

Am I A God 311

Chapter 311: A Familiar Face

Zhao Yao's eyes drifted from one end of the beach to another before stopping at one particular girl, surrounded by a Serval cat and a gang of people.

"This is so troublesome." With his brows tightly knitted together, Zhao Yao muttered, "Why must she appear here as well?"

In his eyes, the pair of Serval cat and breeder were the greenhorns of the competition, with zero combat experience.

Despite their initial encounter with the black apostle, their lives in the zoo had been fairly peaceful and clam. Hence, they would have absolutely no contact with any other superpowers.

This pair was simply a sheep thrown into a cage filled with a pack of hungry wolves. Their appearance meant certain death.

"D*mn it, why did they come here?" Zhao Yao buried his head in his chest before noticing the glimmering golden punctuation above her head. He shook his head in despair before muttering, "I guess I only have myself to blame for being such a nice guy. Matcha, let's go."

With that, he had grabbed Matcha and stashed him within his thick black robes. The three of them had been completely enveloped by the silky robes, concealing his identity.

Actually, he was not the only one making the extra effort. A portion of the participants was lurking in the shadows, donning on all sorts of helmets and masks in an attempt to hide their identities.

Meanwhile, the breeder was busy tending to her cat when a swarm of apostles approached her, leaving her at a loss.

One of the teenagers broke the awkward silence and said, "Hey, my name is Meng Hao. Are you also here for the cat king competition?"

The female breeder was somewhat embarrassed to respond as she lowered her head bashfully before whispering, “Hi, my name is Liu Yun. I just serendipitously stumbled upon this competition.”

Meng Hao acknowledged her response with a friendly nod. He looked around before continuing, “Haha, I’m here by chance as well. I have no intentions of winning or even getting past the first round. I just came here to meet people like us, people with supercats. Oh yes ...” He casually diverted the conversation towards her cat and asked, “Is that a Serval cat? They are extremely rare! I didn’t know that they could be awakened as well. What’s her power?”

“Oh, are you referring to Tiny? Her ability is ...”

Liu Yun’s words were interrupted by a voice which sprang out of nowhere.

“Shouldn’t you talk about your power first before asking others about theirs?” Zhao Yao asked.

Meng Hao’s forehead creased together before bellowing in awkward laughter. Somehow, he did not detect the hostility in Zhao Yao’s voice and responded, “Are you Liu Yun’s friend? Nice to meet you, I’m Meng Hao.” He said so while extending his arm towards Zhao Yao for a handshake, only to be rejected ruthlessly.

Zhao Yao turned towards Liu Yun and reminded her, “I’m begging you not to reveal your power to any strangers. This kind of scums is basically eliciting information right before the competition. Come, follow me.”

“Huh?”

Zhao Yao simply dragged Liu Yun away, while she remained in a daze.

The corner of Meng Hao’s eyes crinkled slightly when faced with Zhao Yao’s indifference. However, the smile instantly returned to his face as he looked to the guy standing next to him, “Meng Shao, what’s our plan now?”

“It’s okay, to each his own.” Meng Hao turned towards the group of people approaching and remarked, “Come, let’s go over there and take a look.”

“Hey, nice to meet you, I’m Meng Hao. Are you an apostle competing in the competition?”

The young man, who sported a buzz cut, simply swiped Meng Hao’s hand away from his shoulder before sliding him a cold, hard glare, “Get lost.”

Anger raged through Meng Hao but he managed to subdue it before it got the better of him. He just burst out laughing and remarked, “See you at the end of the competition!”

He turned his head around before a frown crept up his face, “Why are youngsters getting so rude nowadays? I’ll teach them a lesson afterward.”

Meanwhile, Zhao Yao had dragged Liu Yun all the way to a secluded spot on the beach. She remained clueless as to what had happened but the Serval cat seemed so excited as she began jumping up and down.

“King George? Is it you, King George?”

The Serval cat took a few deep breaths and concluded, “It’s this scent, I’m sure. He gave us RMB 100,000 without even batting an eyelid. It’s him!”

Naturally, Liu Yun could not comprehend a single word Tiny said. She stared at Zhao Yao confusedly and asked, “I’m sorry but do I know you? Why did you drag me all the way here?”

Zhao Yao decided to cut to the chase and replied, “Have you forgotten about the RMB 100,000 you owe me?” Zhao Yao even lifted his robes to reveal his true face.

“Huh? It’s you, Daniel Wu?” Tears welled up in Liu Yun’s eyes, “I came to this competition with the hopes of meeting you here! I never expected to be so lucky!”

Zhao Yao met her under the guise of Daniel Wu previously. He even replicated the same illusion in an attempt to evoke her memories.

Immediately, Zhao Yao shrouded his head beneath the robes only to notice the golden exclamation mark’s sudden disappearance. His mood plummeted as he muttered, “D*mn it, don’t tell me her mission is just to find me?”

Zhao Yao's enthusiasm waned considerably with the mission disappearing into thin air. He answered lazily, "Oh, are you here to return me my money?"

Liu Yun grew somewhat edgy and responded, "No, I can't fork out so much cash in such a short time. I'm terribly sorry. However, I'll return you the moment I have enough!"

Meanwhile, the Serval cat attempted to sneak into Zhao Yao's robes, "King George? Are you inside? You must be here! I have already detected your scent!"

Zhao Yao grew impatient from this pesky cat and simply kicked her away, "Alright, since you have already found me, you should take your leave now. This competition is not for the likes of you."

"Huh? Isn't this just a game where the judges will evaluate our performances?"

Zhao Yao knew that this foolish girl had mistaken the cat king competition for an ordinary cat competition. A normal cat competition without superpower was judged solely based on the cat's pedigree and behavior. It was a far cry from this impending bloodbath.

Liu Yun's breathing hastened when she heard Zhao Yao's explanation, "A battle of superpowers? Doesn't it make this extremely dangerous?"

"It is dangerous, especially for you." Zhao Yao saw the crowd accumulating along the beach. Somehow, Meng Hao and gang were at the heart of it with a crowd huddling around him.

Zhao Yao's ear gave a light shudder and he managed to eavesdrop on their conversations, "Nice to meet all of you here. It is not every day that you get to meet such a large group of apostles and supercats. My name is Meng Hao, and I'm a representative from a real estate company. If any of you need any kind of help, feel free to approach me. If you need a job, I can supply you with ..."

Actually, Meng Hao's main purpose was to recruit more apostles under him under the pretext of his family real estate business.

Naturally, it would be even better if he managed to snag a title.

The beach was flooded with apostles who were completely ignorant about the situation. Hence, Meng Hao's words were music to their ears and it sounded so enticing.

"Oh, so he's not here to collect information but recruit manpower?" Zhao Yao let out a sigh before answering Liu Yun's question, "However, these fools are no match for me."

A myriad of questions started popping into her head but she decided to disregard them all. She had set her mind to repay Zhao Yao's kindness, "Allow me to help you."

"Help? Are you sure you are even capable of that?" Zhao Yao asked.

The Serval cat began screaming non-stop, "I can call all my friends for help! I have many friends!" Following her screams, the surrounding rats, dogs, cats, and even seagulls began gathering around them. They sat obediently by the side, awaiting Tiny's orders.

Chapter 312: Boarding Time!

Zhao Yao's worry did not disappear after hearing the Serval cat's words. With his forehead creased together, he thought, "What can they possibly do?" From the looks of it, these animals could barely take on ordinary humans, let alone apostles!

With a smug smile plastered on her face, the Serval cat declared, "I can see whatever they can see! This works regardless of the distance between us. I can even control them from a distance!"

These words caught Zhao Yao by surprise, "Are you trying to say that you have a shared vision with these animals?" All along, Zhao Yao had no idea that the Serval cat possessed such a unique ability. This power was perfect for reconnaissance.

Meanwhile, Liu Yun stared in amazement and muttered, "Huh? Are you really capable of communicating with Tiny? I had suspected this since our previous encounter!"

"Hmph," Zhao Yao replied with a nod of his head. He began weighing the pros and cons of bringing the Serval cat along before he was distracted by the exclamation marks floating above their heads.

Mission: Let me help you!

Objective: Allow Liu Yun and the Serval cat to lend you a helping hand in the upcoming competition.

Reward: 50 experience points

Punishment: Nil

Zhao Yao let out a long sigh before relenting, “Alright, I can tell how sincere you are about helping me. Remember to keep close to me and never spout a single word of nonsense. Also ...” He whipped out a mask from his pocket before instructing her, “Put this on at all times to prevent others from knowing your true identity. With so many apostles around, it will be disastrous if one of them decides to take revenge on you outside of this competition.”

Liu Yun complied with the instructions obediently and put on the mask.

Suddenly, Zhao Yao noticed an uproar coming from the beach. He raised his head and was greeted by the scene of twenty odd cats walking towards them.

Standing right at the front was actually a dog and its female owner.

The very size of the entourage attracted the attention of everyone at the beach. Similarly, Meng Hao noticed them approaching as his forehead creased together. He immediately gathered his people to receive this group of newcomers.

Meng Hao, the most eloquent one amongst them, naturally took the lead by walking at the front. He was taken aback when he saw a little girl with a pair of shades and mask. He bent next to her before asking, “Hey little girl, are you an apostle too?”

“I am not a little girl. I just completed middle school.” Xiao Yu scoffed while she adjusted her shades.

Meng Hao bit his lower lip before diverting the topic to the dog standing by her, “Are you bringing this dog along for the competition?”

“What’s wrong? You haven’t seen a superdog?” Xiao Yu sneered, “I bet you’re from some sort of backward village.”

The veins on Meng Hao’s forehead started popping out before throbbing violently, “I don’t think dogs are allowed to participate in the competition.”

“Who said that?” Xiao Yu replied with a roll of her eyes, “Did the competition rules state that dogs are barred from competing?”

“No, but this competition is a cat king competition for a reason.”

“So did the organizers state that dogs are barred from becoming a cat king?”

Meng Hao could only suppress his raging flames by letting out a series of awkward laughs. He gave up the thought of chatting with this girl and decided to cut to the chase, “Are you interested in joining us?” Meng Hao turned around to reveal the large crowd gathered behind him, “We’re just a group of apostles sharing our experiences. Care to join us?”

Xiao Yu curled her lips in disgust before retorting, “Who is even interested in interacting with scums like yourself? Noodle, let’s go.” Xiao Yu patted Noodle on his back before leading the pack away, leaving Meng Hao behind.

Meng Hao gritted his teeth as he watched the group of cats disappearing into the horizon. His brain exploded with fury as he grumbled, “Why are kids so irritating these days?”

Meanwhile, Noodle was cursing in his head, “D*mn it. I am King Hanada and yet I have to take instructions from this ignorant girl?”

Nekomata, which floated by their side, knew exactly what was going through Noodle’s head when he noticed the grim expression. Nekomata inched towards him and comforted Noodle, “No matter what, Xiao Yu is still an apostle. She has the power to borrow my ability. Furthermore, it’s too risky for a single cat like me to take part in such a large-scale competition. You just have yourself to blame since you can’t borrow my power.”

Despite how exasperated he was, Noodle could only accept the harsh reality unwillingly. Xiao Yu continued slapping her dirty hands against his back and instructed, “Noodle, you must give your all for the competition and win it. Then, we’ll return to a RMB 20,000,000 home. Do you understand?” The mention of the RMB 20,000,000 home caused Xiao Yu to tremble with excitement.

Fish Ball jumped up and down and exclaimed, “Xiao Yu! Xiao Yu! There’s still me! I will give my all for this competition!” Fish Ball had resumed bootlicking Xiao Yu since he fell out with Noodle.

Xiao Yu even allocated one of the districts to Fish Ball as a reward. She hoped to increase her chances by spreading her eggs.

However, due to the lack of dependable apostles, Noodle and Xiao Yu were the only apostle-supercat pair representing them. The remaining districts could only send out a single supercat.

“Bootlick.” Suddenly, a familiar scent permeated the air as Noodle took in a few deep breaths. His nose naturally gravitated towards Zhao Yao as he muttered, “This smell...”

With the majority of the contestants all gathered at the beach, a giant passenger liner appeared from the horizons, capturing all their attention.

Currently, the entire beach was packed with hundreds of apostles and supercats, including Zhao Yao, Liu Yun and her Serval cat.

Most people were either wearing a helmet, sunglasses or even a mask. Hence, Zhao Yao’s peculiar outfit did not stand out as much.

Following the arrival of the passenger liner, a few speedboats emerged from within and bolted towards the shorelines.

Perched on top of one of the speedboat was the familiar black and white cat. It was none other than the cat king of the north.

Some sort of microphone was attached to his neck. Zhao Yao noticed his paws darting across his phone before a computer-generated voice erupted in their ears.

“Welcome to the inaugural cat king competition! I am an organizer and judge of this magnificent competition! I am none other than the cat king of the north! Today’s competition will be held at an island, more than 100 kilometers away. Hence, pick a speedboat and make your way there!”

The process went smoothly as the contestants registered via their superphones before boarding the speedboats. Then, both the supercats and their apostles were assigned a number which was pasted on their bodies. Evidently, this was their participation numbers.

Zhao Yao tore through the crowd and led them right to the ship deck before asking the Serval cat, “How is it? Can you control them?”

Suddenly, the Serval cat’s pupils disappeared, exposing the entire sclera. Her field of vision suddenly included the seagulls flying in the sky and the fishes swimming in the depths of the sea.

The cat nodded her head and replied, “No problem, crystal clear.”

“That’s good. Continue monitoring the situation and alert me if anything goes awry.”

Matcha, which was scrunched up in his robes, could not take it any longer and burst out screaming, “Zhao Yao, let me go now! I want to talk to my fangirl!”

Boarding Time

Zhao Yao slid Matcha a condescending glare before acquiescing to his request. Naturally, the Serval cat’s eyes glistened with excitement when she saw Matcha appear. She ran up to him with tears welled up in her eyes.

“King George, I knew you were inside!”

Matcha acted as if it was nothing and replied, “Take a seat and keep your volume down. I left my palace secretly just for you. I do not want too many people to know about it.”

At this moment, a dog, a cat and a girl had similarly made their way to the deck. The girl looked towards Zhao Yao with a beaming smile and asked, “Yao Er, are you also here for the competition?”

Chapter 313: The Compromise

Zhao Yao's heart sank when he heard that obnoxious female voice rang in his head, "That pesky fella is here again, but how did she even managed to recognize me?" Just now, Zhao Yao had already spotted them when they were stealing all the limelight. It was impossible to miss the entire entourage plus the husky.

Zhao Yao chose this spot just to avoid her. However, it was futile.

"Are you wondering how I managed to spot you?" Xiao Yu bent next to Noodle and rewarded him with a pat on his back, "It's because of Noodle's fantastic nose!"

Zhao Yao let out a sigh of despair before using his illusion to communicate with Xiao Yu alone, "Do not expose my identity. I'm sure you are equally reluctant to expose your own identity as well."

"Of course." A glimmer flashed across her eyes, "I would never participate in this kind of stupid competitions if not for that house."

"House?" Zhao Yao was left speechless by her response, "You are intending to sweep the top three prizes?"

"Of course, with the rising standard of living, property prices in Jiangmen City have soared. My parents are just ordinary people. They will never be able to afford another property in Jiangmen."

Xiao Yu spoke as if she were a thirty-year-old, "Hence, I can only depend on myself or my future husband for my own house. However, I do not wish to be constrained by my future husband's financial capabilities, so I'll simply buy one on my own."

Zhao Yao replied with a roll of his eyes, "Wow, that's far-sighted of you."

"Of course. By the time I'm in college, I will have a house, a car, and my pretty little face. Guys will simply flock to me." Suddenly, Xiao Yu tapped Zhao Yao on his shoulders and remarked, "I have no intention of hurting you with these words."

Zhao Yao was already devoid of expression as he answered, "That's exactly what you are doing."

Xiao Yu ran her fingers through Zhao Yao's hair in an attempt to comfort him, "Actually, it's not a bed of roses when it comes to relationships. The boy from my neighboring class had been courting me for the past month. He finally gave up last week which made me sad for at least half an hour. Staying single at 25 years old is truly a smart decision. A relationship is truly too saddening."

Zhao Yao clutched his chest tightly as he felt dozens of swords impaled right through his heart.

Because of the illusion, Liu Yun was totally oblivious to this conversation. She inched towards them and asked, "Do you guys know each other?"

Zhao Yao immediately clarified, "We've met a few times but we're not that close."

Liu Yun seemed rather confused and asked, "But I thought I heard her call you Yao Er?"

"It's Guo Er, I think you heard wrong." Xiao Yu came forward to help Zhao Yao conceal his identity.

"Huh?"

Zhao Yao immediately screamed at Xiao Yu via the illusion, "Hey! Stop giving me some random names! Do you think you are actually Xiaolongnü? Call me brother."

Xiao Yu acted all sad and lamented, "Oh my, Guo Er, Auntie used to dote on you so much when you're young. Have you forgotten all about it already?"

Zhao Yao was left speechless and rebutted, "Kid, what exactly do you want from me?"

A glimmer of excitement flashed across her eyes as Xiao Yu announced, "Join forces with me as we sweep the top prizes of the competition!"

Zhao Yao stroked his chin thoughtfully before replying, "But they have yet to release the competition format. An alliance will be rather useless if it's round robin."

“Have you ever heard of soccer fixing?” Xiao Yu continued, “If the two of us meet in a competition, you don’t have to go all out, do you understand?”

Zhao Yao covered his mouth with his hand as he pondered about it. Finally, he decided to relent since there were no obvious disbenefits from it.”

Meanwhile, the husky and Fish Ball had already gathered around the Serval cat.

Fish Ball slammed his paws against the wooden plank and roared at Matcha, “Young fella, why do you look so familiar?”

Matcha slid Fish Ball a glance before replying, “Where are you from?”

Fish Ball collapsed to the floor in laughter before he went back on his feet and answered, “You don’t even know who I am? I am cat king Fish Ball of Hanada II. The entire Jiangmen City knows about my name while you remain clueless. Are you even a supercat? I will protect you from today onwards if you kneel down and call me your master.”

“Protect me?” Matcha sniggered before revealing his claws, “Look at it. Have you ever seen claws as sharp as this? Many humans have already fallen prey to these claws.”

Fish Ball was not going to lose just yet. He followed suit and revealed his claws. However, they were barely an inch long, “D*mn it, I forgot Xiao Yu helped to trim them last night!”

Immediately, he illuminated his entire body with light, “A fight between supercats boils down to superpower, not physical brawl!” He dangled his paws in front of Matcha as two beams of light shot out of it, “Do you see the light? Do you have an intense desire to chase after them? Do not control yourself! Chase it, release your inner demons!”

The Serval cat could no longer suppress her urge and pounced onto the beam of light. However, the beam of light always seemed to be able to slip through the gaps between her claws.

Fish Ball began cackling before he looked towards Matcha and commented, “Stop controlling yourself, go and chase”

Piack!

Matcha instantly retaliated with a slap to his face before pouncing on his body and landing a barrage of punches.

“Are you taking me for a fool?” Matcha roared.

Suddenly, Fish Ball started shining even brighter as he screamed, “Stop it! I will kill you if you continue doing that!”

Matcha was taken by surprise when the light suddenly grew brighter. Zhao Yao did not dare to take any risks in the world of superpower and decided to strike first by turning the world to a standstill.

“I hit! I hit! I hit! I hit!”

When time resumed, Fish Ball was already lying motionlessly against the ground with a red and blue light illuminating from his body.

When he saw Matcha flashing his claws in the air, Fish Ball immediately jumped to his feet and pleaded, “Brother, please stop hitting me. I will die if you continue doing so!”

The husky watched the two cats struggling with each other before he rested on the floor impatiently, “Why are cats the only animals awakened? Cats are so stupid. It would be so much better if dogs were awakened instead!”

At this moment, an announcement blared on board the passenger liner, broadcasting the cat king of the north’s voice into every corner.

“How are all the participants doing? I’m sure all of you must be famished by now, so we shall distribute the northern cat cat food to all our participants. We would like to thank them for their generous sponsors!”

“If any of you like the flavors we have prepared today, feel free to scan the QR code at the bottom of the bag. You get to enjoy a 20% discount as a participant during your future purchases!”

Zhao Yao was left speechless by this product placement, “When will he ever stop with his advertisement?”

Soon enough, a person had approached them with bags of cat food. However, Zhao Yao had never expected to see this ‘person’ here.

If you looked at this ‘person’ from afar, he would simply pass off as an ordinary man. However, upon closer observation, you would notice the artificial imprints on his face, wrist, and even neck. He was obviously a human puppet.

“Speaking of which, the person who operated the speedboat just now also seemed kind of strange. Is he also a puppet? Is this the power of the cat king of the north?” Zhao Yao had always been interested in these four cat kings. From the superphones to these human puppets and the weird prizes up for grabs, Zhao Yao suspected that the cat king of the north had the power to create unique items like these.

Chapter 314: You Are Out!

Zhao Yao tore open the bag of cat food and was able to discern its quality without even tasting it.

“I guess it’s an excellent quality cat food? It’s about the same as those brands I can get at supermarkets.”

Zhao Yao scattered the cat food right in front of Matcha. However, he was totally indifferent to it. After all, Matcha’s diet consisted solely of legendary cat rice. He took a bite of it before vomiting the rest.

On the other hand, this was the best cat food Noodle and Fish Ball ever had. They simply could not have enough of it until Xiao Yu dragged them away after taking a few mouthfuls.

Xiao Yu exclaimed, “Are you guys gluttons? Where do you intend to excrete later? I did not bring plastic bags along. Are you trying to turn me into that kind of owners that never pick up after their pets?”

The pair of cat and dog could only lower their heads in shame. Xiao Yu realized how affected they were and decided to comfort them in case it affected their performance, “Alright, alright. I’ll treat the both of you to beef and salmon at the end of the competition.”

Immediately, both their tails went up as they began encircling Xiao Yu excitedly.

Hence, the rest of them remained standing on the deck while setting their eyes on the horizons. The winter breeze continued roaring, sending the majority of the people indoors after half an hour.

After sailing for more than three hours, a thunderous boom exploded from the bottom of the ship, sending tremors and vibrations into every corner. Seawater even started to seep into the ship through the gaps while the liner began tilting towards one side and started sinking.

All the participants were overwhelmed with fear as they scurried across the place, with screams flooding the area. Suddenly, a voice rang through the speakers, “Everyone, this is just a mini test before the start of the competition. This ship will be completely submerged in 10 minutes. Luckily, the island is just 3000 meters away from us. Those who managed to reach it will be eligible for the competition.”

When you peered through the windows, you could see the silhouette of the islands on the far horizon. You could even spot beams of light shooting from the island as if someone were controlling it.

“Also, please do not forget about your life vest. Every seat should come with a life vest!”

Flames of anger shot through the contestants when they heard that obnoxious voice. A sea of profanities and curses erupted in the ship.

“How can he do this to us? Is he trying to kill us?”

“B*stard! This is simply murder!”

“How can the organizers be so irresponsible? How can such competitions even exists?”

The voice from the speakers was totally indifferent to the scolding but continued explaining, “Oh yes, I would like to remind the participants that there is no use searching for the speedboats or lifeboats. We have taken all of them away. Meowhahaha.”

“This lunatic!”

“I’m gonna kill him!”

“What are we supposed to do?”

It was a complete chaos with hundreds of supercats and apostles rushing around like headless chickens.

However, some apostles’ powers came extremely handy. Some had the power to turn into mermaids, while others could walk on the surface of the water. Some cats and apostles could just fly across the water, towards the island.

Following a series of blaring explosions, a shadow emerged from the crowd into the sky. Explosions continually erupted from his soles before he flew towards the island at warp speed.

This person was none other than the teenager with the buzz cut and his Siamese cat.

However, not all the apostles were as lucky as the ones mentioned above. Most of them were at a loss of what to do. Some even resorted to climbing to the top of the ship while others jumped into the rough sea with their life vests on.

The situation was getting out of hand. Zhao Yao, who was caught in the middle of it, let out a sigh of despair. Immediately, he activated timefreeze. Then, he grabbed two life vests before dragging Liu Yun, the Serval Cat, Xiao Yu, the husky and Fish Ball to the deck.

When time resumed, Liu Yun and Xiao Yu just stared at their surroundings in shock. They had no idea how they just magically appeared there.

Zhao Yao simply stared at a distance as he tried to make out an island in the far horizons.

Zhao Yao turned to them with a solemn expression before answering their queries, “This is my ability, I’ll tell you more about it when we have time. The ship is about to sink. Can the both of you swim?”

Zhao Yao could breathe a momentary sigh of relief when both of them nodded their heads. He threw them the two life vests before instructing, “Put this on right now. Jump into the water when we are nearer to the surface. Remember to swim in the direction of the island. Do not get sucked into the eddy currents!”

After giving out his concise instructions, Zhao Yao immediately turned around and left them before Xiao Yu stopped him by tugging onto his sleeve, “What are you trying to do?”

“Save lives.” Zhao Yao replied sternly.

This was the first time Xiao Yu ever saw Zhao Yao act so serious. However, she was immediately distracted by the seas of people gathering and the thunderous blare erupting from the ship. It was going to split into two at any moment.

Xiao Yu could not believe her ears and shook her head violently, “Are you crazy? How can you possibly save all of them? You might even lose your life because of it!”

“Do not worry, I’ll just do whatever I can. I’ll never do anything beyond my abilities. The two of you will just wait here for me.” Zhao Yao swung Xiao Yu’s hand away before dashing back into the cabin. Meanwhile, he was thinking, “I’ll save as many people as I can. Maybe, I can even earn some experience points from this.”

At this moment, the Serval cat began blinking and responded, “Maybe you do not have to save all of them.”

With her sclera all exposed, the Serval cat explained, “By tapping on the fish’s vision, I realized that many of those who cannot save themselves are being taken away to a corner of the island.”

From the fish perspective, one of the contestants who could not swim was enveloped in a giant bubble when he fell into the sea. Then, he was slowly brought towards the island.

“Oh really?” This piqued Zhao Yao’s curiosity, “What’s rescuing all these people?”

“I have no idea, they look really weird. I don’t think they are biological creatures.”

Suddenly, a glimmer flashed across Zhao Yao’s eyes, “Oh yes, since the government is somehow related to this competition, they will never allow any contestants to die on their watch. So this was done just to scare them? They just wanted to weed out the weaklings before the start of the actual race ... this process allows them to see each participant’s true character.”

Zhao Yao finally managed to relax when he heard this reassuring news. However, his eyes lit up when he noticed a giant exclamation mark at the corner of the ship deck.

Knowing that things were not as dire as expected, the solemn expression also disappeared from Zhao Yao’s face. He looked at the Serval cat and asked, “Oh yes, can you direct the fishes to save the people?”

Five minutes later, Meng Hao and his companions were all gathered together at a wooden plank. All their arms were resting on the planks along with their cats. The cats all huddled in the middle of the plank, for fear of a single drop of water touching their fur.

Meng Hao continued kicking relentlessly as he propelled the plank forward. He screamed words of encouragement, “Let’s go! We are almost at the island! One last push!”

One fatso commented, “Bro, if not for your composure and wit, we would never have thought of using this plank as a float. We would have been dead by now.”

Meng Hao revealed a grin before replying, “This is the product of our combined effort. This competition seems extremely bizarre. We will never know what will happen when we reach the island. We can only survive if we stay together as a group.”

At this moment, a school of fish appeared, propelling Zhao Yao and the rest forward by producing a huge wave. However, the supercats which Noodle brought along fainted the moment they came in contact with water, eliminating them from the competition.

Behind them were an entire group of people grabbing onto the planks for their dear lives. These were the contestants Zhao Yao had rescued.

When Zhao Yao passed by Meng Hao and company, he noticed the exclamation marks above their heads and immediately asked them, “Hey Meng Hao, do you need any help?”

Chapter 315: Saving Lives

Meng Hao stared wide-eyed at Zhao Yao before clarifying, “You have the power ... to control fishes?” After all, Zhao Yao was playing an instrumental role throughout the entire episode. It was hard not to believe so.

Zhao Yao simply replied with a cackle and responded, “I guess it’s better if I keep my power a secret, so stop asking me about it. You guys have been swimming the entire journey. Coupled with the bad weather, you are bound to fall sick. You won’t even be able to compete at the end of the day.”

Meng Hao bit his lips and nodded his head. Actually, he was raging with fury that someone was taking the limelight away from him by saving more people and winning more hearts. However, he managed to put on a front and revealed a beaming smile, “Bro, thank you so much for your help. If not for you, I would be dead even if I managed to get to the island.”

With that, Meng Hao began waving his arms frantically in the air, gesturing them towards Zhao Yao. However, Zhao Yao suddenly held onto his arm and exclaimed, “Wait!”

Tens of people stared at him open-mouthed. Zhao Yao was trembling with excitement when he saw the plethora of exclamation marks floating by the sea. With his most amiable smile, he looked towards them and asked, “Do all of you need my help?”

“Of course!”

“Let us join you!”

“It’s freezing!”

Immediately, Zhao Yao’s BOOK was inundated with tens of missions. The objective remained the same – rescue them to the island. Zhao Yao stared at the experience points before accepting the mission one by one, stretching his smile from one ear to another.

Xiao Yu observed Zhao Yao's expression and scoffed, "He's just rescuing someone. Why does he have to smile like some pervert?"

Soon enough, the fishes began propelling the cats forward by producing an enormous undercurrent in the sea. However, the undercurrent somehow seemed to miss Meng Hao and his three companions, leaving them floating at the exact same spot. They knew that something was amiss as they watched everyone, but themselves, traveling towards the island.

His chest tightened with fear when he swept his head around and realized that the four of them were the only ones left, stranded back there.

Meng Hao tried his best to suppress the anger exploding within him, "Bro, could you kindly get your fish to help us too?"

Meanwhile, Zhao Yao was still communicating with the Serval cat, "Do not help the four of them without my orders." Zhao Yao shook his head dejectedly when he noticed the absence of his favorite punctuation, "Bro, have you ever watched Dragon Ball?"

Meng Hao's forehead creased together as he replied, "Yeah."

"That will make it a lot easier to explain. The fishes that I call upon are similar to the Flying Nimbus. Only the pure-hearted individuals are allowed to receive their help. Even a tinge of evil thoughts would render you incompatible with them."

Meng Hao's jaw went slack when he heard those absurd claims, "Bro, are you joking with me?"

"Why would I ever joke about something as serious as this?" Zhao Yao pinched the bridge of his nose before continuing, "Just try asking for my help whole-heartedly without even a trace of evil thoughts. I'm sure the fishes will help you the moment you do so."

Meng Hao's fingers began trembling with anger. He did not want to go on his knees with all those eyes staring at him. How would the others regard him if he resorted to this? However, his companions were already shuddering violently from the cold and began stuttering, "Please ... please rescue us."

Zhao Yao's eyes lit up with excitement when he saw the exclamation mark sprang up above one guy's head. He thought, "I guess it only works when they truly require my help."

Immediately, a school of fishes produced a tremendous undercurrent which propelled that guy forward, towards the rest of the people. A smile crept up his face as he roared, "Boss, it works! Just ask with sincerity!"

The two other guys immediately followed suit and were rendered the help which they needed, leaving the despondent Meng Hao all alone. He finally relented, "Can you please help me?"

Zhao Yao took a glance at him but shook his head in despair, "You are filled with too many evil thoughts. My fishes don't even dare to come near to you."

Meng Hao's pulse slammed with fury as he cursed in his head, "F*cker, you are the one filled with evil thoughts! You mother f*cker!"

His companions began screaming at him, "Boss, you just have to ask earnestly!"

"Yes! Concentrate all your thoughts on it and don't think about anything else. Show the fishes your conviction!"

"R*tard." Meng Hao never believed a single word Zhao Yao muttered. All along, he had suspected that the man in the black robes was simply toying with them.

He looked towards the people ahead and realized that all of them had slid him a guarded look as if he were truly filled with evil thoughts and intentions. How could that possibly happen? All his previous efforts in recruiting the apostles and supercats would simply go down the drain!

Surrounded by intense gaze and his subordinates' screams, his brain was about to explode with fury. He could only ball his fists together and suppressed his anger before looking towards Zhao Yao and asked again, "I'm begging you, can you please just save me?"

Finally, Zhao Yao saw the exclamation mark which he had been waiting for. His mouth curled into a smile as he replied, "Good kid, come join us."

Suddenly, a huge undercurrent accumulated beneath Meng Hao before pushing him forward. However, a sudden vortex erupted from beneath, sending Meng Hao crashing into the water surface.

Meng Hao's teeth chattered violently from both the cold and anger. He stared daggers at Zhao Yao and screamed, "Bro, what's the meaning of that?"

Zhao Yao was filled with remorse as he accidentally canceled the mission. Obviously, he could not tell Meng Hao the truth. He could only come up with a lame excuse before explaining, "The fishes suddenly detected a sudden surge of evil thoughts which resulted in that. I'm advising you to give up on these thoughts and to turn over a new leaf."

A hint of fear crossed their eyes when the others heard Zhao Yao's words. They even began paddling away to distance themselves away from Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was on the verge of killing Zhao Yao after a few futile attempts before the fishes finally rescued him.

He realized that everyone was keeping a distance away from him. That alone caused fury to pour through his body. He truly did not harbor any evil thoughts in his head. All there was were simply anger, anger, and more anger.

All in all, Zhao Yao managed to save 50 apostles and 40 supercats from the rough waters as he brought them safely to the shores.

This short trip instantly earned Zhao Yao close to 1000 experience points, changing his BOOK to lv5(2558/10000). Just looking at it caused Zhao Yao to beam from ear to ear.

With his explosive power, the teenager with the Siamese cat was naturally the first ones to reach the island. He slid a condescending glare at the bunch of fools Zhao Yao rescued and scoffed, "Lame."

He was also an apostle working alongside Inspector Ho. Naturally, he had details about the competition which Zhao Yao had.

He knew that Inspector Ho would never put these innocent lives at risk. Hence, he had altered his strategy to align with this key idea.

From his perspective, this ‘accident’ was simply a sieve to eliminate the apostles with inferior strength, determination, and even personality. To him, what Zhao Yao did was simply a waste of effort. It was only a matter of time before these people were eliminated by the upcoming competition.

With more and more people arriving at the beach, they soon realized a weird phenomenon – there was a clear distinction along the beach separating the contestants into two groups.

Chapter 316: White Flag

There were two distinct groups of contestants on the island.

The first group managed to reach the island by solely depending on their own strength. Hence, most of them were dripping wet and were drying themselves by the fire.

The other group was the ones enveloped by the giant bubble, which explained how dry they were. Evidently, they were the contestants saved by the organizers.

Suddenly, beams of intense light rained down on the beach as the cat king of the north slowly descended from a flight of stairs.

“It has been a tough journey for all of you here. We have prepared some fire for you to dry yourself with. Feel free to take the ginger water and warm water we have provided. Take care of your body and refrain from catching a cold!”

An intense heat started radiating from Chimera’s body as embers erupted from his skin, instantaneously vaporizing the water on his body. He slid cat king of the north a death glare before muttering, “Do not let me catch you, baka! I’ll kill you!”

Cat’s inherent fear of water coupled with his fire-breathing abilities intensified Chierma’s disdain for water. Thankfully, he was saved by the school of fishes halfway through his journey. If not for that, he would have already vented his frustration on someone already.

Matcha was half dead as he collapsed to the ground with his body drenched in seawater. He mustered his remaining strength to slid Fish Ball a glance before muttering, “Come here.”

Fish Ball came immediately with hopes of getting into his good books, “Hey bro, what’s the matter?”

Matcha raised his paws in the air before running them through his fur and instructing, "Lick me."

Immediately, the blood vessels in Fish Ball's eyes burst, turning his eyes all red. With his body quivering in indignation, he looked towards Matcha and clarified, "So you need my help to lick your fur?" Even though it was natural for ordinary cats to help one another groom themselves, this habit had been regarded with disdain since supercats received their intelligence.

This was especially torturous when you help a cat of the same gender groom himself.

"Hmph," Matcha rolled over before flashing his razor-sharp claws in Fish Ball's face. Then, he began to mimic his fluid movements on the piano to show just how nimble he was with his fingers.

Fish Ball was choking with anger as he muttered word by word, "I ... will ... do ... it..."

Matcha could feel the seawater dissipating with every movement of Fish Ball's tongue. A smile crept across his face as he mumbled, "A little lower, hmph, there, right there. Just a little lower ..."

Tears welled up in his eyes when Fish Ball stared at the spot he was about to lick, "Bro, I am a supercat that have been awakened for half a year. I simply cannot do this!"

Matcha let out a sigh before mocking him, "You are useless. Never mind, just continue licking my back."

Fish Ball continued licking Matcha with his eyes glued to him. He swore in his head, "I will lick you until you turn bald." Immediately, he began licking Matcha even more violently.

In response, Matcha screamed, "Oh my, that's right! This strength is perfect!"

Following cat king of the north's words, the crowd scattered across the beach as they found a fire to themselves.

Meanwhile, he continued his speech, "You might have noticed that those apostles and supercats with no means of saving their lives were saved by the organizers when the ship sank. Even though they are still alive, they are unfortunately eliminated from the competition."

One girl sprang to her feet and protested, “Is there something wrong with you? How can you just do whatever you want? What if something disastrous happened just now? What if someone lost his life? What if all of us fall sick?”

This girl’s words were a spark as others followed suit and created a ruckus.

However, Zhao Yao, Explosive Man, Meng Hao and Chimera decided to keep their mouths shut.

The cat king of the north simply acknowledged the sea of dissent with a smile, “Li Li, sorry for troubling you.”

Immediately, a giant wave erupted from the surface of the calm sea, producing a thunderous boom which swept across the beach. The giant waves came together before morphing into a giant cat, that was at least 10 meters tall.

Perched on this giant cat’s forehead was a regular tri-colored cat with a body coated in glistening fur. There was even a tiny tiara on top of her head. Evidently, she was the one controlling this giant cat.

“Everyone, allow me to introduce you to the cat king of the south, Li Li. She has the power to control water flow and she was the one who saved some of your lives.”

“Also, allow me to make myself clear one more time. As explained earlier, the cat king competition is a contest involving apostles and supercats. Anything can happen in the world of superpowers. Hence, there is no such thing as absolute fairness and safety in this competition.

You have no one to blame if you are born smaller, weaker, or dumber than others. No one cares.

As a matter of fact, battles that are more gruesome than you could possibly imagine are being waged in certain corners of the world right now. It is 10 times, 100 times, 1000 times worse than what you had just experienced.

If you came to this competition thinking that everything was a bed of roses, I would strongly encourage you to leave right now. There’s nothing wrong in a peaceful life, it might even be more suited for you.”

Cat king of the north continued, “If you wish to remove yourself from the competition, simply step inside this bubble. It will absorb all the water on your body. It also comes with an endless supply of water, food and sleeping bags. There is even a live broadcast of the competition. We will then send you home at the end of this round.

However, if you choose to continue down this path, I would like to apologize...”

To add on to the dramatic effect, numerous waves continued sweeping across the vast sea. It seemed liked it was about to engulf the beach at any moment.

Zhao Yao stared at cat king of the south and pondered, “As compared to Nessie, she can control a far greater amount of water, but she doesn’t seem capable of turning her own body into water. In the case, it’s simply a tradeoff between offense and defense.”

As compared to the cat king of the north’s ability, the cat king of the south’s power was far easier to understand. Zhao Yao had already come up with a series of tactics to counter her power the moment he saw her.

Faced with Li Li’s incredible power and seeing that the strong apostles, such as Zhao Yao, Explosive Man, Chimera, Nekomata and Yue Shan, reluctance to say a word, those who stood forward and protested could not stomach it anymore.

“What kind of joke is this? Who even wants to participate in this stupid competition?”

“I’m leaving this competition. There are no safety guidelines at all!”

These apostles were ordinary humans who had only just received their superpower half a year ago. They had never seen the danger associated with their powers. They only came here because of the lucrative prizes. They thought that it was an ordinary tussle between ordinary humans. Never did they expect such a dangerous thing to befall them. Without a guarantee for their individual safety, many decided to quit.

White flags were thrown in the air as the participants entered the bubble. Soon enough, only 50 contestants remained on the beach. It was less than 10% of what they started with.

The remaining people were veterans such as Zhao Yao, Explosive Man and even Chimera. With their extensive battle experiences, they clearly understood how dangerous and ruthless the upcoming battles were going to be.

Chapter 317: The First Round of Elimination

Explosive Man slid the people who took the easy way out a condescending glare before muttering, “A bunch of trash.”

Meanwhile, Meng Hao’s forehead creased together at this sight. This competition was completely different from what he had imagined. His initial attempts at winning people’s heart had failed resoundingly, “At this rate, I can only try my best and become the champion. When I am crowned the cat king of Jiangmen City ...”

All these time, Yue Shan was hiding beneath his mask with his eyes fixed on Explosive Man. This apostle’s strength was far worse than he had assumed.

“He is exactly the same as Inspector Ho’s description. His power was equally strong in terms of destructive power, offensive capabilities and even agility. I guess he is my biggest threat to earning that title.”

Cat king of the north bellowed in laughter as he observed the people who chose to remain in the competition, “All right guys, this is your last chance. There is still time if you decide to give up now. Even though Li Li and I will be monitoring the remaining competition, we cannot guarantee that you will leave this competition unscathed. After all, this is war.”

Following his warnings, another two groups decided to heed his advice and left the competition.

Approximately 10 kilometers away stood a warship resting in the middle of the sea. Inspector Ho was inside watching the live telecast of the competition.

Every single inch of the island was monitored with a camera. They even employed drone cameras to serve as backup cameras. This allowed him to monitor the situation on the island perfectly.

Lin Chen's forehead creased together when he realized just how tense the events had turned out. Initially, he was just dispatched here to alleviate the problem of manpower shortage. Seeing the situation, he could not help but commented, "Sir, is there really a need to make things so dramatic?"

"Yes," Inspector Ho replied sternly, "If we were representing the government, it would be unwise to resort to such measures. However, the four cat kings are the ones under the spotlight right now. They belong to the dark side of the world of superpower. With them around, we can do anything we want."

Furthermore, this competition is supposed to act as a deterrent in the world of apostles and supercats. The champion should be someone that would cause your chests to tighten with fear. If it was just some simple tussle between them, what's the point of even crowning the ultimate victor the cat king of Jiangmen City?

The champion must be someone who managed to overcome the entire bloodbath and remain standing at the end of the day. Only then would they submit to his rule.

And those who are unhappy with the entire organization and the four cat kings would simply jump onto our side at the end of the day."

Meanwhile, Zhao Yao glanced at the pair of Liu Yun and her cat before whispering, "How is it? I strongly encourage you to quit this competition. You guys have seen it for yourself. This is extremely dangerous."

...

The Serval cat balled her paws together before shaking her head violently. Her eyes glimmered with resolve as she announced, "I will follow King George!"

Matcha swung his head gleefully before whispering to himself, "I knew that some bitch out there would know how to appreciate just how great I am."

Liu Yun rested her head against her hands and deliberated over the matter for quite some time. A tinge of hesitation flashed across her eyes as she spoke, "I will just be a burden if I join you. In that case, I'll just ..."

Zhao Yao nodded his head with a smile plastered on his face. He thought, “Liu Yun is a smart girl. It would be so troublesome if she actually tagged along and dragged me down.”

He then fixed his eyes on the last remaining target, Xiao Yu, and asked, “How about you? Firstly, I have to ask you a question. Are you even an apostle? Do you have any abilities at all?”

“Lame. Obviously, I’m an apostle. I might even be stronger than you. Also, this is my shot at a rags to riches story.” However, Xiao Yu slid Fish Ball a condescending glare before instructing him, “Fish Ball, you are too weak. Without an apostle, I’ll encourage you to leave this competition. We will find you after winning this competition.”

Actually, cat king of the north’s announcement had already sent shivers running down Fish Ball’s spine. Xiao Yu’s words were simply music to his ears as he hurriedly escaped to the elimination zone. With all these powerful apostles surrounding him, Fish Ball felt like a rat caught between a pack of cats.

“Alright, I guess the remaining contenders are those genuinely interested in the competition. In that case, enjoy your rest while you can. The first round of elimination will commence in half an hour.”

Hence, Zhao Yao, Liu Yun, Xiao Yu, the husky, the Serval cat and the invisible Roly Poly gathered at a small fire which crackled and spat sparks at them. This brief respite was extremely short. Soon, half an hour had passed and the cat king of the north had returned.

“This will mark the start of the first round of elimination. Look around you! In the middle of this island stands a huge forest. I have scattered dozens of toy soldiers and cameras all over the place.”

“However, only 32 of these toy soldiers have a handmade sapphire embedded at the back of their heads. You will earn the qualification to proceed to the next round if you manage to retrieve the sapphire and make it back to the beach within one hour’s time!”

“You are allowed to snatch the sapphire throughout the course of the entire competition. However, there are two pointers that you must take note of.

Firstly, we will stop you if you resort to any methods which might potentially threaten your opponent’s life. From there, the aggressor will also be eliminated from the race.

Secondly, each pair cannot have more than one sapphire with them at any point in time. Anyone caught flouting the rules will face immediate elimination.

Each sapphire has been attached with our own GPS system. Furthermore, we have cameras strategically located at every corner of the island. Hence, do not even think about flouting the rules.”

A giant screen unfurled in the elimination zone as cat king of the north continued with his explanation. On it were all the footages captured by the cameras. You could even spot the toy soldiers with their rifles slung across their backs.

Tiny blue dots, which represented the sapphire’s location, were scattered all over the map. They were roaming aimlessly around the island alongside the toy soldiers.

Meng Hao’s pupils constricted as he whispered to himself, “In that case, even the apostles and supercats which are eliminated would be able to see the live telecast! This is the best opportunity to leave a good impression and attract people to join me!”

After given it much consideration, Meng Hao threw his hands in the air and asked, “Are we allowed to form alliances in this part of the competition?”

“Whatever floats your boat!” The cat king of the north cackled before continuing, “I don’t care if you form alliances or betray your friends as long as you do not kill anyone.”

Suddenly, another arm shot into the air as the Explosive Man roared, “What if we accidentally destroy the sapphire?”

Cat king of the north replied, “These are sapphires which I have created with my very own hands. I am fairly confident in their strength. However, if you are caught destroying the sapphires intentionally, you will also be automatically eliminated from the race.”

Explosive Man curled his lips in disgust and scoffed.

Zhao Yao threw his hands in the air and asked, “What if fewer than 32 participants managed to return with a sapphire at the end of the one hour?”

“The first round of competition will end at the one hour mark. Naturally, those without the sapphires will be disqualified.”

Zhao Yao nodded his head as a glimmer of excitement flashed across his eyes.

“Are there any more questions?” The cat king of the north swept his eyes across the beach. A moment of silence ensued before he raised his paw in the air and announced, “In that case, let the competition begin!”

Following his roar, the entire crowd dispersed from the beach and disappeared towards the forest.

As expected, Explosive Man was all the way at the front with air currents propelling him forward. He sprang from one place to another and was the first to enter the dense forest. The Siamese cat grabbed onto his neck for dear life as a frown crept up its face, “Why is this competition so troublesome?”

Yue Shan began pulling his two companions into the forest with the help of his psychokinesis. With their bodies levitating in mid-air, they too made their way into their objective.

The three of them entered the race alone, without their supercats.

Somehow, Yue Shan seemed to know where the sapphires were hiding and made a dash in a specific direction. Actually, he already knew the entire competition process at the back of his head as the predetermined winner. With his game-winning plan laid out in front of him, he went about executing it without a shred of hesitation.

Meng Hao carefully observed the situation as an alarm rang in his head, “These people are no pushovers. I guess I should pick a different direction instead.”

With that, he grabbed the white British Shorthair by his feet before calling on his two companions to enter the forest. To play safe, he chose a different route from Yue Shan and Explosive Man.

Chapter 318: The Excited Participants

Zhao Yao also made his way into the forest but abruptly stopped right next to a tree. This was barely 100 meters from the starting point.

“Zhao Yao! All of them are already so far ahead of you! What are you even waiting for?” Xiao Yu threw her hands in the air before venting all her frustration on Noodle’s head, leaving him seething with anger.

“Do not worry. I have a foolproof plan that would definitely work. However, I would like to try to eliminate some of the contestants right now.” Zhao Yao slowly shut his eyes and began contemplating the situation.

At the same time, he raked his fingers through the Serval cat’s back before instructing, “Talk to the seagulls and let them monitor the situation on the island. Remember to keep a close eye on the elimination zone.”

Meanwhile, the conditions in the elimination zone were a far cry compared to the dense and humid forest. Other than bread, water and fire, the eliminated contestants even had all kinds of tidbits, rags, sleeping bags, hammocks to ensure a comfortable rest.

At the front of the elimination zone stood a large screen monitor which gave a live broadcast of the situation within the island.

Suddenly, cat king of the north’s voice sounded from all directions, “Finally, the heart-thumping competition has begun! Let’s look at how our contestants are doing!”

Following his introduction, a series of red dots magically appeared all over the map. Unlike the blue dots, these red dots, which represented the contestants’ locations, were whizzing across the forest.

Cat king of the north stared at the red dots scattered all over the map and sniggered, “Just look at how excited they are!”

Liu Yun was sitting comfortably in a recliner, with Fish Ball resting in her arms. Her heart skipped a beat when she was struck with a sudden realization as she looked towards her own number.

“Is the GPS locating system hidden inside our racing bib?”

These racing bibs were distributed by the organizers when the participants first boarded the ocean liner. From the looks of it, some sort of tracking device was also attached to it.

Cat king of the north's captivating commentary attracted the attention of many eliminated contestants. Even though they were already disqualified, they were still fairly interested in its outcome. After all, a battle of superpowers was far and few between, a rare sight to ordinary civilians.

Suddenly, the commentator (cat king of the north) guffawed as he pointed to a specific point on the map, "The first battle has already begun! This is way quicker than I had imagined!"

With the footage enlarged, the viewers could watch Explosive Man slowly descend from the air before getting surrounded by tens of armed toy soldiers.

The corner of the commentator's lips curled upwards as he announced excitedly, "Let us have a look! This is the first fight between the toy soldiers and our contestants. I'm curious to find out more about him, hmph ... This is the pair of cat king hailing from Guang Ming district. They are Pork Chop and his apostle, Explosive Man!"

Naturally, these were the information provided by the contestants when they first registered for the competition via their superphones. However, not many bothered to fill up using their real names.

The commentator declared excitedly, "Explosive Man is somehow capable of producing a sudden burst of strength. This allows him to propel his body over long distances and even fly at low altitude.

However, my toy soldiers are no pushover as well. These toy soldiers are imbued with the physical gifts of a grown man. The rifles they are equipped with are also loaded with rubber bullets.

But you should never underestimate the strength of these rubber bullets. Even though I have intentionally reduced its power, eliminating the risks of death, getting hit by these bullets were as good as getting struck by a baton. Furthermore, if you are hit by these bullets at short distances, it would create a devastating pain which will even cause grown men to scream like a girl."

Fish Ball began shuddering the moment the commentator's words rang in his ears. He could not help but feel relieved for exiting the competition.

“This battle of superpower is simply too dangerous.” With a wide grin plastered on his face, Fish Ball buried his head in Liu Yun’s chest, “I, Fish Ball, deserve this comfortable chair as I lie down here and watch others struggle to survive.”

Meanwhile, Explosive Man started laughing when he was greeted by this ridiculous scene. He instantly bolted towards the toy soldiers with air currents exploding from his sole.

Explosive Man’s insane power was borrowed from his supercat , the Siamese cat. To put it simply, he could detonate any non-living matter which his body came into contact with. Moreover, he could even control the direction of the impact from the detonation.

This meant that he was unable to blow up living matters such as humans and cats. However, non-living matters such as clothes, air molecules and houses were his ideal explosive material. The strength of the desaturation was also dependent on the quality of the explosive material.

With this power, he was able to send shock waves and heat waves sweeping towards his enemies, while remaining unscathed himself. With the law of action-reaction, he could even move around at an astounding speed or even fly at low heights.

With all eyes staring at him, Explosive Man simply burst towards the hordes of toy soldiers at warp speed. Every step he took produced an extraordinary amount of force which sent dust particles flying into the air. With his great speed and the smokescreen formed by the settling dust, none of the bullets even managed to touch him as he continued his onslaught.

Suddenly, a series of loud explosions could be heard from even the elimination zone as Explosive Man sent the toy soldiers flying in the air before their bodies disintegrated and settled as stardust.

Explosive Man stared at the ruins from his devastation and scoffed, “No sapphire?”

The commentator continued his elaborate commentary as the battle unfolded, “Wow, his explosive prowess is simply off the charts! He was able to get rid of so many toy soldiers in a blink of an eye! This contestant is definitely one that you should take note of! I’m putting my money on him to make it through to the round of 32.”

The elimination zone broke into chatters as they witnessed just how strong Explosive Man was from his impeccable performance.

“He’s so strong! Anyone would have died from that attack!”

“I never expected such a strong contender to be part of this competition. Thank god I am already out of it.”

Now, the cameras were focused on the action somewhere else. Yue Shan was speeding down a path before loads of rubber bullets rained down on him, obstructing his progress. However, the bullet suddenly stopped mid-air before dropping to the ground. Immediately, the toy soldiers were restrained by an invisible force as they were lifted into the air before getting crushed by the same potent force.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao and his two companions started mutating before transforming into a lion hybrid, tiger hybrid, and wolf hybrid respectively. Huge and well-defined muscles adorned their new bodies as they gnashed their teeth in anger. Their strength had far surpassed that of any ordinary humans.

The British Shorthairs, which Meng Hao and his gang had adopted, were brothers by blood. Hence, they unleashed a similar power the day they were awakened – the power to turn into beasts.

The three beast hybrid just charged towards the toy soldiers at one go. They did not even bother to dodge the bullets as they were intercepted by their thick fur and tough muscles. This attack did no damage to them but fanned their anger as they let out a menacing growl.

On the other end of the island, Chimera was speeding through the forest by controlling a 10-meter long fire dragon. The fire dragon instantly burnt the toy soldiers to a crisp when it went past them.

There was also a Garfield cat traveling inside the forest alone. Suddenly, it let out a weak growl as tens of shadows appeared behind it. These shadows were no ordinary shadows. They were tangible beings which charged towards the toy soldiers before taking them down effortlessly.

The viewers stared wide-eyed at the screen as they witnessed just how strong the remaining contestants actually were. Most of those who were eliminated had only used their abilities for small fights and tussles. They had never been involved in a battle of this scale. Hence, they were totally foreign to these potent powers.

Liu Yun’s forehead creased together when she observed just how strong they were, “These contestants are so strong ...” She began to worry about Zhao Yao.

“Haha, all these contestants seem so excited, eh?” the commentator suddenly paused in his explanation before resuming, “But three groups of contestants have not moved an inch since the start of the competition.”

At this moment, Zhao Yao appeared on the large screen standing in the elimination zone.

Chapter 319: The First Successful Participant!

Zhao Yao, the Serval cat, Matcha, Xiao Yu and her husky simply sat at the foot of a tree.

Zhao Yao’s eyes remained tightly shut together as he began to brainstorm his next course of action.

“My power of timefreeze is enough for me to steal the sapphires from any contestants. My road to victory is simple and clear, just steal three sapphires.”

“However, what if I take this to the next level? If we are the only three contestants to make it through this round, we will automatically win the top three prizes.” Zhao Yao’s brows started to knit together as he pondered, “So I just have to use timefreeze to get rid of the remaining sapphires. Should I absorb them into the extradimensional belly? No. These sapphires are embedded with a tracking device. Absorbing them into the belly will be as good as flouting the rules.

If the organizers realize that I am cheating so blatantly, they will simply change the rules to work against me.

I need to come up with an even less conspicuous method, something smarter. I need to eliminate everyone without destroying the sapphires ...”

The commentator stared at the screen with his forehead furrowed together as he muttered, “This is very strange. All the contestants should already be fighting against the toy soldiers or locating the sapphires, so what exactly are these people up to? Let me take a look, they are King George and Daniel Wu, the quintessential fake names.

Beside them are cat king Tiny, cat king Noodle and his apostle, Xiaolongnü.

“I didn’t even know that dogs could also be awakened. As a matter of fact, this is the first time I have even heard of a superdog.” The commentator looked towards the crowd and asked, “How do you think they will fare in the competition?”

The crowd simply stared at them before erupting into their small discussions.

“I think they are just moments from giving up.”

“I would also give up if I found myself caught in this situation. Why would I throw my life away for something as stupid as this?”

“I think that guy has the ability to control marine life but I don’t think that girl has any useful abilities. I’m sure she will give up.”

Liu Yun’s forehead creased together as she listened to their conversations. She could not help but worry about them.

At this moment, Zhao Yao disappeared from the screen as the cameras focused on Explosive Man. With streams of air current exploding from his feet, he was already making his way back to the beach from the forest. From the minimap at the corner of the screen, the red dot was returning with the blue dot.

“Haha, everyone! Take a look! Explosive Man has already found the sapphire. I guess he is the first contestant to make it past this round of competition. He is truly remarkable!” The commentator announced.

Because of Zhao Yao’s position, Explosive Man sped past him when making his way back to the starting point.

When Explosive Man whizzed past Zhao Yao, their eyes actually met for a split second. However, Explosive Man could not even be bothered by either Zhao Yao or Xiao Yu. He simply cocked his head towards his destination and continued flying back at warp speed.

According to the rules, the participant must return to the beach with the sapphire in hand in order to advance to the next stage.

Explosive Man reached his hand into the pocket only to realize that it was empty.

“What happened?”

At the same time, the viewers in the elimination zone were equally baffled by this scene.

The commentator stroked his chin thoughtfully as he observed the minimap, “This is interesting.”

...

On the other hand, while Explosive Man was fuming with anger as he made his way past Zhao Yao, Zhao Yao simply looked into Xiao Yu’s eyes before muttering, “Take a look at your pocket.”

Xiao Yu’s eyelids quivered when she reached her hands into her pocket. She could feel the jagged edges of the precious gem and was so surprised to find it lying in her pocket. With a face of astonishment, she asked Zhao Yao, “How did you even do that? Weren’t you just sitting down here the entire time? Where is this sapphire from? Don’t tell me it’s a forgery.”

Zhao Yao grabbed the sapphire from her hands and replied, “You are the only forgery around here. If you don’t want it, I can just throw it away.”

“I want it!” Xiao Yu cried as she snatched the sapphire back from Zhao Yao before cradling it in her arms. Her lips curled into a smile as she stared at her ticket to the next round of competition. However, a tinge of fear crossed her eyes as she looked towards him, “What will happen to you then?”

“You are simply a burden if you stay here. I have already come up with a flawless plan. If it works, we will be the only contestants making it through to the next stage. We will instantly become the top three winners. Then, we will just decide the champion, first runner-up, second runner-up amongst ourselves.” Zhao Yao bit on his lower lip when he recalled his mission before retracting his statement, “However, I must be the champion.” He then nudged Xiao Yu to make her way to the finishing point.

Xiao Yu was staring at Zhao Yao with a very serious and solemn expression. Suddenly, her lips parted as she muttered, “Yao Er, if you do not make it through this round and I successfully claim

the top three prizes, I will ...” Her forehead creased together at this moment as a hint of hesitation flashed across her eyes, “I will ... split the prize with you.” It took her lots of effort to say that.

“Alright, stop your stupid blabbering. I can win the title whenever I want.”

The husky shot out his tongue before screaming at Xiao Yu, “Let’s go Xiao Yu! We will get the reward the moment we advance through the first round. The reward is the cat food that we had just now and an autograph signed by cat king of the north himself!”

Bam! Zhao Yao sent a slap across his head as the Husky collapsed to the ground, with a dejected face.

Suddenly, Nekomata slowly appeared from the husky’s back and whispered to himself, “Illusion, timefreeze, and also that ability called extradimensional belly ...” Other than Zhao Yao himself, Nekomata was the most knowledge about his abilities. He had witnessed how strong Zhao Yao was and had absolute confidence in him.

“There’s nothing for me to worry if Zhao Yao’s around. I better make sure he doesn’t realize that I’m also here.”

Zhao Yao could finally breathe a sigh of relief with Xiao Yu returning to the beach. He asked the Serval cat telepathically, “How’s the situation in the forest?”

...

The commentator’s jaw went slack as he roared, “Huh? Everyone, something extremely strange occurred just now when Explosive Man’s sapphire disappeared. Somehow, a sapphire magically appeared in Xiaolongnü’s hands. This means that she had stolen the sapphire using some sort of power.

However, she is a heartless woman, leaving her companion alone while she advances to the next stage.”

Xiao Yu rasied the sapphire in her hands after reaching the beach to a chorus of applause as the commentator announced, “Let’s welcome our first participant!”

Xiao Yu was completely indifferent to the applause as she set on the ground with her head nestled in Noodle's belly. Because of her status as an active participant, she was not allowed to return to the elimination zone after completing this round. Hence, she could not watch the live broadcast of the competition from the screen.

Meanwhile, Fish Ball who was resting in Liu Yun's arms stared at the screen when a glimmer flashed across his eyes, "At this rate, everyone's eyes will be on Zhao Yao. Judging from his character, he is definitely up to something evil. However, I don't think he knows about the tracking device in the race bib."

With that thought in his head, he craned his neck upwards and saw lots of seagulls encircling the island.

Suddenly, Fish Ball sprang from Liu Yun's arms before making his way to a secluded part of the elimination zone.

Liu Yun gave chase only to find him shooting a beam of light at the sky.

"Fish Ball, what are you doing?"

Chapter 320: Let the Games Begin

"Roly Poly, activate invisibility now."

Once Zhao Yao gave the order, the fat cat used his power to conceal Zhao Yao, Matcha, the Serval, and himself from sight.

The disappearing act did not go unnoticed by the Cat King of the North. He instantly switched to Zhao Yao's video feed.

"Huh? It seems that either Daniel Wu or Tiny can become invisible. We can't see them and neither can the camera capture them. Well, I have to say this would come in handy in our competition. Let's see if they're able to use it to their advantage!"

After a pause, the King of the North continued, “We can tell from the satellite map that they’ve not moved at all since becoming invisible. We can only wonder what they are waiting for.”

“Is it finally my turn to shine? I’m suffocating in here,” Roly Poly complained.

The Serval cat’s eyes widened. “There’s another cat in there? Isn’t that against the rules?”

“Yes, it is. This is called cheating,” Matcha said unabashedly, extending each and every one of his claws, “Winning comes with sacrifices. I’ll do whatever it takes.”

The Serval’s eyes shone brightly with admiration.

“I don’t quite understand what that means,” she admitted, “But I do know you looked super cool when you said it!”

“Alright, alright, knock it off,” Zhao Yao waved a hand at the cats, “Tiny, who’s heading to the finish line with sapphires in hand? Could you ask your seagulls to investigate from the video footage in the elimination zone?”

The Serval’s eyes glazed white as she entered the mind of one of her seagull friends.

“Three sapphires are moving towards the beach right now. Wait a minute, Fishball seems to be sending us some kind of signal?”

“Signal?” Zhao Yao raised an eyebrow, “Take a closer look.”

A seagull landed gracefully on the ground. It tilted its head in puzzlement as it looked at the cat, whom rushed forward to meet it. Fishball pointed at the ground surreptitiously. Then, he unleashed two beams of light on the ground, which displayed a line of text.

‘The number tags have trackers. We can see every contestant’s location on the big screen.’

The Serval read this aloud to Zhao Yao when she saw the words.

“That’s good news,” Zhao Yao said brightly, “Now we know where everyone is. Serval, station your seagull in the elimination zone and make sure it watches the screen closely.”

He then switched to Dust Ball’s power and spat out Gaia from the extradimensional belly.

A confused Gaia looked around at his new surroundings.

“Have I fainted again because I spent too much time on the computer?” he wondered aloud.

“You’ve not fainted. It’s just your turn to contribute,” Zhao Yao explained, tugging the number tag over the cat’s head.

Gaia leaped onto the ground, then sunk right into it. The plan was to have him explore this little island and mislead everyone about Zhao Yao’s actual location.

Of course, Gaia could not venture too deep into the earth or the tracker’s signal will be gone.

*

“Hello there, brother. What were you doing just now?”

The Cat King of the North had snuck up to Fishball. He surveyed him with narrowed eyes.

“You weren’t sending some kind of message, were you?” he asked sternly.

Fishball laughed at his face in response.

“Of course not! I would never do that. I felt a bit restless is all. I thought dancing might help energize me.”

With that, he started twisting and turning his body rhythmically, flashing rays of colored light like a disco ball.

“Isn’t dancing the best?” Fishball grinned.

He started singing and dancing on his own, his body drenched in vibrant colors.

The King of the North gawked at him.

“Your power is..?”

“It’s more than just producing light, I guarantee you. The true power of the light is that it makes me really popular!” Fishball replied happily.

Sure enough, many of the cats have rushed forward, chasing the light and meowing loudly.

“Ain’t this cat interesting?”

“Yeah! He’s quite a good dancer, isn’t he?”

The Cat King of the North watched wordlessly as a group of female cats surrounded Fishball excitedly. He pursed his lips, then walked back to his seat in front of the big screen.

He switched back to commentary mode in an instant.

“Let’s check in on how our contestants are doing. Oh? Daniel Wu’s invisible team is now on the move. Unfortunately, we can’t catch them on camera. Are they going to stay invisible throughout the competition?”

Of course, the trackers were actually on Gaia, who was tunneling through the ground enthusiastically. With everyone’s eyes off their backs, Zhao Yao brought Roly Poly, Matcha, and the Serval to the entrance of the pit stop.

“Hurry! A lot of people are heading to the entrance right now!” the Serval exclaimed.

The Cat King of the North noticed this movement as well.

“It seems that more contestants have located sapphires! They’re about to reach the finishing line. Let’s see who we have here.”

Live footage of Yue Shan and his team was displayed on the screen. They were making a beeline for the beach entrance.

From the corner of the screen, Explosive Man could be spotted soaring towards the entrance as well.

“It’s the Telekinetic Knights, with Explosive Man coming in fast as well! He might have had a setback, but he’s back in the game again!”

“What will happen when they meet? There shouldn’t be any conflict since they’re all got sapphires, but you never know. Are we looking at our second, third, fourth, and fifth contenders for the next round?”

On a naval vessel many kilometers away, Inspector Ho watched the competition unfold with relief.

“Looks like the first round is successful. We won’t have to step in at all,” he nodded.

Lin Chen was standing next to him, his eyes on the screen as well. He said, “Explosive Man’s going to be tricky to handle. If he makes it to the third round, he’ll be a threat to Yue Shan.”

“You’re right,” the Inspector agreed.

There was a steely glint in his eye.

“We’ve got to interfere in the next round then. He has to be eliminated,” he continued.

Their discussion came to a halt when a disturbance was shown on screen. Both the Inspector and Lin Chen wore perplexed expressions.

The Cat King of the North was confused as well.

“Strange. It seems like there’s trouble brewing between the Knights and Explosive Man. What’s happening? Our cameras are unable to record sound, so we have no clue what they’re saying. But everyone looks very, very angry.”

*

The root of the problem was Zhao Yao.

Now that he was near the finish line, he needed to hatch a plan to secure a sapphire quickly.

“Inspector Ho already knows about my illusions. I can’t conjure them openly, or my identity might be exposed,” he thought.

“I need to manipulate my skill such that its true nature is undetectable.”

He scratched the bottom of his chin thoughtfully and wondered, “How do antagonists normally antagonize people?”

His face was scrunched up as he went through some ideas. It lit up when he landed on a brilliant one. With a gleeful smirk, he created an auditory illusion that was sent to both parties.

After a beat, Explosive Man heard the Knights shout at him.

“Hey, moron!”

He whipped his head around, furrowing his brows at the trio.

He heard Yue Shan say to him, “Kid, if you kneel down now, kowtow to us, then hand us your sapphire, we’ll consider just breaking one of your legs.”

The Knights erupted with devious laughter after that.

The vein on Explosive Man’s forehead was visibly throbbing. In a fit of fury, he launched himself into the air, glaring at the trio.

The three of them stared up at him, perplexed.

The tall one spoke first, “Why does that guy look so mad?”

The short one agreed, “He looks like he wants to slaughter us. Has either one of you ever offended him or something?”

They watched as he descended on them.

The Explosive Man’s sent a chill down their spines.

“Telekinetic Knights, no one will be able to save you today. Give me your sapphires now, or I will rip you from limb to limb.”