it needed no explanation. He figured it out instantly the moment that he saw Han Xiao. He was puzzled by another question at this moment.

There were five harbors on Noriosse. How did he accurately find the correct one?

He might have heard from Jenny that this Black Star seemed to be an Oracle as well.

“Good question, allow me to introduce.” Han Xiao pulled a man from the side, took off the mask on the face of the person, revealing the face of Feidin. He smiled and said, “This is my mascot.”

“... You mean by luck?”

Aesop’s face stiffened, and then he looked relieved. Oracles as skilled as him were very clear on one thing—there would never be a perfect plan. No matter how good the plan was, it would often be disrupted by accidents. Although luck was something very uncertain, the simplest thing was usually the most inexplicable.

Han Xiao had the Destiny’s Child card, so he understood the mindset of Oracles and the so-called trigger, but this time, he did not use the Destiny’s Child card as there was no need to.

When he refused Aesop’s request, to his understanding of Aesop, he knew that Aesop could easily see through his ‘intention’. Hence, only one choice was placed in front of Aesop. In order to avoid Ames, who was going to arrive, he had to take a spaceship and leave Noriosse. Therefore, the possibilities were narrowed. He just had to spread out across five harbors and wait, as Aesop would definitely pass by one of them.

As a result, the person in the dilemma became Aesop. If he did not leave, he would definitely be found. If he left, he might be found.

Hence, even if Aesop had foreseen this possibility, he would have no choice but to fall into this trap. Not to mention the fact that Aesop did not use his power due to the lack of a trigger.

Those who delved into logic tended to fall into a paradox that they themselves could not see. Aesop wanted Han Xiao to act while complying with his rules of the game, but Han Xiao turned it around and made his interlocked plan into a fair environment for the both of them to compete in their luck. Then, Han Xiao used his rich experience to beat him. Feidin could solve any and all difficulties involving luck.

Aesop’s lousy disguise was good enough for the identity check at the harbor but not disguise veteran Han Xiao.

According to the normal way of thinking, if Aesop left Noriosse long ago right after he made the arrangements, the plan would have had no solution, meaning that he would be in an invincible position. However, Han Xiao had one of the biggest advantages—he knew Aesop’s personality from his previous life. This ancient man had experienced too many things, so his personality was strange and abnormal.

Power? Not interesting. He had once served as the vice president of a star-class civilization.

Wealth? There was no meaning. Resources did not have a real owner, so wealth was only a false definition.

Beauty? Tired of it long ago. The species that he had mated with could circle a Fixed Star several times.

Strength? Experienced before. He had once erased the entire planet from the map with a horrifying weapon.

Aesop was really tired of living, and this was not derogatory but literal. His life was left with a few fun things—freedom, curiosity, and excitement!

So, he had become a treasure hunter who travelled everywhere with unknown whereabouts. He could only experience the feeling of being alive at the edge of danger. Hence, when he plotted and planned, Aesop would absolutely never hide behind the scenes. He would create a fair situation and let the opponent have the opportunity to taste the fruit of victory. To him, it was a dangerous game.

If he won, he would feel empty.

If he lost, he would rejoice.

He had lived too long and really become incomprehensible to ordinary people.

Aesop also took off the disguise, revealing his old appearance, and heartily laughed. “It seems that my apprentice found a powerful partner.”

Han Xiao smiled as well. He showed no flaw on the surface, but he had other thoughts in his mind.

He was thinking of killing Aesop.

Aesop was such a powerful Oracle. Even if he was not his enemy, who could guarantee that he would not be a threat to him in the future?

Han Xiao was very clear about Aesop’s ability; his power was prophecy, so his combat capability was almost equal to zero. As long as he seized this Oracle, killing him would not be much harder than killing a chicken.

This was a good opportunity to get rid of hidden dangers. He just had to tell Ames that he did not find her teacher and let Aesop be forever ‘missing’.

So...

Before Ames arrives, should I...

Kill him?

Han Xiao eyes flickered.

In his eyes, there was not a single person that had to die no matter what, and there was not a single person he must not kill no matter what.