

Am I A God 321

Chapter 321: The Fight that Zhao Yao Started

There was a pinch in Yue Shan's eyebrows.

He looked at the Explosive Man seriously.

"Are you hearing what you're saying?"

The innocuous question never reached the Explosive Man. Instead, what he heard was Zhao Yao's heavily edited version.

"I'm going to count to 10. If you do not get on your knees and beg for forgiveness by the time I reach 10, you'll suffer a fate worse than death."

Explosive Man fixed his eyes on Yue Shan. "Have you guys gone mad?"

Once again, that went through the Zhao Yao filter and came out as, "It's been decided then? I'll have you know the more you fight it, the more excited I get."

The super creepy threat raised the hairs on the Telekinetic Knights' necks. Two of them lunged forward, but Yue Shan raised a hand to stop them from attacking.

"Don't be rash. There's no point in this. We're near the pit stop. Let's just get there."

He then turned to face Explosive Man, arms raised in surrender.

"We don't mean any offence," he stated firmly.

Explosive Man could see the gesture, but what he heard was completely different.

To him, Yue Shan was still talking trash, “See this? I don’t even need a weapon in my hand to fight you. I’m going to start counting now.”

“One...two...three...four...”

The vein running down the Man’s forehead was bulging again. It looked as if it would break through the skin’s surface.

He was seething with rage.

This time, Zhao Yao did not even have to transform his words.

“I’ll grant you your death wish.”

He launched himself at the trio.

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“Hey?! What’s this?” the Cat King of the North exclaimed, staring at the showdown on the screen with his mouth wide open, “Don’t know what happened between them, but they’re fighting. They’re actually fighting.”

Explosive Man had propelled himself forward with the explosive energy he generated. Yue Shan responded by raising his hand and clenching his fist. He had bound the man with a telekinetic grip, but that was shattered when he made a series of explosions.

The Explosive Man was still fighting to reach the Knights.

The impact of their collision was earth-shattering. The camera could not pick up the sonorous boom that it created, but it recorded the mushroom of smoke and dust that erupted.

One of the Knights ran straight into the middle of the clash.

The King of the North noticed.

“Gosh! One of the Knights just charged right into the battle. Let me see, I have no idea who’s this... Metalhead? Yes, Metalhead has gone in!” he shouted.

As the dust settled, the outline of Explosive Man holding Metalhead in a chokehold. He broke into another explosion, which ripped Metalhead’s clothing into shreds, revealing the cocoon of metal that had wrapped around every part of his body.

Metalhead threw a punch at Explosive Man’s chest.

They were called the Telekinetic Knights, but that was technically incorrect. Only Yue Shan had telekinesis. Metalhead was a metal man, while the remaining teammate was more like a rubber man.

The combined impact of their powers was astounding, so Explosive Man was quickly subdued.

“The Explosive Man is down! The damage from telekinesis is inescapable. The metal man and rubber man are practically human shields. The Telekinetic Knights make an undefeatable team! The Explosive Man has no chance.”

The Explosive Man knew this as well. There was indignation in his eyes, but he stopped fighting back. Instead, he made a run for the beach.

He could not win them, at least not now. He would have his chance after he got past this round.

Time went still before he could take more steps forward.

The entire world descended into silence.

“Not so easy,” Zhao Yao laughed.

He had appeared next to the Explosive Man in a split second. He could move and even think six times faster than before. This expanded his 12-second TimeFreeze into a comfortable 72 seconds.

In that time, he fished for the sapphire from the Explosive Man's shirt pocket, then balanced it on the lip of the pocket. He pulled the edge of his shirt.

When time resumed, the Explosive Man felt a force tug at his shirt as the sapphire dropped to the ground.

He did not hesitate to jump to the conclusion that Yue Shan was behind this. He was trying to steal his sapphire with telekinesis.

"What the f**k is wrong with you?!" he yelled.

He launched another explosion in Yue Shan's way, not as a form of attack, but a shield. He did not want them to see him as he dived for the fallen sapphire.

Unfortunately for him, time stopped again when his fingers grazed the gemstone.

Zhao Yao had appeared next to him once more. He studied the sapphire's position, looked to Yue Shan, then back again.

He gave it a forceful kick.

When the seconds started ticking away again, the sapphire was already hurling towards Yue Shan.

Yue Shan had no clue what was coming his way. All he saw an incoming shadow. Instinctively, he caught it with his telekinetic force. He dropped the sapphire when he saw what it was.

Taking more than one sapphire for yourself was grounds for elimination.

"Explosive Man, take your sapphire and just leave. We'll take it that nothing happened between us," he suggested.

Like the Man, Yue Shan had no desire to continue battling. He just wanted to advance to the next round.

Of course, this intention was completely lost in translation thanks to Zhao Yao.

His words sounded like a challenge in Explosive Man's ears, "The sapphire is right here, kid. Why don't you get on all fours and crawl to me like a good dog? You can hold it in your mouth like a frisbee, then crawl back like the good dog that you are."

Flames were practically erupting from his eyes.

"You...are...too...much..!"

The showdown continued. Zhao Yao made sure to stop time whenever there was an explosion. He would turn out the pockets of the Knights and scatter the sapphires. To the undiscerning eye, it looked like they inevitably fell out from the intense scruffle.

The trio hardly noticed that their gemstones were gone. The Explosive Man kept closing in on them, forcing them further and further away from the entrance.

He was going at them with all that he got. As government officials, the Telekinetic Knights could not do the same. They could only defend themselves as best as possible.

"This is unbelievable," the Cat King of the North commented, "There must be bad blood between those two. Why else would they fight to the death when they just met?"

There was a flurry of discussion among the captive audience in the elimination zone. It seemed like no one expected such a fierce battle to actually take place in the competition. The weird part was it seemed to have started for no reason at all.

Liu Yun was one of those who had no clue what was going on. Fishball, however, had an inkling.

"Why do I feel that this has something to do with that Zhao Yao fella?" he wondered, eyes glued to the screen.

On the naval vessel, Inspector Ho slammed both hands on the desk angrily.

“What the hell is this?” he demanded, “Why have Yue Shan and the team started a fight with Explosive Man? Did we not tell them that the objective of this round is to just pass? We take out competitors the next round!”

Lin Chen was still standing next to him. Compared to the Inspector, he was the paragon of calm.

“It’ll be fine. It’s only been 15 minutes. Yue Shan still has 45 minutes to get to the pit stop,” he said.

Now that the fight he started was in full swing, Zhao Yao was ready to execute the next stage of his plan.

He instructed the Serval to keep an eye on the video footage of the battle, then took his leave.

Chapter 322: 318 Zhao Yao’s Been Busy

Chimera strolled through the woods in a blasé fashion.

He was surrounded by a group of dragons. They were made entirely of fire and emitted so much heat that every competitor they met dived out of the way.

Despite this, he still had not located a sapphire.

“Baka, where could the sapphire be?”

This thought had barely crossed his mind when he picked up someone else’s voice. The voice spoke in a hushed, urgent whisper.

“Wow! Look! There’s a sapphire here!”

“There are so many of them!”

“Don’t move! The sapphires are mine!”

There were, of course, no sapphires. Zhao Yao was up to no good again except this time, he had a new victim.

He stood right beside Chimera as he conjured the illusion of the hushed discussion.

A glimmer of hope shone in Chimera's eyes. He cheered quietly as he headed towards the voices.

On the other side of the woods, Meng Hao managed to rally more than a dozen competitors together. Both people and cats looked to him as he spoke.

"As you all know, we can form alliances in this round of the competition," he started.

He cut a fine figure standing before the crowd. He would seem intimidating if not for what he said next.

"This means that this round isn't just about our individual strengths, it's about combined power as a team!"

He continued, "I'm sure some of you have already noticed that some contestants are far more powerful than the rest of us. If we want to advance to the next round, we'll have to stick together and overpower them! We have the numbers they do not!"

The Cat King of the North chuckled as he watched the rousing speech.

"Well, it looks like Meng Hao intends to form the biggest alliance in this competition. His strategy is to win by numbers. I have to say it just might work..."

The King of the North's commentary stopped abruptly when Chimera stumbled onto the screen. He had ended up there after following the voices that Zhao Yao put in his head.

The alliance gawked at him and he gaped back. Neither party expected to meet the other.

It had gone exactly as Zhao Yao had planned. He planted Chimera's voice into the ears of the crowd. The voice taunted, "What are you idiots looking at?"

Meng Hao's eyes widened. He had never met a talking cat before.

This was a first, but it was not completely extraordinary. Supercats boasted all kinds of powers. Speech could very well be one of them.

He wanted to soothe the tense atmosphere, but someone in the crowd (Zhao Yao) beat him to it.

“What are you looking at, moron?”

Meng Hao let out a sigh.

“Has that person gone out of his mind? Now's not the time to start s**t with other people!” he thought.

He turned to face the crowd.

“Everyone, let's take a step back and calm down. Our focus is on finding the sapphires. There's no point in fighting here while the other contestants are getting closer to the gems.”

Through Zhao Yao's filter, Meng Hao's words were transformed into, “Brothers and sisters, let's take this cat down!”

Chimera's brows stitched together as he narrowed his eyes. In retaliation, he summoned fire dragons to emerge from behind him, ready to pounce.

Deep down, he did not hope to fight. There were too many people here. There was no telling what sick moves they might have up their sleeves. The dragons were just his way of saying ‘do not mess with me’. It manages to scare opponents off most of the time.

This time, however, he was at the mercy of Zhao Yao's manipulations.

The trickster had assumed his voice to make yet another taunt.

“The f**k you looking at, punks? I’ll skin all of you!”

Meng Hao shut his eyes with a heavy sigh.

“What’s wrong with this Talking Tom? Does he really want to start a fight?” he pondered.

Zhao Yao had cast an illusion over Chimera such that he looked like the cat from the My Talking Tom app.

As the Chimera was about to strike the first blow, the camera footage was switched. It cut to a super zoom-in of the Cat King of the North’s face.

“Ladies and gentlemen, we’ll be back after this short advertisement.”

Jeers erupted from the elimination zone. Everyone was dying to know what was happening out there. Fishball, who was perched on Liu Yun’s shoulder, extended both his middle claws in response.

A moment later, the ad was over and the screen cut back to Chimera and Meng Hao’s alliance. They were already in the middle of a heated battle.

The King of the North stared at the screen, confusion clouding his face.

“Why are kids these days so quick to come to blows?”

No one knew that the answer lay in Zhao Yao. This was but the beginning of his little scheme. He would first lead contestants to each other. Then, he would deceive them into thinking that the other party was hurling insults their way. This would inevitably descend into a huge fight.

The chaos was his cover to steal the sapphires in the contestants’ pockets. He would use TimeFreeze to fish them out, then kick and toss them as far away as he could in all directions, making them impossible to retrieve again.

The toy soldiers the gems had been lodged in were noticeable by the human eye. Without them, it would be like searching for a needle in a haystack.

The only apostle who could find them with ease was Zhao Yao. The Serval's seagull spy was planted in the elimination zone and it had a bird's eye view of the sapphires' locations on the satellite map.

Even if a lucky contestant did find a sapphire again, he or she would have to deal with Zhao Yao's relentless disturbances. The gem would be lost again in no time.

Inspector Ho let out a deep sigh as he watched the screen.

"We've miscalculated. We should've known that the sapphires would be close to impossible to find if lost in combat."

Lin Chen nodded. "We should've given each contestant a tracker as well. That way, they would know where the sapphires are."

"Well, this is just a lesson, nothing more. We still have the next round. The Cat King of the North would know what to do," the Inspector said.

He shook his head gravely, eyebrows furrowed.

"But seriously, did this bunch of punks eat TNT for breakfast growing up? They have such a short fuse!"

The end of the one hour limit quickly drew closer as more time was wasted on fighting. The contestants realized this eventually and turned their attention to locating the missing sapphires one by one.

Unfortunately, it was too late. The gemstones were scattered everywhere. They could be stuck in the mud, lodged in a log, or perched on a tree branch. They were too small to be spotted and basically impossible to find.

In the closing minutes of the round, Zhao Yao met up with a disgruntled Gaia, whom returned to the extradimensional belly. With the seagull's locations coordinates, he could bolt around the forest to find one sapphire for himself, then another for the Serval.

By the time he dashed towards the beach, there was only one minute left on the clock.

His sudden appearance caught the eye of the Cat King of the North. He scrambled for the microphone.

“Everyone, look who’s finally shown up! Daniel Wu has been invisible for practically the entire round. When he does appear, it’s with a sapphire in hand! He’s racing to the finish line!”

Xiao Yu had no clue that Zhao Yao was hurtling towards the beach.

She had been there for a while now.

“Left paw,” she instructed her husky.

“Right paw.”

“Lie down.”

Noodle the husky followed her instructions with confidence and ease.

“These commands are far too simple for me! The supercats, however, can’t handle them,” he chuckled to himself.

His glee transformed into incredulity when Xiao Yu gave a new command.

“Do a handstand,” she said nonchalantly.

Noodle looked at her dumbly.

“A handstand? You’re asking a dog to do a goddamn handstand?! This counts as animal abuse!”

Xiao Yu sighed. “Well, Noodle, if you can’t even do a handstand, then you’re not as professional as you should be.”

She then turned to face the entrance.

“Noodle, do you think Zhao Yao will succeed?”

The dog huffs a stream of air through his nose in response.

“That kind of scumbag should just die in there.”

Noodle’s wish, however, was not granted. Loud cheers had erupted from the elimination zone. Every pair of eyes was glued to the screen, which showed Zhao Yao and the Serval crossing the entrance and into the beach in the nick of time.

They opened their palms to reveal the sapphires within.

“Unbelievable! This is just unbelievable!” the Cat King of the North exclaimed, “Only three contestants have managed to secure a sapphire. Let’s give a round of applause for your finalists!”

Xiao Yu rushed forward, a wide grin on her face. She leaped into Zhao Yao’s arms.

“The house is mine! The house is mine!” she cheered.

That marked the end of this round of the competition. The rest of the contestants were asked to stop their search and return to the beach immediately. Most of them wore sullen or frustrated expressions. Some had dust, bruises, and dried blood smeared all over their faces.

They had fought so hard for a big, fat nothing.

It was no wonder they were staring daggers at Zhao Yao. In their eyes, he did not deserve this victory. He was just some idiot in a black cloak who avoided being attacked because he could become invisible. He got lucky.

Of course, Zhao Yao paid no mind to the bone-chilling glares that were thrown his way.

He was happy as a clam at high water.

“Hey, Cat King of the North, since only three of us got past this round, can we go straight to the prize presentation?” he asked.

Zhao Yao received a mysterious smile in return.

“I’m afraid not. We have two more rounds left in this competition.”

“But no one else has made it through. We’re the only three left. That makes us the top three. We’ll just split the prizes among ourselves.”

“Unfortunately, that’s not how our competition works. Come, let me announce the rules of the second round.”

The King of the North looked at the three finalists.

“Please look at the sapphire in your hands.”

Zhao Yao, Xiao Yu, and the Serval opened their palms at the same time. A number had appeared on each of their gems. They were marked 32, 31, and 30.

“If the first round had gone more smoothly, we would have our top 32. The first to reach the beach would be allocated 32 points, while the last would receive one point,” the King of the North explained.

“In the second round, all contestants, regardless if you got a sapphire in the first round or not, can fight your fellow competitors for their gems. At the end of the hour, the eight contestants with the highest number of points will proceed to the third round.”

“Unfortunately, since only three among you can proceed to the next round, we would have to shake things up a bit. Anyone who manages to snatch any of three sapphires here will be a top-three finalist.”

In that moment, every apostle and cat on the beach turned their heads to Zhao Yao, Xiao Yu, and the Serval.

There was bloodlust in their eyes.

Chapter 323: The Plight and the Decision

Xiao Yu could hear her heart thumping in her ears.

She was beginning to feel afraid. How could she not when there so many hostile eyes were trained on them? She had borrowed Nekomata's spirit ability and it was a hundred times more useful than Fishball's disco lights, but it still could not protect her from so many opponents.

There were close to 50 teams, which amounted to 80 cats and apostles. There was no telling what kind of powers they might have and what damage they might inflict.

The thought brought on involuntary shivers. Xiao Yu was just a primary school kid after all.

Zhao Yao gently patted the top of her head.

"You're scared?" he chuckled.

"As if," Xiao Yu responded coolly, swatting Zhao Yao's hand away, "I bet you're the one who's scared."

She was terrified, but there was no way she would let her nephew know that. He would bring this up and mock her for the rest of their lives.

Zhao Yao gave her a kind smile, then scanned the crowd. His gaze was met with pair after pair of fiercely determined eyes.

"Don't worry. Just stay behind me. Everything will be fine."

Next to his feet, Matcha was performing an encore of his reassuring words.

The ginger cat patted the Serval's head. "You're scared?"

"Aren't you scared too, King George?" she replied nervously, tail drooping.

Matcha hummed non-committedly, surveying the crowd as Zhao Yao had done.

"Don't worry. Just stay behind me. Everything will be fine," he repeated.

While Zhao Yao and Matcha were the paragons of calm, Noodle the Husky was the exact opposite. He had quickly cowered behind Xiao Yu, quaking with fear.

"Idiots! There's no hope! We are doomed. How can we survive when we are surrounded by so many people?"

There was a pause as his mind flitted from option to option.

"Oh, right! I can play dead!" he thought brightly.

Noodle recalled the times when Xiao Yu trained him to collapse to the ground when she pointed a finger gun at him. He always found it stupid, but the dire state they were in right now elucidated Xiao Yu's intentions. He was suddenly overcome with gratitude.

Nekomata narrowed his eyes as he assessed the situation.

"Zhao Yao may be powerful, but how can one man defeat so many apostles at once? Could it be that he has grown stronger somehow? How is that possible?"

A sly smile played on his lips. "Interesting... I should observe him further."

Zhao Yao's composed demeanor was noticed by every cat and apostle in the area as well. It fuelled their anger and frustration towards him. To them, this Black Robe Man was an undeserving show-off who was acting cool.

How could he emerge victorious against 80 of them?

“Heh heh, I bet we’ll make him cry later. Does he really think that being invisible makes him invincible?”

“When all of us attack him at once, we might just kill him. That would cause a bit of trouble, wouldn’t it?”

“Kid, you might want to hand us the sapphires now. You can become invisible, but you won’t be able to escape so many of us.”

While most of the contestants cast thrash-talk and dirty looks in Zhao Yao’s way, the Explosive Man had his eyes firmly on the Cat King of the North.

“When does the second round begin?” he asked impatiently.

The King of the North replied, “Everyone must be tired after the first round. Let’s take a half-hour break. After that, we will commence the second round of this competition. It will begin in the woods as well. It will last an hour. After the hour is over, the contestants that have managed to secure a sapphire will proceed to the last round.”

The Explosive Man glowered at Zhao Yao, Xiao Yu, and the Serval before walking away.

He thought to himself, “I will have all three sapphires in hand. Then, I will be crowned the Cat King.”

He paid little regard to Zhao Yao’s powers. To him and every other contestant, the three of them only managed to scrape past the first round because of underhanded means and good luck. They were not the actual competition.

Yue Shan was quietly surveying Zhao Yao as well. The first round felt almost unjust. It was frustrating. He could have breezed through the first round. Unfortunately, the Explosive Man stood in his way for no good reason. His telekinesis was powerful enough to subdue him, but that would injure him gravely and as a government official, he could not do so.

“I must secure the sapphires in the next round.”

Zhao Yao did not pay any mind to the aggression that he had become a target of. He focused on getting ready for the next round instead.

First, he carefully pulled a balaclava over his head, then strung a surgical mask over his face. There will be a tussle later and he did not want to accidentally reveal his true identity if some rascal was to pull off his cloak.

Xiao Yu clenched her hand into a tight fist. She also assumed that Zhao Yao and King George's only ability was to become invisible. This led her to believe that the responsibility of winning the coming battle would rest on her narrow shoulders.

She looked intently at her fist, which dissolved into a phantom hand. She was perfectly capable of using Nekomata's power.

"I'll have to do my best."

To Zhao Yao, she said, "Once the second round begins, we'll enter the woods and throw the sapphires in front of everyone. They'll all fight for the sapphires. When that happens, I'll cover you and get you out of there. You don't have to be afraid. I will never let anything happen to you. If not, your mom will kill me."

Xiao Yu knew that her spirit power would be able to literally keep both herself and Zhao Yao out of an opponent's grasp. Once they were safe, she could start thinking about how to get her hands on a sapphire.

Zhao Yao did not say anything in response. He merely smiled.

It would be a lie to say that he was not feeling any pressure or worry. He had never had to fend off so many apostles and supercats at once.

However, he did have a lot of tricks up his sleeve. If he kept a clear head and used the right skills the right way, victory would be his.

"Invisibility would be useless now. I can't evade all of them."

Being invisible was not the same as disappearing after all. The opponents might not be able to see him, but they could definitely touch him. That meant they could hurt him too.

Meng Hao and his half beasts could easily detect his scent to locate him. Chimera and Explosive Man could set fire to the woods. Yue Shan could identify his whereabouts with his telekinesis.

“I could conjure an illusion or swallow myself into the belly. To create a realistic illusion, it would have to cover all the senses. Inspector Ho would be able to associate that with me. If I used Suck-Me-In, my signal would vanish unless I get Gaia to help again...”

Zhao Yao passed the first round using deception. He could very well do the same with the second round, but it might not be the right course of action.

“If I don’t actually show some of my powers, no one would respect me even if I become Cat King,” he mused.

The Cat King of Jiangmen would serve as the leader of all supercats. It was only fitting that the strongest would deserve this position. He would need to show that he had the capacity and might of a commander.

Zhao Yao had always operated from the shadows. He reigned in his powers so that the true extent of his powers remained secret.

This was his opportunity to finally unleash his full power. He could feel a buzz of excitement.

The corner of his lips lifted into a smile. He had made up his mind.

“Guess I’ll fight my way past this round. Let’s get this over and done with.”

Chapter 324: Unstoppable

The elimination zone burst into a chorus of discussion.

Some gloated over Zhao Yao’s imminent defeat while others seriously analyzed the situation and the possibilities.

“Well, looks like this is the end of the road for that kid.”

“Not necessarily. If they get rid of the sapphires right at the start, they still stand a chance.”

Some did not understand the design of the second round and those who did, tried to explain.

“If they threw away the sapphires from the start, it’ll be like starting the competition all over again. Doesn’t that make the first round pointless?”

“It seems that way because only three contestants got past the first round. Imagine if 32 contestants had one sapphire each. They would definitely not be cornered into tossing their gemstones away. They would begin the second round with a lead.”

Amid the flurry of debate, there seemed to be one thing that everyone agreed on. It was that Zhao Yao had to rid themselves of their sapphires right away.

There was just no way that they would be able to handle the onslaught of 80 supercats and apostles.

This thought simmered in Fishball’s and Liu Yun’s minds. They looked in Zhao Yao’s direction, eyes clouded with worry.

Half an hour later, chimes started sounding from the loudspeakers, signaling that the short break had ended.

The Cat King of the North’s voice boomed throughout the island.

“May I have your attention, please? The second round of the competition is about to commence. Contestants, please get ready. Once you have entered the woods, you are free to start fighting for the sapphires. Remember, the rules are the same as before. You can attack an opponent, but the killing of any supercat or apostle is strictly prohibited...”

As the King of the North droned on, apostles and supercats alike started getting on their feet. Their eyes were cast firmly on Zhao Yao.

Some of them sprinted towards the woods right away. They wanted to block Zhao Yao from getting away if he tried to do so.

Xiao Yu could feel her heart thumping rapidly against her chest. It was clear that their opponents were not going to go easy on them. She took a deep breath and let it out slowly, forcing herself to calm down and brush aside her nerves.

Zhao Yao was smiling urbanely as always. He held Xiao Yu's hand and said, "Come on, let's go. Stick close to me."

She clicked her tongue.

"Don't take advantage of your aunt."

She snatched her hand back and walked ahead of him instead.

She had taken barely two steps when she disappeared from sight. Zhao Yao had cloaked Xiao Yu, Noodle the Husky, the Serval, Matcha and himself in invisibility. He also cast a protective force field around them before pulling the entire gang into the woods.

"First, we've got to find a good vantage point," he thought.

Xiao Yu was struggling to escape the force field. However, no matter how she pushed or tugged, there was no way out.

Nekomata's eyes lit up in wonder. He was no stranger to this skill.

"The deflective field... Seems like Zhao Yao can borrow the powers of multiple supercats. Gaia... Ares... They must all be in his hands."

"Maybe I should save them," he mused.

There was an uproar when the contestants spotted Zhao Yao turning invisible.

This meant that it was game time.

“He’s become invisible!”

“Don’t let him get away!”

One after another the contestants raced into the woods. They unleashed all kinds of powers in hopes of locating Zhao Yao.

An apostle wrinkled his extraordinarily large nose. He had an equally remarkable sense of smell.

“There! He’s right ahead!” he exclaimed.

Another apostle had his mouth wide open, from which emitted sound waves. He was hoping to capture Zhao Yao using ultrasound. When he detected him, he pointed to an empty and flat expanse of land.

“There he is!”

The Explosive Man did not need to be told twice. He let out a terrifying snarl, then torpedoed straight towards Zhao Yao.

Yue Shan made his move as well. He let out a grunt before creating a telekinetic energy blast around the Metal Man, which propelled him forward like a shooting star.

“He will never get away!”

“We’re getting close! Those on the frontline, block all possible exit points!”

The Cat King of the North cut from one camera to another, revealing the flurry of activity that surrounded the woods.

“The action has begun even though the second round has barely begun. As you can see from the satellite map on the screen, Daniel Wu and gang has been completely surrounded. This is definitely not a good start for them. It’s unlikely that they’ll stay in the game for long.”

On the naval vessel, Inspector Ho was watching the screen carefully as well.

“Has the secret weapon been deployed? We have to attack whoever gets their grubby hands on the sapphires. We won’t be able to step in after this round,” he said.

Lin Chen made a firm nod. “Don’t worry. It’s been activated.”

Everyone watching was certain that the man in the black robe was at his wits’ end. The competitors were closing in on him quickly and it would be impossible for him to get past them.

Explosive Man, Yue Shan, Chimera, and every other opponent had unleashed their powers in a chaotic bid to defeat him.

“You’ll never get away, rascal!” Chimera cried, releasing a fire dragon in Zhao Yao’s direction.

He froze time to evade it with ease.

He continued running as time started ticking again. He eyed the flat piece of land he was coming up on with approval.

“This is a good spot. Xiao Yu’s hidden a distance away. She won’t be hurt if I can fight them right here.”

He had been running not because he wanted to flee his opponents. It was reconnaissance. He had to first keep Xiao Yu out of harm’s way, then scout for the perfect showdown arena.

He had found it.

In a move that made everyone’s jaw drop, Zhao Yao shed his layer of invisibility. He was seen standing with his chest held high and his arm stretched to the sky, the sapphire twinkling in his hand.

After a brief pause, the opponents surged towards him, hungry and ready to pounce. Explosive Man and Yue Shan were among those who led the pack.

“Hand me the sapphire!” Explosive Man roared.

“Yeah, give us the sapphires!”

“Give them to me!”

Half the contestants tore through the ground, ready to snatch the sapphire from Zhao Yao’s hands. Others lagged behind on purpose.

Yue Shan was one of those who stayed back.

He knew that there was no need for him to tackle Zhao Yao. With so many apostles and cats closing in on him, there would be no escape. The sapphires would be ripped from him and the people who did so automatically becomes the new target.

He did not want to be caught in that pandemonium. He would wait for the right time to strike.

Yue Shan’s thought was echoed by the Cat King of the North.

He said into the microphone, “The time has come! Whoever gets their hands on the sapphires will be attacked next. Will they be able to keep the gems? Who will it be? The Telekinetic Knights? Or perhaps Explosive Man?”

While everyone had worked up a frenzy, Zhao Yao remained perfectly at ease. He scanned the barrage of apostles and supercats running wildly towards him to identify his first target area.

However, his calculate had to be put on hold when an impatient Explosive Man barreled towards him, propelled by a series of explosions. The ground that he had stood on was cracked from the impact of his lift-off.

He was not waiting any longer to take those sapphires.

The rest of the opponents skid to a stop. They watched as Explosive Man rocketed towards Zhao Yao. They knew that he would succeed in securing the sapphires. The moment that happened, they would go after him.

They watched with bated breath as Explosive Man reached Zhao Yao.

What happened next was a blur. The encounter went by so quickly it was impossible to make sense of. The only thing the spectators could discern was the sound of a loud boom, followed by a crack of lightning that split the sky in two.

As the dust settled, the crowd could make out Zhao Yao kneeling on the ground. He had one hand firmly around Explosive Man's neck, pinning his head against the grass.

The Explosive Man was motionless. He was like a mere fly that Zhao Yao had easily swatted to death.

The truth was more complicated than it seemed. Zhao Yao had frozen time for a split second. He could move six times faster during TimeFreeze and he made full use of it to plummet his opponent into the ground.

Explosive Man barely had time to register what happened, much less resist it.

It was impossible to retaliate after a TimeFreeze. It would always be too late.

The contestants gawked at the sight before them. They looked from Zhao Yao to his concussed victim in disbelief.

A hush had befallen the elimination zone. No one moved or made a sound. It was as if Zhao Yao had frozen time again.

Even the Cat King of the North was at a loss. He blinked at the screen dumbly.

Zhao Yao got to his feet slowly, purposefully. His cloak was waving wildly in the wind like a burst of black flames.

He lifted his hand again. The sapphire sat in his open palm, glinting in the sun.

"You want the sapphires? Sure. You just have to get past me."

Chapter 325: 1 VS 80

“Instant kill!”

The Cat King of the North fired his commentary so rapidly that it was difficult to catch each of his words.

“The Explosive Man was finished with an instant kill! We just saw Daniel Wu’s one-hit KO bring one of the competition’s most powerful contenders to his knees. He looks like he’s out cold. I’m sure he’ll regain consciousness soon, so let’s turn our attention back to Daniel. It’s obvious that invisibility is not his only power. Sure looks like he had concealed his true strength in the first round of the competition.”

An uproar erupted from the elimination zone. Everyone had something to say about what they had just witnessed.

“The Explosive Man was defeated just like that?”

“What the hell even happened? Could he resist the Telekinetic Knights as well?”

“That was mad fast! Daniel Wu is insanely fast!”

“Jesus,” Fish Ball muttered to himself, “He’s that good?”

He might be acquaintances with Zhao Yao, but he was unfamiliar with the depth of his abilities.

He turned to the gawking female cats next to him.

“He’s good, isn’t he? That’s my disciple over there. I’m the one who sent him into the competition,” he boasted.

In the woods, the hush that had fallen over the contestants was slowly lifted. They looked at each other, then started closing in on Zhao Yao again, tentatively this time.

There was no denying that he was powerful, but even the greatest apostle would be unable to face off 80 others at once.

The odds were not in his favor at all.

Every contestant thought this way, but no one dared to make the first move. The Explosive Man took the lead and look what became of him.

Since they could not thrash him, they talked trash instead.

“Daniel Wu!” someone called out, “You might be skilled, but that’s not going to save you now. Look around you. There’s too many of us for you to beat.”

“Yeah! Come on, lads, we needn’t be afraid of him! We outnumber him 80 to one. We just need to unleash one superpower each to destroy him completely.”

“Daniel Wu, if you want to leave this place in one piece, you better hand over the sapphires now.”

Yue Shan remained silent while his fellow contestants hurled one insult after another. He narrowed his eyes, considering his next move.

His power had nothing to do with the body. It lay in his mind.

Physically, he was as defenseless and weak as the next man on the street. Watching Explosive Man get plummeted into the dirt was a timely reminder that he had to protect himself before he could think about attacking.

Yue Shan wrapped himself in a telekinetic shield that would block all kinds of physical damage.

Then, he struck.

He used his power to bind Zhao Yao's limbs together, paralyzing him.

"Gotcha!"

Yue Shan intended to yank him forward and snatch the sapphires.

But, in the next moment, Zhao Yao was gone.

"Turned invisible, huh?" Yue Shan thought.

It did not matter. Visible or not, Zhao Yao was in his telekinetic grip. He pulled his target towards him in one swift motion, igniting a chain of loud booms and bringing to him...nothing?

Nobody knew that when Zhao Yao was seized, he had become invisible, then promptly swallowed himself into the extradimensional belly.

"He's invisible again!"

"Be alert! He's up to something!"

Zhao Yao's disappearing act had raised the tension among the contestants. They cast their powers haphazardly, hoping to hit him, wherever he was.

It was futile.

As Zhao Yao stepped back into the real world, Roly Poly in tow, it had gone completely still.

"TimeFreeze!"

Zhao Yao surveyed the woods quickly. He could remember where Yue Shan had been standing.

That was where he headed with impossibly nimble steps.

In the past, Zhao Yao would have to put on that regretful princess dress or activate the supercat armor in order to battle so many apostles at once.

Now, things were different (thankfully).

Matcha had reached level six and the nature of his power had evolved.

Everything had multiplied by six times. He was six times stronger during TimeFreeze. He could use each second as if it was six seconds.

With that up his arsenal, big numbers no longer posed too large a threat. He had all the time in the world to take them down one by one.

Yue Shan's telekinesis, however, was a much bigger problem. He could sneak up on Zhao Yao even if he was a distance away.

This was why Zhao Yao had to take care of him first.

Once he landed before Yue Shan, he threw punch after punch against his stomach.

The force field stood sturdily between Zhao Yao's fists and Yue Shan's skin. It protected Yue Shan and cushioned most, but not all, the impact.

Zhao Yao kept going. He continued to ram his fists into Yue Shan.

He was endowed with the combined power of four cats now. Coupled with his long-term exposure to the Celestial Beats and his training, he was as fit as an Olympic boxer.

And what happens when an Olympic boxer could punch six times faster?

Each hit would feel like the blow of Hercules hammering against steel.

No one could catch the barrage of punches that Zhao Yao rained on Yue Shan.

When time started ticking again, all they saw was that he appeared before Yue Shan and swiftly delivered an epic punch to his stomach.

It might have looked like one punch, but it contained the immense energy of every single blow made when time stopped. A rapid succession of booms could be heard as they wore the force field down, before rupturing it completely.

Yue Shan was thrown off his feet and into the air, crashing onto the ground at neck-breaking speed ten meters away. When he rolled to a stop, he was out cold.

Zhao Yao nodded with satisfaction.

“That was the perfect amount of strength.”

He turned to face the rest of the startled contestants and said, “I suggest that those of you who can’t even handle one of my punches to leave me be. If we end up fighting, I might accidentally kill you.”

With that, he disappeared again, this time with the help of Roly Poly’s invisibility.

“Be careful!”

“He’s going to attack again!”

“Come, we’ve got to stay together!”

The apostles began to huddle around each other in a tight circle, hoping desperately to find safety in numbers.

No one would have expected that Zhao Yao would appear in the midst of the crowd. When he did, he was accompanied by a blast of air and the sound of rumbling thunder.

Those in the crowd were knocked off their feet and sent flying. Half of them had lost consciousness even before they fell to the ground with a loud thud.

Then, Zhao Yao disappeared again.

He repeated this performance a few times. He was like a grenade that would detonate wherever he appeared, sending cats and apostles into the air.

“We’ve got to stop sticking together!”

Boom.

“Disperse! We must disperse! We can’t keep staying in the same places.”

“He’s coming!”

Kaboom.

“He’s there! He’s right there!”

“Hey! I’m one of you, get off me!”

“Those with the strongest defence should stay at the circumference!”

The crowd had descended into pandemonium. Everyone was panicking, very much like a helpless herd of sheep being cornered by a big, bad wolf.

They were unable to formulate a proper strategy against Zhao Yao, so he could continue to creep into their midst and fling them through the air.

Metal Man, Rubber Man, and the few apostles who had their wits around them would try to seize him every time he appeared, but they could scarcely graze him with their fingertips before he vanished again.

They still had no clue that they had been led into Zhao Yao’s carefully selected battlefield. This flat expanse of land allowed him a bird’s eye view of every contestant’s location. There was no hiding from him.

“Unbelievable. This is simply unbelievable!” the Cat King of the North exclaimed, “Daniel Wu is actually wiping out all the contestants single-handedly. Not one of them has been able to return his blows. This is a 1 vs 80 battle for the ages. I cannot believe my eyes.”

The feverish commotion in the elimination zone continued to grow louder.

The captive audience had seen some amazing things today. They had thought that Explosive Man’s destructive detonations were powerful, as was Yue Shan’s valiance and Chimera’s fire dragons.

However, it seemed like they had seen nothing yet. Until now, that is.

Zhao Yao had shown them a whole new world. He had given them a taste of what true power looked like.

He had squashed 80 contestants as easily as ants with his thumb. None of them could even attempt to fight back.

This was an epiphany for apostles and supercats alike.

Zhao Yao had proven to them that the world really had changed.

Fish Ball had leapt away from Zhi Yun and joined the female cats that were huddled together.

He pointed his paw at Zhao Yao’s magnificent figure on the screen.

“What you see here is all my work,” he started, “I helped him lose 120 pounds in six months through tireless training. His strength is now absolutely unparalleled! If I hadn’t stepped into his life, he would still be the same fat otaku he had always been.”

The cats’ eyes lit up with awe as they looked at Fish Ball.

“Wow, you’re amazing!” they sang in unison.

Fish Ball waved them off casually, “It’s nothing. I’ve only imparted to him half of what I know. I still have a few tricks up my sleeve to teach him.”

While he was busy boasting, Zhi Yun was gaping at the screen.

“I never thought that our powers could be this...devastating...”

Zhao Yao continued to make his rounds through the arena, knocking out contestant after contestant.

As the crowd thinned, it became easy to spot a masked man that remained cool and collected among the flurry of panic surrounding him.

He was keenly observing Zhao Yao.

When Zhao Yao landed before him, he threw another tremendous punch that sent everyone in the area flying limply through the air.

Everyone, that is, except for the masked man.

Only he remained on his feet.

In the next moment, he had his hand around Zhao Yao’s neck, holding it in a painful vice grip.

“I’ve finally got you, Headless Horseman.”

Chapter 326: Making a Clean Sweep

A few minutes ago, the masked man had not been part of the crowd.

Previously, the contestants had been closing in on Zhao Yao, hoping to attack. At that point in time, the man had snuck away from the flat clearing.

“This should be it?” he thought, stopping by a tree with a large hollow in its trunk.

He then shouted, “Hello! Is anyone here?”

As his voice echoed through the woods, a shadow wormed out of the tree hollow and landed behind him gracefully.

The masked man spun around and found himself face-to-face with an alarmingly muscular man.

It was the Butcher.

“Is it my turn to shine?” he asked, smiling sweetly.

After being defeated by the Headless Horseman, the Muscle Society had fallen into Inspector Ho’s control.

He could have thrown them in jail, but that would be a waste. These apostles were remarkably strong and could be put to better use.

So, Inspector Ho handed them to the Cat King of the West.

Each of the four Cat Kings were masters in their own element.

The King of the South could control the seas and oceans. He could easily manipulate that to create natural disasters.

The King of the North enjoyed integrating himself seamlessly into human society. He observed people, acted like them, and could create all kinds of amazing things from thin air for them.

As for the King of the West, his power lay in reformation.

Under his wing, the Butcher’s alliance and agenda became aligned to the government. He was now assisting Inspector Ho with the competition as a secret weapon.

The masked man removed his mask and handed his jacket to the Butcher, whom put them on briskly.

He cracked his neck, then spoke into his earpiece.

“Hello? What should I do now?”

Inspector Ho’s voice was heard. It said, “Help Yue Shan secure the sapphires. How you do it is entirely up to you.”

“Got it,” Butcher grinned.

He extended his foot to take one step, then another, his stride much wider than a normal person’s. It almost felt like the earth’s gravitational force was weaker for him. He disappeared into the green of the woods within seconds.

He did not launch an attack the moment he reached the landing. Instead, he quietly observed how Zhao Yao would appear, then disappear, and appear again elsewhere. He tried to discern a pattern in his behavior and tried to pick up his opponent’s scent.

It did not take long for him to identify who the man in the black cloak was. He knew this scent and he recognized this impenetrable power.

“The Headless Horseman...”

The corners of his lips lifted.

The Butcher might have been reformed, but he did not forget his humiliating defeat at the hands of the Horseman. He was glad that he had an opportunity to get his rightful revenge.

He was not going to mess up this time.

He was patient. He watched each of Zhao Yao’s movements and waited for a good time to strike. His chance came when Zhao Yao teleported before him.

“Now!”

The Butcher’s hand was lightning fast. It darted forward and wrapped its fingers around Zhao Yao’s neck.

“I’ve finally got you, Headless Horseman.”

Zhao Yao clutched the Butcher’s wrist, trying to pry his hand away. It was not as easy as he assumed it would be. He found that he could not move it away even by an inch. His grip remained steadfast and firm, like a block of cement.

When he heard his assailant’s voice, his pupils dilated in surprise.

“Butcher? He has escaped?” Zhao Yao thought.

He knew he was in trouble.

If he had detected his opponent’s presence earlier, he would have had time to consider his options. Unfortunately, he was already stuck in his vice grip when he realized that the he was here.

This greatly reduced the ploys he could use against the Butcher.

“TimeFreeze is in cooldown.”

“That would mean that my only way out is to go into the belly.”

“But even if I resorted to that, it’s not immediate. I need time.”

“If I made any move at all, he could twist my head off my shoulders like a bottle cap. Should I sacrifice one life, then attack?”

The Butcher tilted his head to the side, looking at Zhao Yao curiously.

“Hmm? Headless Horseman, why aren’t you resisting? Your compliance is very out-of-character,” he commented.

He remembered their previous encounter very clearly. The Headless Horse was relentless, shrewd, and awfully aggressive.

He was disappointed with the lack of response he was now displaying.

“If you don’t fight back, I won’t have a chance to show you my new skills,” the Butcher taunted.

Zhao Yao remained limp, which prompted him to shake his head.

“I have to be honest with you. I’m in excellent condition today, pal. Even if you fought back, you wouldn’t stand a chance.”

He tightened his hold on his neck, as if he wanted to break it.

On the navy vessel, Inspector Ho and Lin Chen heaved a great sigh of relief.

“Well, at least that’s settled.”

The Inspector’s relief morphed into concern as he watched the Butcher take control of the battle with ease.

“The Butcher is good. Too good. We can’t leave the rest of the Muscle Society with the King of the West. It’s too dangerous.”

Now that Zhao Yao was in the Butcher’s grasp, a barrage of attacks were directed their way. Flames, lightning, acid, shock waves, and all kinds of superpowers were unleashed.

Chimera sent his fire dragons towards the pair. Godly God was one of the participants as well. He projected phantoms that tore through the field, heading straight for them.

“He’s not fleeing?”

“If he doesn’t move now, he’s done for!”

The heavy blitz of superpowers started to descend towards them like a hundred arrows. The Butcher remained rooted to the ground, unperturbed by the incoming onslaught.

The contestants watched their powers draw closer and closer with their mouths wide open.

The Butcher pursed his lips. He looked more annoyed than afraid.

He tightened his fingers into a fist and sent a wave of heavy punches ripping through the air. A loud boom could be heard as each jab rocketed forward. They crashed into the superpowers that were raining on the duo, shattering them like fireworks.

There was a collective intake of air among the contestants.

Even Zhao Yao had to run and hide when they launched their powers on him. This mysterious masked man, however, could single-handedly reduce them to nothing.

“Who is that?”

“His punches are as powerful as a bomb.”

“We’re not gonna be able to win this monster.”

To say that the Cat King competition had been eye-opening would not be exaggeration. From the Explosive Man, to Yue Shan, to Chimera, then Daniel Wu, and now the masked man; It seemed like there was no limit to an apostle’s power.

Just when they thought they had met the undefeatable victor, someone better would come along.

The Butcher seemed to have made a clean sweep of the competition. His explosive punches had extinguished any thought of resistance in the rest of the contestants. None of them made a move towards him. They would take a step back if he as much as glanced their way.

He shook his head at them with disdain, then turned back to the Headless Horseman.

“Well, aren’t we in for a treat?” the Cat King of the North said, “A new contender has appeared and he is even stronger than our unbeatable Daniel Wu. He had managed to slice through the other contestants’ powers like a watermelon. It is truly unbelievable. Daniel Wu has finally met his match! He’s gonna have to bid goodbye to his sapphires this time.”

Zhao Yao might be in the Butcher’s grasp, but he did not exhibit an ounce of fear or panic. He was running through all the different escape plans he could hatch up.

He had no clue that the Butcher was reformed and would not kill him, so he prepared himself to lose a life in order to get out of this sticky situation.

“I was too careless. I have no choice but to die once then...”

His mind was formulating a plan.

He would activate Suck Me In and try to make his way into the extradimensional belly. If his movement alarms the Butcher and causes him to break his neck, he would die.

That would go one of two ways. He would either die in the belly or, if the Butcher was swift enough, he would die outside of it.

If he managed to escape into the belly and die there, he would put on his cat armor and reappear on the battlefield.

If he died out here, in the real world, he would have to use a power-up and, unfortunately, put on that stupid princess cat dress.

Obviously, the latter option was not the preferred one.

Chapter 327: Triumph

Zhao Yao’s mind whirled with possibilities.

He still felt fairly relaxed. After all, there was no way that the Butcher would defeat him. He did not have to worry about surviving; He just had to focus on how to win.

“Even if he breaks my neck, my cognitive function should still be active for a minute or so. That should be enough time for me to switch to Matcha’s TimeFreeze. It’s risky though.”

“Also, what if he just squishes my head like a grape?”

“If I died outside of the belly, I would have to wear that appalling dress.”

He recalled the first time he had to put on that dress.

“Nope, not gonna happen. I’m never cross-dressing ever again.”

The fear of being seen in a dress was enough to make Zhao Yao drop the idea.

“I could just use Elizabeth’s power instead. I’ll distract the Butcher and put on the armor,” he thought.

Ten seconds had passed before Zhao Yao landed on this option. He quickly turned to stare right into the Butcher’s eyes, his own gleaming red.

“Eh?” the Butcher uttered as he felt his control of his body gradually slip away.

He could not stop his hand from loosening its grip on Zhao Yao’s neck. He could do nothing as he dropped into an involuntary squat, then leaped upwards with astounding strength, rocketing straight to the sky.

The impact of his take-off was so great that a thick crack had split the earth beneath his feet.

In an instant, the Butcher had diminished into a speck that soared further and further away, growing smaller still.

Zhao Yao smiled. Elizabeth's mind control was an unrivaled form of defence in one-on-one combat. Even the Butcher was no match for it.

He could have compelled the Butcher to hurt himself, but he did not do so. Conniving was not a good look for a Cat King.

"I'll have to face him head-on."

As the Butcher began his long descent to the ground, Zhao Yao cut to Dust Ball's skill.

Supercats began appearing on the battleground, each concealed by Roly Poly.

"Let's go into Stealth Mode."

"Assault Arm!"

"Electric Arm!"

"Defence Shield!"

"Ground Liquification!"

As Zhao Yao issued one command after another, supercats began rolling into the real world and leaping onto different parts of his body.

The contestants were not paying any attention to him. Their eyes were glued to the Butcher.

"What's happening? Why has he jumped so high into the sky?"

"Haven't you heard of the Buddha's Palm Technique?"

"You've got to be kidding. This guy is a kung-fu master too?"

While some of them remained rooted to the ground, waiting to see what the Butcher would do next, others had fled the arena.

A handful of them watched Zhao Yao, whom had his head raised towards the sky, unmoving.

“Why isn’t Daniel Wu running? Now’s his chance.”

“How would I know? That choke might’ve compromised his mental capacity.”

“Who cares about him? C’mon, we’ve got to go before that monster returns.”

Soon, the Butcher was but 200 meters from the ground. He threw punch after punch at the air around him, hoping to chalk up enough friction to slow his neck-breaking descent.

While he struggled, Zhao Yao remained absolutely composed. His hands were folded behind him, head raised to the sky. There was an air of dignity in his face.

“Our mystery man had taken straight for the skies!” the Cat King of the North exclaimed, “What could he be trying to do? Use the force of gravity to flatten Daniel Wu? I would worry if I were him, but Daniel isn’t running. Does he actually have more secret tricks up his sleeves?”

“By the looks of it, I doubt anything could help him win this time.”

The elimination zone broke into a clamorous racket.

Fish Ball stood up, shouting at the screen.

“Fool! You’ve got to run! Why would you mess with someone like that? Are you out of your mind?!”

Every pair of eyes in the audience was glued to the screen, waiting for Zhao Yao’s catastrophic defeat to play out. There was no doubt in their minds that he would lose. The Butcher was just far too powerful.

The gap between the two final opponents grew smaller still.

Zhao Yao maintained the same position and self-possessed demeanor as before.

“I must look so frickin’ cool,” he thought.

While he appeared to be doing nothing, he was actually preparing for the upcoming battle.

He had entered the Diamond Hall to exchange two power-up cards.

One card was obviously for himself. The other was for Ares. Now that the supercat was unquestionably loyal to him, he had no qualms about strengthening his ability as well.

The combined power of Ares and Zhao Yao’s magnified force fields cast a golden glow around them that soared towards the heavens.

“I...I feel like my veins are bursting with...with power!” Ares exclaimed in surprise.

“You sound like you’re about to blow your load,” Gaia commented.

Zhao Yao hushed him.

“Can we please focus on defeating this piece of s**t?”

The activation of the power-ups, coupled with Ares’ recent level-up, pushed the potency of the force fields to unprecedented heights.

They were ready for the Butcher, whom was now a mere 50 meters from reaching them.

There was a trace of excitement in his eyes as he noticed the golden glow that enveloped Zhao Yao.

“Now, that’s more like it! C’mon, Headless Horseman, gimme all you’ve got!”

The glow grew brighter and more luminous as the energy and damage it cast grew stronger. It ripped Zhao Yao's black robe into pieces, revealing his headless body. Even the ground around him split into a spiderweb of cracks. The rocks and trees near him did not stand a chance either. They shattered as easily as glass.

Ares raised his paws and pressed them together. This caused massive hands weaved with the golden light to appear behind Zhao Yao, all of them bearing the same pose as Ares's paws.

Zhao Yao and Ares faced the Butcher. They moved in perfect sync to extend an open palm in his direction, propelling the golden hands to scorch through the air, straight at their opponent.

The wave of energy crashed into the Butcher like a tsunami. He felt like a helpless fly fossilized in a piece of amber.

"Beautiful!" he laughed maniacally.

He then threw a punch of his own against the golden glow. The collision between the opposing forces of energy created an earth-splitting explosion that flung the Butcher across the woods.

The impact was nothing for him. He landed squarely on his feet, which caused the ground to sink beneath him. He catapulted himself forward with a burst of energy, crushing the rocks behind him into pieces.

The power generated by his feet spread through the rest of his body. It energized his hips, up to his shoulders, and sweeping into his fists. His was making his way to Zhao Yao like a ballistic missile.

"Die!" he roared.

The Butcher put all the energy he had into the punch that he threw at Zhao Yao.

It rocketed towards him, gaining traction as it got closer. In response, Zhao Yao and Ares lifted their palms in perfect synchronicity, then smashed downwards.

"Butcher..."

A loud boom sounded. A large, golden hand had appeared from nowhere and it pressed the Butcher in the ground, mimicking Zhao Yao and Ares' action.

The Butcher's feet sunk into the ground from the weight, but he was not giving up so easily.

He pushed hard against the mud and sand beneath him, generating enough energy to split the ground open. He jumped up onto the ground and started tearing across the woods again.

"Do you really..."

This time, Zhao Yao and Ares made a sweeping action with their hands. The giant golden hand did the same but on an infinitely larger and more powerful scale.

The Butcher could not fight the swell of power that was sent his way. He held his head in his hands as he was thrown off his feet and sent flying into the distance like a baseball struck by a bat.

He barreled through every tree that he passed, cutting each cleaning into two, before finally crashing to the ground.

"Think that you..."

Once TimeFreeze was activated, Zhao Yao appeared next to him in a flash, his right hand gripping onto his head.

"Could..."

The Butcher let out a roar of rage when he realized that Zhao Yao now had the upper hand.

He struggled against his grip, throwing punches and kicks in any and all directions, sending destructive spheres of energy everywhere.

Zhao Yao switched from Matcha's power back to Ares'. The two used their magnified powers to subdue him.

“Win me?!”

Zhao Yao dragged the Butcher by the head, then tossed him forward like a bowling ball.

It was a simple action, but the power-up cards transformed it into a deadly one. He hurled the Butcher with so much force that as he was sent rocketing in the opposite direction, he uprooted trees and ruptured the ground along the way.

He finally came to a stop when he smashed into a hill, which promptly started to fall apart from the impact. Rocks, gravel, and mud started raining down the Butcher, threatening to bury him alive.

In that moment, Zhao Yao and Ares quickly lifted their palm. The golden palm did the same, cupping the dangerous debris and tossing them away.

The Butcher could be seen lying on the ground.

Zhao Yao and Ares raised a hand, then delivered a swift smack. Once again, the golden palm followed, heading straight for the Butcher.

Just as it was about to land on the Butcher and no doubt pulverize him, it came to a sudden halt.

Zhao Yao took a look at his fallen opponent. He was out cold.

That was good enough. Zhao Yao and Ares retracted their hand and paw respectively and the giant, golden palm dissipated into nothing.

The woods had grown quiet.

Zhao Yao looked around him. He was faced with what looked like the aftermath of war. The grass was no longer even and flat, but turned inside out such that mud and lumps were pockmarked its surface. Not a single tree in sight still stood. They had all fallen onto the ground in a heap of leaves, branches, and trunks.

The sun was beginning to rise. He could see the red glow it cast along the horizon. The first rays of light landed on Zhao Yao, mixing with his own golden aura to produce an almost ethereal glimmer.

The remaining contestants gawked at the Headless Horseman as he basked in the unearthly light.

Zhao Yao turned to them.

“Is there anyone else who wants to take my sapphires?” he asked casually.

He received no response. It was as if the crowd had been rendered mute. They could only stare at him dumbly.

He had achieved exactly what he set out to do. His victory was indisputable.

It was nothing short of a triumph.

What the crowd did not know was that this was not even the full extent of his powers.

He did not get a chance to cross-dress after all.

The Cat King of the North was gaping at the screen as well. Usually verbose, even he was at a loss for words.

The same could be said about the spectators in the elimination zone. The way they looked at the Headless Horseman had changed. They stared up at him as if he was a legend.

Conversely, Inspector Ho did not wish to see anymore. He slumped against an armchair.

“This...this kind of damage... Even the combined force of your men and the Muscle Society would not put a dent in him, would it?”

Lin Chen’s eyes were glued to the Headless Horseman.

He did not respond to the Inspector immediately. All he could think of was, “We must not become enemies with this man.”

Chapter 328: The End

Inspector Ho raised his head to take another glance at the Headless Horseman. He had never felt more relieved than he did now with the country's softer approach towards supercats and their apostles.

There were unimaginable powers out there, the kind that the authorities would not be able to control.

The Headless Horseman, for example, could chalk up far more destruction than any military or satellite missile. He could do way more than cause explosions because he had all kinds of support skills at his disposal.

The worst? He was human and he had the mental capacity of one. He could think and that meant that he could strategize

His ability to teleport was the biggest pain in the a**.

Someone of his caliber was capable of wrecking havoc in the city. He could easily assassinate anyone or sneak into any building, destroying everything in his path as he pleased.

The Inspector scanned the Headless Horseman's application details.

"King George...of Utopia District?"

His eyes narrowed with suspicion.

"If I don't recall wrongly...someone else lives in that district...and his powers are not to be trifled with either..."

*

The battle arena was dead silent.

A dense, black cloud wafted from behind the trees and into the clearing. It was accompanied by black shadows that darted into the foreground. They looked eerily like spirits and were moaning like them as well.

Zhao Yao spun around. He watched the scene with, brows furrowed.

“What the hell..?”

The other opponents could not help looking at the approaching spirits as well. Goosebumps were raised on the surface of their skin.

Was this a new contender?

They had no clue that this was actually a display of Nekomata’s spectral powers. He could conjure a thousand ghouls to appear. They were, however, all bark and no bite. They looked scary but could do nothing else.

The spirits moved aside to reveal that a girl had been standing among them.

She looked absolutely ghastly. There was no color on her face, except for the blood red that stained her lips.

“Jesus Christ! It’s Carrie!”

“No, it’s Sissy Spacek!”

“Are you guys blind? That’s obviously Chloe Grace Moretz.”

And so it was. The girl did look exactly like Chloe Grace Moretz, which made things less terrifying.

Nekometa’s power allows its user to alter his or her appearance when in spirit form. To conceal her identity, Xiao Yu chose to adopt Ms. Moretz as a facade.

She was the first thing that Explosive Man saw as he started to stir.

He clutched onto the back of his head and got to his feet gingerly. He had been unconscious for most of Zhao Yao's epic showdown.

"What's going on?" he murmured.

Xiao Yu turned to him and raised a hand. She activated her spectral power, which worked like telekinesis, to grab him by the neck.

The poor man had barely come to, so he was completely unable to respond as she choked him and rendered him unconscious once more.

The contestants watched in silence.

"Where's Daniel Wu?" Xiao Yu asked them.

Some promptly pointed in his direction.

The Cat King of the North scratched his chin gently with his claws.

"First, we had Daniel Wu. Now, there's Chloe Grace Moretz. Who's next? Jackie Chan? Oprah Winfrey?"

Xiao Yu's gaze followed their fingers and landed on a headless Zhao Yao.

"Your head got chopped off?!"

She recovered from the shock that paralyzed her and darted towards him.

"I've only been gone for a moment! How did you lose your friggin' noggin' already? This is bad. We can't even bury you whole."

Xiao Yu came to a sudden halt.

“No, that cannot do. We must find your head. Where is it?”

Zhao Yao stared at her wordlessly.

He paused for a beat before speaking, “I think most people would exact revenge first, then find the dislocated head. Your priorities aren’t quite right, I feel.”

Xiao Yu jumped in surprise.

“You can still speak?!”

“Seeing that I’m not dead yet, yes, I can still speak.”

Zhao Yao pointed at the now peaceful, but completely destroyed, surroundings, “See this? My handiwork. I’ve wiped out anyone who poses a threat to us. We’re the final three.”

Xiao Yu’s eyes lit up.

“Really? Does this mean the house is mine?”

Noodle the Husky and Matcha had appeared next to them as well. They issued punches and kicks at the concussed Butcher gleefully.

Noodle raised a hind leg, then yelled, “Have a taste of my Juice of Justice!”

Matcha backed away instantly. He cast a look of utter disgust at the husky.

“Dogs are disgusting.”

While they bullied the Butcher, Xiao Yu listened intently to Zhao Yao's recount of the battle.

When it was over, she eyed him with disbelief.

"You're that powerful?"

Like the Explosive Man, she had missed most of the showdown. Before Zhao Yao canvassed the area for his battleground, he had first found a safe place to hide her. He had robbed her of all senses, causing her to black out instantly.

Xiao Yu only woke during the final fight with the Butcher, when the entire island shook from its impact. She transitioned into spirit form and rushed here to see the trees torn from their roots and the ground shattered into uneven bits.

To hear that Zhao Yao was behind this level of damage was a shock. If it were true, he was much stronger than she had thought.

It was obvious that the competition had ended. There was still time left from the one hour they were allocated, but no one dared to take Zhao Yao's sapphires or go anywhere near him.

The contestants were scattered across the clearing, resting and talking among themselves. They would look to Zhao Yao from time to time.

He was similarly seated on the ground. He had deactivated his supercat armor and sent them back into the belly. He had been busy fighting and plotting since 2 pm. It was exhausting.

Tired as he might have been, he still noticed the many stolen glances that the other contestants threw him. The attention gave him a sense of satisfaction.

"They must think that I'm so cool. I sense a fan club in the making. The Headless Horseman is going to be known throughout the city," he thought happily.

This made him sit up straight. He very much wanted to sprawl on the floor and rest his aching body, but he had an image to maintain.

Xiao Yu drifted around him, eyes wide and alert.

Zhao Yao studied her.

“Why are you using Chloe Grace Moretz’s appearance? It’s a bit extra, don’t you think?”

Xiao Yu shot him a side-eye glance.

“And why did you call yourself Daniel Wu?”

Zhao Yao looked back at her wordlessly.

He did not want to continue talking with this precocious primary school student. Instead, he occupied himself by analyzing Xiao Yu’s power.

“It sure is similar to Nekomata’s spectral abilities.”

He remembered the Nekomata that Ho Hao Cang owned clearly. It was the only one of his supercats whom had evaded him.

Zhao Yao looked at Xiao Yu’s spirit form, then turned to the husky.

“Is that cat using the dog as a host?” he wondered.

He was going to grill Xiao Yu about this once the contest was over.

*

Back in the elimination zone, Fish Ball was busy tooting his own horn again.

He pointed at Xiao Yu, who was projected on the large screen.

“See? I told you Daniel Wu would win. I know this girl too. She used to clean up my poop all the time,” he said.

“Really?”

“Wow, Mr. Fish Ball, you’re so cool!”

Fish Ball laughed jovially, patting his ardent fans on the back.

“Well, what you see is nothing, really. If it were me up there, let’s just say that the contest would’ve ended sooner.”

One of the supercats seated nearby could no longer stand his big talk.

“Are you quite done? You girls must be brighter than this! How can you believe any word that comes out his mouth?” the cat said.

“Yeah. All you can do is shoot lights from your paws and yet, here you are, talking trash. What a loser,” another cat chipped in.

Fish Ball let out a quiet laugh, then turned to the unhappy cats.

“Who gave you permission to look at me?”

In the next moment, his entire body released bright beams of light that shot right into the cats’ eyes.

The glare was so intense that most of them had no choice but to lower their heads to avoid it. Some refused to give in and continued staring at Fish Ball defiantly.

Soon, however, their eyes started watering and twitching from the light. It was a matter of time before all of them lowered their heads, as if in a bow.

The group of not-so-bright female cats let out a collective gasp of awe.

“Fish Ball is too cool!”

Chapter 329: Afterwards

There was no intention to proceed to the next round when the hour ended.

This was partly because the second round had yielded only three qualifying contestants and mostly because no one questioned the Headless Horseman’s power.

A look at the destruction around them was proof that it was not wise to fight the Horseman.

Soon, Zhao Yao, Xiao Yu, and the Serval started discussing what prizes they wanted to get.

Explosive Man was watching the trio from the beach. His eyes were clouded with a mix of rage, disappointment, and just a bit of awe.

“Headless Horseman, huh? I’ll remember you.”

He knew that he was no match for the Horseman, at least not now. He had become his target, an opponent he aspired to beat one day.

Meng Hao was looking at Zhao Yao too, but his expression was more embarrassed than anything else. He had assumed that he was some useless noob, but it turned out that he was terribly wrong.

He did not understand why the Horseman resorted to such lame tactics in the first rounds of the competition when he was so powerful.

As for Yue Shan, he probably was the contestant who was the most frustrated by the defeat. He never thought that the Headless Horseman would actually participate. Even if he did, there was no way of knowing the true extent of his power either.

Chimera had slunk in a corner, watching Zhao Yao with cautious eyes.

“China is too dangerous,” he thought, “I better return to Japan.”

The other competitors wore similarly glum looks.

Everyone had signed up to participate in hopes of winning a prize. Their hopes were dashed far too quickly. The first round ended with just three qualifying contestants. There was not even a third round.

It was a waste of time.

Unlike his miserable counterparts, Zhao Yao was absolutely delighted.

The three winners each wanted a different prize, so they reached a conclusion swiftly.

Naturally, Zhao Yao chose the fortune cat. Xiao Yu chose the house in the city center while Liu Yun and the Serval picked a super-weapon made by the Cat King of the North.

The one small setback was that Xiao Yu needed to provide her personal particulars to put the house in her name. She did not want to disclose her real identity and neither did Zhao Yao.

In the end, they decided to use Liu Yun's name. She had registered for the competition with her real details anyway. She would transfer the house ownership to Xiao Yu once she was older.

It was highly unlikely that she would go back on her word and keep the house to herself. After today's display of skill, even if she wanted to, she probably dared not do so.

No matter what situation might arise in the future, Zhao Yao would have no problem getting the house back. Elizabeth's illusions offered endless ways to do so. Xiao Yu's spectral abilities were probably enough to do the same.

As for Zhao Yao's fortune cat, it would be waiting for him once they reached the mainland.

He was now lounging on the deck of the cruise. Liu Yun and Xiao Yu had left for the indoors because the heavy gusts of wind were too much.

He looked like he was not doing anything at all, but he was perusing the updates in his Book.

Now that he had won the competition, he was crowned the Jiangmen City Cat King. Technically, that should mean that the two cat king related missions should be done and dusted.

However, only one of them was marked as completed. Zhao Yao could see that he had gained 2,000 x 2 experience points from that one quest, which changed his Book to Level 5 (6,658/10,000).

He was supposed to have earned another 4,000 points, which would allow him to level up the Book.

Zhao Yao read through the incomplete mission impatiently.

“What the hell is this?” he muttered out loud, “Help Matcha win first place in the Cat King competition and receive admiration from female cats all over the country?”

Zhao Yao’s eyes narrowed into slits.

“Seriously? Must I really help him ‘receive admiration from female cats all over the country’? It might be easier to just make me murder every male cat.”

Matcha glanced at Zhao Yao curiously when he heard a mention of his name.

“Matcha,” Zhao Yao said seriously, “Are you able to hook up with every female cat on this cruise in three hours?”

The ginger cat gave him a reproachful look.

“If I could do it, we wouldn’t be having this conversation! You said that you’ll help me win the hearts of every female cat when I become Cat King, but look at me now!”

A cold breeze sailed through the deck in timely fashion.

The two of them were the only ones here.

“Nothing! I have nothing and no one!” Matcha continued angrily, “What’s the point of being a Cat King?”

He took a deep sigh, “Female cats are a lot more complex than I expected.”

*

In the cruise cabin, Fish Ball was displaying a beautiful technicolor display.

“C’mon everyone, I wanna see you get crazy!” he yelled over the music.

Someone’s phone was blaring an EDM tune. Coupled with the lights that he cast over the crowd, the cabin looked very much like a dance floor in a club.

A dozen female cats were huddled in the middle, moving and twisting their bodies to the beat.

“Fish Ball! Fish Ball! Fish Ball!” they chanted in unison.

*

Zhao Yao tried to be encouraging.

“You can’t just sit here and wait for things to happen! You’re a man, show off that magnetic masculinity and draw them in,” he said.

He really needed Matcha to start hooking up with those cats. If not, the 4,000 experience points were going to slip from his fingers. He refused to allow that to happen.

“Shouldn’t they be the ones clamoring to come talk to me? I’m cool, not some aggressive creep,” Matcha stated.

Zhao Yao was beginning to feel a bit of panic welling in his chest.

“Well, I think it’s time to reconsider your attitude. You’re almost two years old now! You’re not a boy anymore. You’re a young man, but you have nothing to show for it. You work a dead-end job at

the cat cafe still. You've never gone out on a date, much less have a girlfriend. If you continue being so passive, no cat would want you."

Matcha glared at him, "Keep your nose out of my love life! There are tons of female cats that admire me. I just haven't met the right one yet!"

Zhao Yao kept going, "If you keep waiting for the right one, you'll end up with no one!"

He was about to persuade Matcha to pursue the cats on board when they were interrupted by a loud meow.

A chubby cat with black stripes and a white belly sauntered across the deck towards them.

It was the Cat King of the North.

"Hello there, Headless Horseman, King George," he greeted, "I have much to discuss with you regarding being the Cat King of Jiangmen City."

*

Inspector Ho glanced at the clock, then dialed a number on his phone.

"Hello? Shi Yu? Is he at work?" he asked.

He could hear a yawn coming from the receiver.

"Yeah, he's at the cat cafe. What's up?"

"You mean Zhao Yao is at work today?"

"Yes. Why? Did he get into some kind of trouble again?" she asked anxiously.

"No, he hasn't. Send me a photo of him, won't you?"

A few seconds later, an image lit up the Inspector's phone screen. It was a picture of Zhao Yao in the cafe.

Inspector Ho narrowed his eyes.

"So Zhao Yao isn't the Headless Horseman?"

He reached for another application form, Xiao Yu's, and read it carefully.

In the cafe, Baiquan handed the phone back to Shi Yu, whom reached for it without question before walking to the counter.

Baiquan heaved a sigh of relief.

"I guess that's settled then?"

Elizabeth's voice reached him through an aural illusion, "Don't worry, it's done."

The ragdoll had easily tricked Shi Yu into thinking that she had taken Zhao Yao's photo and sent it to Inspector Ho. In reality, it was Baiquan who sent an old photo that was taken a while ago.

"By the way, when did you take that photo of Zhao Yao at work?" Elizabeth asked curiously.

"Oh, that was a while ago, when I was secretly -,"

Baiquan stopped speaking abruptly. His expression had changed. With a look of resignation, he unlocked his phone and started heading to the back door.

"Elizabeth, please help me tend to the store for a moment. I need to train."

Bits of gasps and moans could be heard from the phone in his hand.

Chapter 330: How About This Mission?

Bathed in the warm sunlight, cat king of the north began discussing with Zhao Yao his responsibilities as the cat king of Jiangmen City.

Actually, there was nothing much required of Zhao Yao. It was simply a title for a figurehead. The day to day management of the city still laid in the hands of the four cat kings.

Furthermore, it was significantly less bureaucratic over at the four cat kings' side as compared to the government. Their only goal was to maintain social stability and to facilitate the dissemination of intel on dissidents. They would assist the government in taking care of apostles or supercats that were uncooperative.

Even though Yue Shan did not accede to the throne as planned, the headless horseman's display of power had lent much credence to this title itself. It was a silver lining behind the entire misadventure.

The only thing that worried cat king of the north was the headless horseman's wild ambitions. He feared deeply that Zhao Yao would leverage on this opportunity to spread his sphere of influence.

However, he realized that his worries were uncalled for after his discussion with Zhao Yao.

Zhao Yao asked, "Will I get paid for my role as cat king of Jiangmen City?"

This question caught cat king of the north by surprise as he struggled to reply, "Erm ... no..."

Zhao Yao immediately retorted, "So I'll be doing all this for nothing? This is preposterous. What you are doing is going directly against the labor law. I'm informing that you I expect to get paid when I'm asked to attend various functions in this capacity. Also, all payments must be made in cash."

Cat king of the north tried to pacify him, "But it is an utmost honor to be named the cat king of Jiangmen City!"

“Honor does not feed my stomach.” Zhao Yao replied with a curl of his lips, “Shouldn’t I have some subordinates working under me? Can I instruct the other cat kings to do my bidding?”

“Theoretically speaking, no.” Cat king of the north shook his head violently before continuing, “However, we can help you add the title of cat king in your account on the cat web.”

Zhao Yao was somewhat confused by his reply and clarified, “What’s the point of that?”

Cat king of the north hesitated before replying, “More people will take note of your words?”

Zhao Yao rolled his eyes instantly.

Even though he was rather disappointed that he would not be able to enjoy any privilege as the cat king, Zhao Yao was rather relieved that no additional responsibilities awaited him. Just the thought of it caused his lips to curl into a smile. Anyway, his objective was just to win Fortune Cat which would accelerate his experience growth and strengthen his true power.

Cat king of the north was similarly pleased with the headless horseman’s response. From the looks of it, he was not the ruthless ambition apostle he imagined him to be. Now, they could even use the astounding result of the competition as a springboard to inject stability in the underground world of superpower.

“I bet the participants of the competition will become our best spokesperson.”

After cat king of the north took his leave, Zhao Yao focused his attention back to Matcha and began his brainwashing, in order to lure him to go after some female cats.

However, Matcha remained completely indifferent to Zhao Yao’s words. After all the talking, he simply stared at Zhao Yao and said, “What’s the point of going after all these country bumpkins? I want to meet Diana when I get home. You promised me her hand in marriage if I become the cat king!”

Roly Poly eavesdropped on the conversation and slid Matcha a condescending glare, “Hmph, his head is completely contaminated with lust. How can he ever match up to me? However, I feel left out being invisible all day. Has Zhao Yao forgotten about me already?”

Zhao Yao's forehead creased together when Matcha's words rang in his head, "No, I need to attract Matcha's attention to this important mission." Instantly, he grabbed Matcha by his neck before bringing him away.

"Meow! Zhao Yao, what are you trying to do?"

Matcha struggled with all his might but it was futile. Every time freeze would culminate in a fruitless struggle before landing right back in Zhao Yao's hands. Matcha was no match for Zhao Yao since they shared the exact same ability.

Zhao Yao dangled Matcha by his neck and comforted him, "Alright, just stop struggling. I'm trying to help you get laid."

Matcha's heart softened when he heard those enticing words. The pushes and shovels grew weaker but he continued exclaiming, "No! I don't want to get laid! I want to preserve my purity for Diana!"

Zhao Yao had known Matcha since the day he was born and knew exactly what he was like. A bone-chilling scream coupled with a feeble struggle just meant that he did not mean his words. With that, Zhao Yao brought Matcha into the cabins in search of a female cat.

Zhao Yao swung the door open into the third-floor cabin. Suddenly, everyone stood rooted to their spot with the cabin developed in pin-drop silence. All eyes were focused on Zhao Yao and no one had any idea what he was planning to do.

This was the power of influence that came along with absolute strength. No one dared to even lift a finger with the headless horseman's arrival.

A moment of silence ensued since Zhao Yao's arrival before his lips parted, "Erm ... is anyone's cat interested in breeding a new batch of kittens? I can provide a male cat for free!"

Anger seared through Matcha when he heard those demeaning words and began meowing at the top of his voice, "You call that getting me laid? You are just humiliating me in front of everyone! Quick! Let me down right now!"

However, everyone's eyes lit up when they heard those seemingly ridiculous words.

Everyone had witnessed for themselves just how strong the headless horseman was. The opportunity to breed with his supercat was simply a godsend!

The world of supercats was still a nascent field in the midst of development and no one knew whether superpowers were hereditary if supercats bred together. However, this was a valuable opportunity which came once in a lifetime.

Hence, an amazing scene happened. Throngs of apostles swarmed towards Zhao Yao and asked, “Dear headless horseman, how do you find this female cat here?”

Even though the bulk of the contestants were stray supercats, many cat kings were domestic supercats belonging to apostles like Liu Yun, Xiao Yu, and Zhao Yao.

Matcha’s struggles grew weaker and weaker when the crowd of apostles surrounded them and began to sell their supercats. Images of pedigree female cats drowning him in affection began to flood in his mind.

However, supercat breeding was vastly different from a conventional cat breeding. With their human-like intelligence, the success of the breeding not only hinged on the apostles’ approval but also depended on the cat’s inclinations.

Furthermore, Zhao Yao’s mission required all female cats to develop a liking for Matcha.

Hence, Zhao Yao threw his hands in the air to get all their attention, “Everyone, do not get too excited. You can never force anything or anyone into a relationship. Thus, I would like you to bring your cats forward to allow them to interact and engage. A fulfilling relationship requires two committed partners.”

The apostles scurried all over the place and brought their precious supercats to meet Matcha for this widely-anticipated blind date assembly.

Xiao Yu stared wide-eyed at this bewildering scene and asked, “What the hell are you trying to do?”

“I am trying to help my cat find his soul partner.” Zhao Yao replied sternly, “He is old enough to start his own family already.”

Ten minutes later, Matcha sat on an imposing chair with a smug expression. He stared at the orange cat in front of him with a look of disdain before slamming his snow-white paws against the table and roared, “Where is my light? I need to switch off the light in order to eliminate this contestant!”

“F*ck you! Do you actually take this as If You Are The One?” Zhao Yao slammed his hands against his head before reminding him, “Engage in a meaningful conversation and leave a good impression on these girls.”

Matcha then greeted her with a wide grin before asking, “Hi, may I know what your name is? What do you do or a living? How old are you?”