

Apocalypse 1771

Chapter 1771

Gu Qing Shan fell into thought.

If I had the Heavenly Emperor's strength and the Pendant of Fire, I would also sneak into Heavenly Palace city as well.

Right——

The Pendant of Fire!

By using the pendant's power, the Heavenly Emperor would have easily been able to sneak into Star Gazer city!

But then, what's the Heavenly Emperor's goal?

——to get rid of me, Star Gazer's City Lord, so that both cities are under his control.

If that succeeds, all of his issues would be resolved.

There would be no loss even if he fails, as Heavenly Palace city would still remain.

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——that was probably the thought process.

The Heavenly Emperor is already stronger than I am, so he has more reasons than I do to put such a plan into action.

So why hasn't the Heavenly Emperor come to kill me then?

Gu Qing Shan thought briefly before gradually understanding the reason.

Earlier, I'd just suffered attacks from a Sequence outside of the Samsara.

Not only did that Sequence not manage to kill me after attacking consecutively, but it also angered the Samsara enough that it acted against the attacking monster.

That made the Heavenly Emperor a bit unsure.

——the Heavenly Emperor doesn't know exactly how I managed to survive, nor does he know how I got the Samsara to help me.

One of the parties supporting him has already been gotten rid of, so he naturally has to act with more caution.

Even if he kills me by using the power of Miracles, it would still be the end for him if that caused the Samsara to act again.

Gu Qing Shan thought back to how that monster ended up.

—-the monster was sealed inside a casket.

Timing-wise, the duration of being sealed that way is practically eternal.

—-it would be an outcome worse than death.

For that reason, both he and I have established a delicate equilibrium.

The Heavenly Emperor is definitely thinking of a way to approach and observe me.

Approach me...

Gu Qing Shan turned his gaze and looked up at Li An.

—-Li An is a Tianma, so she naturally can't be the Heavenly Emperor.

But the Void is boundless, so there are infinite worlds with infinitely unimaginable means and abilities.

Regardless of whether or not he has impersonated Li An, I need to be careful with anyone who tries to approach me.

...I need to come up with a foolproof plan.

What would be a foolproof plan?

Gu Qing Shan remained silent for a brief moment.

—-regain my strength!

First I need to regain my strength, then wait until the emergence of the Huang Quan realm.

If I retrieve the Six Paths Great Mountain sword, I would be able to dispel any trickery with a single slash!

As soon as I get Shannu back, I wouldn't have to worry about the Heavenly Emperor getting close to me with any sort of unknown techniques.

Gu Qing Shan took a deep breath and stepped outside.

『 Where are you going? 』 Li An asked from behind him.

“I have some personal matters to take care of. You should focus on regaining your powers first, no need to worry about me for now” Gu Qing Shan told her.

He closed the door as he left.

Li An was a bit surprised and muttered: 『 Acting all mysterious... 』

Gu Qing Shan stepped onto the deck of the warship again.

Lines of bloody red text quickly appeared in the void of space to remind him:

[Attention: Star Gazer city has great potential, you will most likely have to complete a time-sensitive event in order to continue unlocking the functions it possesses]

[Attention: Heavenly Palace city has a concealed technique capable of constantly observing Star Gazer city's movements]

[Attention: Many unusual lifeforms and some Apocalypses have appeared within the great tomb river]

[Attention: There are unique Samsara fluctuations emerging from every tomb, Chosen Saints must venture inside in order to investigate them and unearth their secrets]

[Attention: There are some Chosen Saints who haven't left Star Gazer city]

Gu Qing Shan quickly skimmed through all the messages and stood firmly on the warship's deck.

The Heavenly Emperor seems to prefer acting only after all preparations have been made, not fighting battles where his victory isn't certain.

He's exactly the same as me in regards to this.

— if the Heavenly Emperor is hiding in the shadows to monitor me right now, what should I do?

He has the power of Miracles.

It wasn't just the Heavenly Emperor, as representatives of various other Sequences must have entered the two cities as well.

Are they also observing me?

Listening to the surrounding footsteps, Gu Qing Shan turned towards the other end of the deck.

After a moment of silence.

He gradually sped up.

From a stroll to a fast walk, then from a fast walk to a slow run, he kept on accelerating——

Gu Qing Shan was now sprinting at full speed!

He rushed towards the edge of the deck at an extremely fast pace, before leaping into the air!

There's no need to overthink things right now, I need to disregard my concerns and ignore my extreme thoughts. The priority right now is to explore the great tomb and unseal my strength!

Furthermore, it's best that I don't accidentally run into any other Chosen Saints.

Do not team up with anybody.

Do not join any existing groups.

And do not fight anyone

——simply meeting another person would be giving them a chance to size me up.

The wind howled.

As Gu Qing Shan's momentum reduced, his descent was imminent.

But he reached his left hand forward and instantly manifested a metal gauntlet.

Gu Qing Shan didn't waste any time.

The gauntlet struck him without hesitation.

[Repel Evil]!

Gu Qing Shan turned into a streak of light as he flew across the sky by this attack.

—he didn't consider his trajectory or where he would end up.

Riding the strong wind, he continued flying towards the endless underground.

A few moments later.

He arbitrarily struck himself again.

He changed his trajectory!

Even if the Heavenly Emperor was silently observing him from the shadows and was prepared, it would still be impossible for him to predict Gu Qing Shan's next actions!

No one could possibly know where he would end up!

Gu Qing Shan had decided to enter the great tomb in such a risky manner.

At this point, there were no longer any worries about silent observers.

The only thing he had to worry about was the random danger that he might face outside of the two cities...

But since when was he not in danger?

The wind grew stronger.

He continued to fly forward.

Very quickly, his figure could no longer be seen in the darkness.

Nobody could find him now.

...

Splloosh!

A huge splash erupted in the water.

Not too long after that, a corpse floated to the surface and began to bob up and down the cold gloomy river.

The underground waterflow gradually pushed the corpse onto the shore as it remained motionless for a while.

— and then it was revived!

Gu Qing Shan stood up and examined his surroundings.

I'm currently 'stranded' on a deserted island that is only a few meters squared in total.

This place is already exceptionally far from the two cities.

I can't see anything but the great tomb river within my range of vision, there aren't any large patches of land around here either, only a few small islands.

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My surroundings are still dark

It's unknown whether it's daytime or not.

Standing on top of the muddy sand, Gu Qing Shan felt his feet stepping on something sturdy.

He crouched down and dug the ground up.

Only to see that there was an ancient stone slab under his feet, which was engraved with complicated patterns that seemed to depict some sort of lost civilization.

At least, Gu Qing Shan had never seen these patterns before.

"Great..."

Gu Qing Shan muttered under his breath, then suddenly laid down before placing mud all over his body and once again activating [Govern Spirit].

He was dead.

A few moments later.

A large dark shadowy figure emerged from the riverbed.

The shadowy figure silently and uneventfully traveled along the flow of the river as it headed downstream.

Gu Qing Shan's eyes remained shut as he continued to lay under the mud for a long while before reviving himself again, slowly patting the mud off his body.

— he didn't know what that shadowy figure was.

But his Spirit Sense reacted in such a way that he felt he was in critical danger, almost enough for him to use [Virtue].

It was a good thing that he managed to avoid it.

Gu Qing Shan once again took a closer look at the patterns on the stone slab.

Still completely intelligible.

Furthermore, the patterns on the stone slab seemed to be connected somehow, which radiated a powerful force of rejection.

— it was rejecting Gu Qing Shan from approaching it.

Gu Qing Shan sighed, then realized that he should call someone for help.

“Come on... a real combatant, or someone knowledgeable”

Taking out the Reincarnation Gloom Orchid, Gu Qing Shan silently muttered.

“Barry, Kitty, Ying Hao, Anna, Laura, Lady Fusi— so many comrades, anyone will do”

“Come and help me!”

As the Reincarnation Gloom Orchid glowed, [Moon Invitation] was activated!

Thin strands of red thread emerged from the void of space to form a summoning gate.

Immediately, lines of bloody red text appeared in the void of space:

[Moon Invitation's summoning target is currently random]

[Attention: Due to your Title of 'Pure Love Gang', you will summon an individual that is compatible with the Title]

[Through the name of the 'Pure Love Gang', you've found an old comrade]

The summoning gate opened with a bang—

A silver beard old man the size of a thumb slowly stepped out from the gate.

At the same time, Gu Qing Shan facepalmed.

I think this is the great-great-great-great-great-great-great grandfather of the pixie king?

—-I really don't know how their relationships work.

In short, this is the pixie that I saved from the passageway that led into the Dusty World.

Why is it a pixie!?

How is a pixie supposed to cooperate with me to explore this great tomb?

Not to mention, what part of being a pixie fits the 'pure love' description!?

Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but turn towards the void of space where a line of bloody red text was hovering:

[Only the best playmate can become a pixie's lover, a relationship that lasts for life]

[—this is a strange race]

[But without a doubt, they are definitely pure!]

Gu Qing Shan silently read through everything, then turned to the pixie.

Only to see the silver beard old man had flown up as he landed in front of Gu Qing Shan.

“Hah, during my dream today, I already knew I had to come out at this point” the old man said.

“Really? You can only keep one ability in this place, so which one did you keep?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

The old man appeared solemn and began to speak: “You are a comrade of our pixie race to whom we owe a lot, considering the severity of the situation, as well as the joint vote between all the pixies in the dreamscape, together with 28000 coin tosses that I did myself, not to mention various raffles, campaigns, presentations, costume parties— and the most important play-bidding competition of us pixies, I finally recognize that I must also display the exceptional capabilities of us pixies”

“What exactly is it?” Gu Qing Shan couldn’t help but ask.

The old man pulled out a short stick and began to draw the shape of an animal in the mud and explained: “Years ago, the progenitors of our pixie race dawned upon our most powerful Quipcraft as they observed the movements of this animal right here”

— he still hasn’t explained what the ability was.

Gu Qing Shan still kept his hopes high and turned to look at the animal.

It was a donkey.

The donkey somehow began to move and did a sideways roll in the mud.

“Look! It was this movement right here!”

The old man appeared excited and exclaimed: “This is the essence of our pixie race, the ideal of our Quipcraft—”

“What exactly is it?” Gu Qing Shan shrugged and just asked.

The silver beard old man suddenly turned to him with gleaming eyes and called out: “This is called the donkey roll, can’t you see it?”

Gu Qing Shan sighed and asked: “You mean the ability you kept was actually a kind of martial art skill?”

“NO! You only saw the form of it, but missed the spirit of it” the silver beard old man replied.

“I still don’t get it” Gu Qing Shan really couldn’t understand.

The silver beard old man flew up and whispered to him in a mysterious tone: “It’s throwing a tantrum—
— also known as playing dirty”

Playing dirty?

The silver beard old man flew back to the stone slab and landed on it before explaining: “Take a look, these patterns are actually saying that ‘nobody except the successor of the Cambrian civilization can enter’”

Gu Qing Shan suddenly realized that the pixies were also an exceptionally knowledgeable race.

They’d witnessed plenty of mysteries and the secrets of many civilizations.

“No wonder I can sense that these patterns are rejecting me, then should we change to another island?”
Gu Qing Shan asked.

“No, we’re going to play dirty...”

The silver beard old man said as he looked around in a shifty manner.

The river was silent.

There was nothing in their surroundings.

The silver beard old man shiftily walked up to a part of the stone slab and poked at the pattern with his short stick.

—-the pattern was changed by his poke.

“There, I’ve changed the ‘can’ part of this message”

“Now, this pattern reads: ‘nobody except the successor of the Cambrian civilization can’t enter’”

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As soon as he said that.

A rumbling noise could be heard from deep under the island.

A door leading underground appeared right in front of Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan was stunned.

—-I could have never imagined that ‘playing dirty’ meant something like this.

Although the pixie’s power system developed in quite a strange direction, their Quipcraft has the ability to alter Laws!

What an unreasonable power!

Seeing the door open, the old pixie’s eyes glowed.

He urged impatiently: "Come on now! Let's go inside and see what kind of treasure we can find!"

Chapter 1772

Within the stifling darkness of the tomb, Gu Qing Shan slowly progressed.

The Cambrian civilization——

I've never heard of the existence of such a civilization before.

I originally thought that the Samsara great tomb only entombed the participants from the previous Samsara Clash for Supremacy or the previous tomb guardians...

Come to think of it, the information I obtained at the time suggested that most of the 'things' that swapped souls with people in the Tomb of Myriad Beasts were once tomb guardians.

——and from what I now know, the rest might be from lost civilizations.

That's a bit strange.

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While pondering this matter, Gu Qing Shan continued to head forward.

However, it wasn't long before he stopped again.

"What are you doing?" Gu Qing Shan asked in surprise.

The old pixie had already flown ahead of him and was now hovering in front of a random location on the wall.

"Take a look here, the decorative patterns on this wall are very nice, it's full of other-worldly style!"

The old pixie praised.

"Alright, no need to look at a brick for too long, we still have official business" Gu Qing Shan said.

The old pixie glared at him: “This wall’s brick was made very intricately, I can’t just sit back and watch it being wasted away in a place like this”

The old pixie then pulled out his short stick and tried to pry the brick off the wall.

——even after he went red from exerting his strength, the wall remained intact.

The old pixie appeared irritated and waved his stick while shouting: “Bubalabu, I order you to come off!”

Pop pop pop pop pop——

All the bricks on the entire wall began to detach and neatly lined themselves up on the ground.

The old pixie waved his stick again.

The brick with the beautiful patterns flew out by itself and landed in front of him.

The old man happily examined his brick before turning his attention to the other bricks, muttering under his breath: “... Toilet... flooring...” and various other things.

——eventually, the old pixie put all the bricks away.

As an observer, Gu Qing Shan really didn’t know what to say except: “Oi, I’m sure you can only use one ability while you’re here—— didn’t you only retain one Quipcraft?”

“Which Quipcraft did I retain?” the old pixie glanced at him.

“[Playing Dirty]” Gu Qing Shan shrugged.

The old pixie patted his shoulder and amicably answered: “That’s right, I threw a tantrum and played dirty, so I was able to retain a few more Quipcrafts— all to help you, my dear brother Gu”

“...I see” Gu Qing Shan muttered with an understanding tone.

The two of them continued to head deeper into the tomb.

The hanging lights, decorative wall bricks, stair railings, stone benches, ceramic bowls, candlesticks, and pretty much everything else on their way were all taken by the old pixie.

As Gu Qing Shan turned around, the only thing he could see now was a literal empty passageway.

Before they even finished exploring, this tomb had already been stripped bare.

What kind of spirit is this?

“Hey, even pixies don’t usually pillage every single last thing they are able to” Gu Qing Shan couldn’t help but comment.

“Those descendants don’t know anything about living sparingly and managing their assets, but I’m not like them, I’m their ancestor!” the old pixie perked up his chin and boastfully declared.

Gu Qing Shan was speechless once again.

The two of them continued forward for a short while until they reached a spacious open square.

The square was relatively empty with only a single black door that stood erect at the very center.

The old pixie flew around the door to examine it.

“Ah... such an ancient Phase Realm door, how rare” he said with an intrigued tone.

“So there’s a Phase Realm on the other side?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

The old pixie waved his stick to shoot off a Quipcraft towards the black door.

“Tsk tsk, 300 million years of history—— this door has been sealed for a very, very long time, there shouldn’t be any living thing inside”

Gu Qing Shan walked up to the door, but didn’t try to touch the doorknob.

His Spirit Sense was faintly warning him about something——

This door was giving him an ominous sensation, almost as if something terrifying would happen if he disturbed it.

Gu Qing Shan became even more cautious.

He took a few steps back and turned to the old pixie.

Only to see that the old pixie had narrowed his eyes while mumbling something, as if to carefully evaluate the door.

“You pixies must have researched these strange and unusual objects a lot, huh?”

Gu Qing Shan asked.

“You’re correct” the old pixie clapped his hands and gave him a thumbs up: “Curiosity is one of the foundational driving forces for the pixie civilization—— is what I always tell my descendants”

“That’s true, you are the pixie ancestor after all; so you should know how to enter this door” Gu Qing Shan commented.

The old pixie froze briefly before answering: “Gimme a second— there’s actually something quite dangerous about this door, if we try to forcefully open it or use any destructive spells on it, a huge problem would occur”

The old pixie tilted his head in thought for a while before searching his fanny pack.

After a while, he pulled out a small dirty rag.

As soon as the rag was pulled out, a strange mixture of odor started spreading in the air. It was a mix of cake, BBQ, foot soap, chocolate, booger, and sweat of various kinds.

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The old pixie covered his hands with the dirty rag before trying to turn the doorknob.

Cl-clack!

The black door opened without a problem.

The inside was completely dim without anything noteworthy being visible.

The old pixie sighed in relief and began to wipe the sweat off his forehead with the dirty rag before speaking: “The oldest gate-opening technique, combined with us pixie’s [Playing Dirty] technique— without any of them, this door wouldn’t have opened”

“Impressive!” Gu Qing Shan praised him.

“So, Gu Qing Shan, you can go in now, I’ll guard the door here” the old pixie said.

“You aren’t coming in?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

At this point, two lines of bloody red text had appeared in the void of space:

[The Door of True Inspection has opened]

[Attention, this door will only open once and allow entry to only a single individual before it is completely destroyed]

Sure enough, the old pixie explained: “Only one person can enter this door, and since I came here to help you, I won’t take this quota”

After saying that, the old pixie took out a small carving knife and began to carefully scrape off the layer of gold gilding on the doorknob.

“I’m going to be rich...”

The old pixie put the gold into his fanny pack and smiled so brightly that his face was full of wrinkles.

Gu Qing Shan shrugged and said: “Then wait here for me”

He swiftly entered.

...

The gloomy atmosphere from before quickly faded away.

Gu Qing Shan now found himself standing inside a high steeple.

There existed nothing but white structures outside of this steeple that took up space from where he was standing until the horizon.

Unfamiliar fluctuations could be felt radiating upwards from the ground, isolating the fluttering wind and snow outside.

[If this Phase Realm has been activated, then our civilization must have truly been eradicated]

A voice spoke up from behind him.

Gu Qing Shan turned around.

Only to see a man with a crown and scepter standing a bit further away from where he was, silently observing him.

“Can you communicate with me?” Gu Qing Shan tried asking.

But the man didn't seem to have heard Gu Qing Shan as he simply continued: [The civilization of our Cambrian world can only be inherited by our future descendants, any others who attempt to peek into our history would only be rejected]

[After all... the rise of our civilization was indeed strange]

[We don't want to bring trouble to others]

[After all... the sole reason why we were able to breed, foster, build our society, and develop our civilization... was thanks to those things buried under our feet]

The man waved the scepter in his hand, seemingly to vent some sort of stress.

[During the most recent 700 years, we've gradually been able to realize our standing—]

[Indeed...]

[Like parasites, we live by sponging off the surface of that great tomb]

[We attempted to unearth that tomb, managing to build our civilization from the tiny bits of energy and the little excerpts of knowledge that leaked from inside]

[After 200 years, our environment gradually became more ferocious, causing our world to slowly fall to ruin...]

[We also tried to excavate more of the tomb like our lives depended on it, hoping to obtain more resources for survival, but unfortunately...]

[We were far too shallow, unable to reach the requirements of the great tomb, unable to unearth any new resource to prevent our destruction]

[And so, we finally drew a conclusion]

The man's expression displayed a heavy sense of sorrow.

[That in fact, there was nobody who cared about us or our civilization]

[Our civilization was an accident]

[—An unexpected product of this tomb]

The man lowered his body and gently placed the scepter in front of Gu Qing Shan.

[This is a map of the great tomb, a map that took our entire civilization thousands of years of excavation to complete]

[—It shows the way to the entrance of the great tomb]

[That's right, after thousands of years, we only managed to draw a set of maps that led to the entrance of the great tomb]

The man's expression now displayed self-deprecation and deep sorrow.

[Ridiculous, isn't it?]

[But this was the extent of what we managed to do after exerting the entire power of our civilization]

[...This is the only thing we can leave for our descendants]

[Take it]

After explaining this, the man remained motionless.

The entire steeple, even the world itself fell into stasis.

— as if everything had ended right at this moment.

Gu Qing Shan stayed silent for a long while.

A tomb?

The leaked energy contained inside a tomb was enough to create a whole civilization?

After several thousand years of development, even at the cusp of its destruction, that civilization still couldn't open the tomb.

...What a sorrowful and unbelievable history.

Gu Qing Shan silently sighed and stepped forward to pick up the scepter.

Instantly, lines of bloody red text appeared in front of his eyes:

[You've obtained a map]

[This is the map that directs the way to the Human realm Initial Grave]

[It will lead you to the seventh entrance of the Human realm Initial Grave]

[Attention!]

[Due to this discovery, a portion of your strength is about to be unsealed]

[Special note:]

[Following this trail, you will face true danger; but as you are a Chosen Saint who joined half-way through, you still cannot use any swords; otherwise, you will immediately regain all of your strength and get kicked out of this Clash]

Chapter 1773

From the darkness, lines of bloody red text popped up one after another:

[Attention, you may now partially unseal your strength]

[You may choose one supernatural ability to unseal]

[When the Samsara's will descends, you only need to state your choice in your mind and it will be released]

[Attention, you still cannot choose a sword or your sword techniques]

[Attention, you cannot choose to regain your cultivation realm]

Gu Qing Shan read through the messages.

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A second later, a wondrous consciousness descended upon him.

—this sensation felt very similar to the fluctuations that the two paper sheets protecting the cities gave off.

Through communicating with this consciousness, Gu Qing Shan felt a sense of realization.

I can unseal my abilities.

Although it's limited to only one ability, that's still something worth celebrating.

So what should I choose?

He only hesitated for a split second before he suddenly thought about why the Samsara was doing this.

At this point in time, the Samsara chose to have the great tomb resurface.

There are numerous terrifying factors hidden within the tomb river.

There are Apocalypses, lost civilizations, and unknown horrors— like that shadow that descended within the river earlier.

When I arrived at this island, I managed to evade the dangers brought by that shadow by dying through [Govern Spirit].

From this point onwards, the deeper I head into the tomb river, the more likely I'd run into unpredictable dangers.

I might even run into other Chosen Saints.

There is also the issue of Sequences.

Living beings' Sequences, Apocalypse Sequences, and an unknown Sequence that the Heavenly Emperor belongs to.

There might even be other Sequences I haven't yet encountered.

There are too many secrets, danger is always around the corner, and yet under such circumstances, the Samsara still doesn't let anyone fully unlock their strength.

—-and yet it allowed me to unseal one of my abilities.

There are deeper implications to the Samsara's actions.

What exactly does it want to do?

Gu Qing Shan paused briefly and slowly recalled his Sequence's description—-

The Human realm Initial Grave.

It was only after I discovered the map to it that the Samsara allowed me to unseal one ability.

In other words, my most crucial mission from this point is to be a scout.

Scouting... is very different from fighting.

The goal of scouting is to collect information, not to win against the enemy.

Most of my abilities are centered around fighting and scheming, so I don't have any particularly exceptional scouting abilities...

After thinking for a brief while, Gu Qing Shan made his decision.

"Please help me unseal a unique Mystery—"

"[Overlooking Soul]"

Immediately after that.

Overflowing deep-blue wind manifested around Gu Qing Shan's body.

Hoh—-

The invisible shackles binding him were slightly relaxed.

Lines of bloody red text swiftly appeared:

[The Samsara has unsealed your unique Mystery]

[You've reawakened the Mystery: Overlooking Soul]

[Overlooking Soul: When any entity displays emotional fluctuations in front of you, you will be able to observe the secrets hidden within their soul]

This was the ability I obtained when I became allied with the Overlooker of Myriad Worlds.

Earlier, even though I summoned the Overlooker of Myriad Souls, this ability wasn't unsealed.

Considering how sneaky the Overlooker of Myriad Souls acted when eating, it probably didn't want to confront the Samsara.

But now, I've finally regained this ability.

The supernatural phenomena around Gu Qing Shan's body ceased.

The steeple, the city, the snow, everything slowly faded into nothingness around Gu Qing Shan, no longer to be seen.

The Cambrian civilization had thoroughly vanished.

And Gu Qing Shan had returned to the underground tomb.

The old pixie was tucking a small bag away when Gu Qing Shan suddenly reappeared, which startled him.

"Why did you suddenly return without any warning?" the old pixie asked.

While asking, he continued to tuck the small bag away into his pants.

Gu Qing Shan looked at him.

Only to see some words written in pixie language appearing above the old pixie's head:

[This youngster returned so quickly, but it's good that I scraped away all the gold on the doorknob; none for him, heh heh heh]

Gu Qing Shan: "..."

He subconsciously rubbed the doorknob.

There wasn't a single bit of gold left on the gilded knob.

[Overlooking Soul] is a very useful Mystery, but it occasionally creates awkward situations like this.

I don't have any scouting abilities, so I have no choice but to unseal this unique Mystery; this way, I'd be able to collect information from anyone I run into.

— I'd be able to collect a lot of information with much higher efficiency.

"Alright, we have to go now" Gu Qing Shan sighed and said.

"Where to?" the old pixie asked.

Gu Qing Shan raised the scepter in his hand—

This was the final map left by the Cambrian civilization.

A tiny noise could be heard from the scepter.

“Watch out, it’s going to explode!” the old pixie screamed.

Gu Qing Shan tossed the scepter away.

Suddenly, the scepter burst into flames and began to unravel itself in the air.

A map displayed itself to Gu Qing Shan and the old pixie.

It was incredibly detailed with clear markings depicted on it, which the two of them stared at carefully to make sure that they would memorize every last bit.

After a while, the flames faded away.

Together with the map.

“Let’s go” Gu Qing Shan said.

“Hm, this tomb doesn’t have any value anyway!”

The old pixie looked around another time before saying with a satisfied tone.

The two of them left the tomb together.

At this point, the night sky had grown even darker.

Droplets of cold water sporadically rained from above.

A light shower had begun.

The melancholic rain shower blanketed the tomb river.

Gu Qing Shan frowned.

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“In such a dangerous area, the weather has grown worse. Since your strength is still sealed, I suggest that you return to the tomb and rest for the night before continuing” the old pixie said.

“No, all Chosen Saints are currently exploring as much as they can, we can’t afford to linger behind them” Gu Qing Shan replied.

He wiped the raindrops from his face, examined his armor and weapons again before securing them tightly to his body.

“Are you sure you want to act at this late hour?” the old pixie asked.

“Hm, I’m considering which path to take” Gu Qing Shan replied.

——according to the map left by the Cambrian civilization, there were several paths that led to the entrance of the Initial Grave.

The old pixie asked: “Do you want to head to your destination by yourself, or do you want to run into other Chosen Saints?”

“Do you have a method to be sure?” Gu Qing Shan asked in surprise.

“Hm, a type of pixie divination technique” the old pixie replied.

“I previously decided to act alone, but now, I actually want to run into somebody else, even if I can only see them, I’d have a way to scout out more information” Gu Qing Shan explained.

“Alright, leave it to me!” the old pixie answered.

He flew forward and hovered in the air, using his nose to smell something in the air.

Seeing such strange conduct, Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but ask: “Hey, didn't you say it was a type of pixie divination technique? Aren't you just smelling things?”

The old pixie didn't turn around and just answered: “What do you know? My nose is reinforced with an ability from a Mystic-type animal, capable of searching for a path”

Gu Qing Shan shrugged and stopped questioning it.

He indeed didn't understand Quipcraft at all.

However, lines of text written in pixie language started appearing on top of the old pixie's head:

[This way is no good...]

[Hm, this way is no good either, it smells like 'done for']

[Oh? Oh, oh!]

[This way is safe, and also... I can smell money!]

[I heard that Chosen Saints have their strength sealed away initially]

[—it's been a very long time since I did a hit-and-run, this is as good of an opportunity as any to earn myself some pension!]

After that last statement, Gu Qing Shan saw the old pixie suddenly turning around and pointing at a certain direction:

“Let's go this way!”

Gu Qing Shan speechlessly looked at him.

—this old pixie truly is an ‘extraordinarily skilled’ individual.

Seeing him staying still, the old pixie patted his chest: “Don’t worry, young Gu, my divination techniques are very accurate, I guarantee that we’ll run into somebody if we head in this direction!”

Right as Gu Qing Shan was about to refuse, he suddenly thought of something.

The old pixie is currently [Playing Dirty], so his powers are not sealed at all.

Would the Samsara allow something like that?

He silently asked the Sequence.

The Sequence replied: [Don’t worry, the pixie race is an exceptionally miraculous one, they represent the inconceivable aspect of universal truth, all Sequences and Voids welcome them without exception, and the Samsara is no exception]

[—it’s a good thing for the Samsara for there to be the participation of pixies in the Samsara Clash for Supremacy, its Laws will be supplemented with the pixie’s, so it welcomes them]

Gu Qing Shan felt assured.

“Let’s go, we’re heading in the direction you picked”

“Now that’s more like it”

The two of them slowly traveled against the flow of the river, headed in a certain direction by following a small path along the river bank.

...

About half an hour later.

Gu Qing Shan stopped walking and drew the blade from his hip.

The old pixie took a sniff from the air and commented: “No battle fluctuations, no living people—— it’s ok”

The two moved forward a bit more.

Only to see over a dozen corpses soaking in rainwater, their blood continuously seeping into their surroundings.

“Hah? How come they are all wearing the same kind of armor you’re wearing?” the old pixie asked.

“They’re people from the Heavenly Palace—— a force opposing me” Gu Qing Shan answered.

The old pixie started chuckling and said: “You sure are a schemer, equipping yourself with their equipment, are you looking to impersonate one of them?”

“It was an unexpected acquisition” Gu Qing Shan explained.

The old pixie’s expression suddenly changed and quickly said: “Someone is coming, their strength seems to be quite decent as well, should we take refuge first?”

Right as Gu Qing Shan was about to move, he stopped.

He looked at his armor again, then at the dead heavenly beings on the ground.

——we’re all wearing similar sets of armor.

“No... I’m going to stay here to see what’s going to happen, you should hide first” Gu Qing Shan replied.

“A direct clash? Or an ambush?” the old pixie excitedly asked.

“If I remember correctly, if a pixie wants to hide, nobody would be able to find them” Gu Qing Shan commented.

“You are correct, then I’m going to hide”

“Hm, don’t act unless someone tries to do something to me” Gu Qing Shan instructed.

“No problem!”

The old pixie landed on the grass and rolled, disappearing without a trace.

Gu Qing Shan immediately crouched down between two corpses, then rubbed the blood on the ground all over his armor, body, and head; finally, he laid one of the corpses over the upper half of his body.

He laid down into position.

— and activated [Govern Spirit]

He was dead.

At this point, he was literally one of the corpses.

Not very long after.

A strong gust of wind blew over the pile of corpses.

Two Chosen Saints whose bodies were hidden in the shadow had appeared.

“All of them are dead”

“Hm”

The two of them quickly judged the surroundings and temporarily calmed down.

One of them spoke up: “Sir, that Heavenly Emperor is quite capable, managing to flee despite being surrounded by the representatives of two Sequences”

The other scoffed and replied: “Being able to infiltrate the Samsara so early on and becoming the Heavenly Emperor, of course, he shouldn’t be underestimated”

“Sir, are we going to continue moving forward?”

“No... We’re going to wait here for a bit, the representatives of those two Sequences will arrive to meet me”

“Understood”

Chapter 1774

Burururu——

The sound of thunder reverberated across the night sky as the cold rain loudly buffeted the ground.

It felt like this entire world was being drowned by water.

Two people were simply standing next to the pile of corpses as they silently waited.

One of them donned a full set of golden armor with a bright red cloak, his body continuously emanating with a terrific presence.

/

Unfortunately, he wore a mask so nobody could discern his true face.

The sharp sound of chirping birds could be heard from a distance.

“They’re coming— you should retreat first, the matter we’re going to discuss isn’t one that you can listen in on” the leader said with a solemn tone.

“Yes sir” the man’s servant bowed respectfully and began to run into the distance.

A few moments later.

A huge gust of wind blew over the corpses.

Two figures were standing a few dozen meters away from the leader.

One was a woman with a pair of grey wings.

The other was a bald man with a piece of cloth over his eyes as he wore clothes similar to that of a monk.

「 We’re here 」 the bald man said.

“White Monk, you two shouldn’t have come to meet me in such a hurry” the man in golden armor said.

「 Hah? 」

The grey-winged woman licked her lips and spoke in a seemingly intoxicated tone: 『 All monks' heads are so slow, it's been a long time since I had some fun ever since I started to work with him—— maybe we should give it a try... 』

The grey wings covering the woman's body slightly shifted open to reveal her bare shoulder and collarbone.

The man in golden armor glanced over at her, then proceeded to take out a shield and stepped back into a defensive battle stance.

The shield in his hand suddenly erupted with layers of brilliant light that surrounded him like protective barriers.

Outside the barriers, faint female figures started appearing one by one, sometimes displaying their lustful allure, other times displaying skeletal bodies which howled ferociously.

“And here I thought you wanted to discuss something, turns out you just wanted a fight”

The man in golden armor spoke with a tone laden with killing intent.

His other hand reached behind his back to wield a spear.

Seeing that things were turning sour, the bald monk shouted: 「 Don't make a scene, fellow envoys! The reason I summoned the two of you here in such a hurry was that I had crucial intel to share, not to fight to the death 」

He then violently slammed the end of his pewter staff that was engraved with runes on the ground.

Bang——

Waves of invisible fluctuations radiated from the point of impact.

The man in golden armor and the grey-winged woman both took a step back and unsheathed their weapons.

All the supernatural phenomena faded away.

Both of them looked cautiously at the bald monk.

“What exactly is it?” the man in golden armor asked.

「 I'll make it short, when the Envoy of Corruption and I pursued the Heavenly Emperor, I sensed something out of place during the entire process 」 the bald monk explained.

『 Oh? Why didn't I notice anything? Are you suggesting that I'm weaker than you? 』 the grey-winged woman chuckled.

Some supernatural fluctuations began to manifest on her wings.

「 I'm not suggesting anybody is weaker than anyone right now. What I want to say is that you both should trust my abilities when it comes to seeing through the clandestine; both of you should understand that I'm the expert when it comes to such things 」 the bald monk replied.

The grey-winged woman stayed silent for a while before asking: 『 What did you notice? Elaborate 』

「 We were pursuing that... Samsara Heavenly Emperor, in order to confirm which Sequence is behind him, but even after so long, nobody could discern his background. On the contrary, he managed to evade our pursuit time and time again, leaving his pursuers with increasingly heavier losses, which made me doubtful 」

「 I was pondering what exactly was special about him, why was it that he keeps on managing to survive 」

「 You both should know the capabilities of my Sequence—— I had specifically investigated all of his actions up to this point and was on the verge of drawing a conclusion—— when an unexpected power interfered with me 」

“What are you suggesting?” the man in golden armor asked with a heavy tone.

「 The Heavenly Emperor—— no matter who he actually is, carries a power that surpasses the Sequences, it was that power that fooled our eyes 」 the monk explained.

『 What kind of power was it exactly? 』 the grey-winged woman asked in irritation.

「 I only know that he obtained ‘something’ from within the previous Reality Gate, but that ‘something’ is obscuring my senses with its powers—— since I’m already under its effects, it has now become impossible for me to understand it, let alone discern the truth 」 the monk explained.

Suddenly, a voice spoke up from the distance:

“There is no need for you bunch to care about such things, nor try to investigate any other intel”

The wind and rain suddenly ceased.

From the distance, a cluster of colorful heavenly light could be seen rapidly approaching the three of them.

——it was a dignified man clad in a suit of colorful war armor.

Behind him, a solemn halo displayed the six forms of living beings: heavenly, human, wraith, asura, dead, and beast king; which were respectively represented in their distinct colors.

Clusters of white clouds continuously swirled around his body, a faint heavenly aria was constantly playing around him.

「 It's him! 」

『 How does he have the courage—— 』

“Let's cooperate and kill him!”

The three people swiftly took offensive stances.

“There is no need to fight, I came here to tell you all something” the dignified man said.

The man in golden armor shouted: “Heavenly Emperor, you've already gained too much benefit during this Samsara Clash for Supremacy; state the Sequence behind you and hand over your Heavenly Emperor position, that is your only chance of survival”

He glanced at the other two as he signaled to them.

The other two swiftly flanked the Heavenly Emperor.

The three of them formed a three-pronged encirclement around him.

As if he didn't see that, the Heavenly Emperor continued: “Let me reveal a secret first”

『 What secret? 』 the grey-winged woman asked.

“You people and the living beings of this realm are all the same, nothing but a bunch of pitiful fools; no one will be able to escape from the prison, even the Sequences and the—— behind the Sequences——”

The Heavenly Emperor's voice suddenly vanished.

Gu Qing Shan's vision was dark as he was lying on the ground, thanks to his senses as a dead person, he could tell that the Heavenly Emperor was still talking.

However, he couldn't hear anything past the first part.

Lines of bloody red text suddenly popped up in front of his vision as well as inside of his Thought Sea:

[Red alert!]

[The Sequence has placed you under the tightest possible isolation]

[You cannot hear or see the Heavenly Emperor's secret]

[You are safe!]

Gu Qing Shan was stunned.

I'm safe...

In other words, the secret that the Heavenly Emperor is revealing was a taboo?

What would happen if I did hear it?

Before Gu Qing Shan could ponder this matter any further, three horrified screams echoed throughout the area.

Almost immediately, the man in golden armor, the grey-winged woman, and the bald monk all started fading away into mist before disappearing completely.

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Not only did the man in golden armor turn into mist, but even his golden armor was completely erased.

A faint moan of despair could be heard from the golden armor.

— that was the voice of the artifact spirit as it died.

Eventually.

Only the Heavenly Emperor remained standing by himself.

Plish... plish... pliiiiish...

The sound of splashing rain resumed.

Standing under the showering rain, the Heavenly Emperor suddenly started laughing maniacally.

“Ahahahaha, you aren’t even qualified to hear the secret and you dare to come to force me out?”

In the middle of his laughing fit, he suddenly collapsed on his knees and began to breathe heavily.

“Hurry...”

“Come quickly!”

The Heavenly Emperor shouted solemnly.

A figure immediately came flying.

This was the servant who was with the man with the golden armor from earlier!

It turns out that he was on the Heavenly Emperor’s side from the very beginning.

“How may I serve, your majesty?”

The servant knelt down on his knees and respectfully asked.

“The pills... give me the pills...” the Heavenly Emperor struggled to speak the words.

The servant hurriedly took out a pill bottle from his chest and poured out a total of 12 white pills, placing them in front of the Heavenly Emperor.

The Heavenly Emperor grabbed and swallowed all of them whole.

“AARRRGH! It hurts! It hurts so much!”

He screamed in pain and began to roll back and forth on the ground.

After a few moments, he then curled up into a ball as he muttered: “Cold... so cold...”

The servant simply took distance without being concerned with his reaction, instead turning his attention to being cautious of the river.

A long while later.

The Heavenly Emperor’s moans finally stopped.

He stood back up again, now fully regaining his senses.

The servant took that opportunity to return to him and asked in a low voice: “Your majesty, what should we do with these corpses?”

“Ignore them, let’s go”

“Yes, your majesty”

One following behind the other, they quickly flew away from the area.

Another long while later.

Gu Qing Shan crawled back up from the ground.

“Old man, come out”

He tried shouting quietly.

—no answer.

Gu Qing Shan’s heart felt a bit heavy.

Could the old pixie have heard that secret and was erased by the unknown taboo?

He quickly headed into the grassy area from earlier and tried calling out again: “Old man, come out already!”

Suddenly, the old pixie leapt out from the grass and flew straight onto Gu Qing Shan’s hand.

He clung tightly to Gu Qing Shan’s finger, still shivering nonstop.

“Almost scared me to death... almost scared me to death...”

The old pixie muttered while continuing to shiver.

“Did you hear that secret?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“I don’t have that kind of guts! The most prominent characteristic of the pixie race is our curiosity, so the longer a pixie lives, the better they get at discerning what we can and cannot get involved in” the old pixie explained.

“So you didn’t hear anything?” Gu Qing Shan asked again.

“Of course not! Of course not! As soon as that guy opened his mouth, I sensed the power of eradicationsurrounding us—— I immediately knew something was wrong and sealed off all of my senses to fall into a blank state, that’s how I managed to survive!”

The old pixie suddenly jumped up and furiously shouted: “Using that kind of secret to kill people, such cold-bloodedness!”

“Do you know what that secret is about?” Gu Qing Shan tried asking in a low voice.

“Nope! And I never want to find out! We pixies can resurrect even if we die, but if we heard that secret earlier, we would be immediately erased—— that includes any traces of us ever existing in the first place! I don’t want that happening to me!” the old pixie shouted hysterically.

Gu Qing Shan paused briefly and consoled him: “Don’t be scared, that guy actually has a weakness as well. Just take a look, he had to take a bunch of pills after that to finally regain his senses”

The old pixie coldly sneered, then said: “Gu Qing Shan, considering you are the truest ally of our pixie race, I’ll give you an advice——”

“What’s that?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“Definitely! Absolutely! Positively! No matter what! You mustn’t try to mess with that individual!” the old pixie emphasized every word.

“But why? Just because of that secret?” Gu Qing Shan wondered.

“No. Didn’t you say that individual had to eat some pills?” the old pixie asked him in return.

“He did” Gu Qing Shan confirmed.

“When I undid the seals on my senses, I immediately recognized what those 12 pills were” the old pixie commented.

Gu Qing Shan asked right away: “Oh? What were they?”

“They were a kind of medicine that has become lost knowledge since a very long time ago called [The true twelve sufferings of living beings]” the old pixie explained.

“The twelve... suffering?” Gu Qing Shan parroted.

“That’s right, by consuming those 12 pills, one would be able to experience the suffering of being a living being” the old pixie continued.

“And then what?” Gu Qing Shan pursued the issue.

“There is nothing else, that’s all they do” the old pixie said.

Gu Qing Shan fell silent.

If it only provides 12 kinds of suffering... why is it considered a medicine?

The old pixie looked straight at him and explained: “You feel confused, don’t you? If those pills do nothing but cause suffering to the consumer, why are they called a medicine?”

“That’s right, it doesn’t make sense...” Gu Qing Shan muttered.

The old pixie remained silent for a while before he started explaining: “I’ve lived for 300 million years”

Gu Qing Shan looked at him and waited for him to continue.

“Because I am the oldest ancestor of the pixie race, I am still able to retain the passion, curiosity, and greed unique to a pixie...”

“As for [The true twelve suffering of living beings]...”

“They were specifically created for the sake of great entities who had lived for millions or tens of million years”

“Because these great entities had experienced everything there is to experience over and over again, they have thoroughly lost all interest in anything and everything, becoming bored with emotion itself. Even if reality collapsed right in front of their eyes, their emotions would still not fluctuate the slightest bit”

“At the same time, they aren’t willing to die, unwilling to give up the power they hold”

“[The true twelve suffering of living beings] is the medicine to fix this affliction”

“This medicine... will allow them to experience – for a short while – the most basic, most primitive sensations of all living beings”

1

“It allows them to feel like they are still actually alive”

Chapter 1775

The showering raindrops were becoming even more intense.

Gu Qing Shan sat next to the pile of corpses fully focused on cooking something within a pot.

The old pixie was pacing back and forth while he used his stick as a walking cane.

“Why are you pacing back and forth?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“I also need to calm myself down...” the old pixie muttered in reply.

/

“That’s true” Gu Qing Shan agreed.

What had transpired just now contained too much information, with plenty of ramifications to consider.

Some of these ramifications couldn’t even be considered, otherwise, it felt like his head would literally pop.

So Gu Qing Shan decided to stop himself and calm down.

——he began to cook a meal.

“Why am I so unlucky, running into such a dangerous secret”

The old pixie mumbled to himself with knitted eyebrows, occasionally swinging his stick in order to take off the equipment that these corpses were wearing.

“Aren’t you also earning a big score?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“Hah, scoring big is normal for me, but the things I experienced earlier are far beyond the limits of what I am able to endure” the old pixie replied.

Gu Qing Shan tasted his porridge.

——delicious, mild flavor.

“Don’t think too much, let’s have a midnight snack” Gu Qing Shan said.

The old pixie’s nose twitched a bit before he jumped up: “Seafood porridge? That’s great indeed, but I have something more important to take care of—— I need to wash away this misfortune first!”

“How are you going to wash it away?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“I need to die, Gu Qing Shan” the old pixie answered with a very serious tone.

“Die?” Gu Qing Shan exclaimed in surprise.

“Right— this is a Mysticism ritual unique to us pixies: using death to avoid misfortune”

The old pixie stood still as he began to mumble something under his breath.

“It’s a good thing to dispel your misfortune... but there is no need to die for it, is there?” Gu Qing Shan tried dissuading him.

But the old pixie was unmoved and suddenly raised his voice: “Flaming roaring blaze, burn away my body, dispel misfortune, only dead way walks!”

Hoh—

His body suddenly burst into flames.

Gu Qing Shan was startled.

He’s really committing suicide?

The flames continued to cackle for a while.

As the old pixie was burnt to ash, the flames gradually died down as well.

Gazing at the dying flames, Gu Qing Shan's mind was blank.

To avoid the misfortune brought by the Heavenly Emperor, the old pixie is now dead?

All of a sudden, the flames flickered and intensified once again.

The flames condensed down to the size of a thumb, then gradually manifested into the shape of a body and facial features.

The old pixie had reappeared!

Walking out from the flame, he sighed in relief: "From a wooden body to a fire body, sure enough, I feel much better now"

Gu Qing Shan: "...Why are you alive again?"

The old pixie answered him with surprise: "I already lost my life once, I'm now a fire pixie"

He flew up next to Gu Qing Shan, then poured himself a bowl of porridge and began drinking it.

Gu Qing Shan remained stunned for a while before gradually calming back down.

—after the old pixie's 'circus act', he felt like nothing else could surprise him now.

After finishing the porridge, the two of them continued to follow the map while staying cautious.

En route their travel, while the rainfall poured down harder, they didn't run into anything out of the ordinary.

From this perspective, the old pixie's divination technique was indeed quite reliable.

After a short while, the sun started rising and the rain finally stopped.

They'd reached the location marked on the map.

This place was a valley.

There was a stone tablet standing upright at the mouth of the valley with faint marks visible on the surface, it was as if the tablet used to contain some sort of information a very long time ago, but it's been erased by somebody.

"The location is up ahead" Gu Qing Shan said.

He began to walk into the valley, only to see the stone tablet projecting a ray of light that manifested into a wall blocking his way.

An emotionless voice resounded:

[You are not a Chosen Saint of the Human realm]

[If you want to enter the Human realm Initial Grave, please proceed through a different entrance]

Gu Qing Shan was shocked.

What?

It took so long and so much effort for me to get here, and you're telling me I can't actually enter?

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Gu Qing Shan tried touching the transparent wall.

It was rock solid.

And impossible to cross.

“Don’t mind it” the old pixie told him.

He then pulled on Gu Qing Shan’s collar while leading him inside, laughing as he said: “Although we aren’t Chosen Saints of the Human realm, we know many people from the Human realm, like old Doe, young Doe, and everyone else in old Doe’s extended family¹— so it’s ok, it’s fine!”

Just like that, the two of them passed through the transparent wall without an issue, slowly making their way into the valley.

A few lines of bloody red text appeared in front of Gu Qing Shan’s vision:

[The old pixie has used the Quipcraft: Playing Dirty]

[You’ve passed through the entrance for Human realm Chosen Saints]

Gu Qing Shan: “...”

After leading him into the valley, the old pixie regretfully said: “Alright, this is as far as I can take you”

“You can’t enter?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“[Playing Dirty] is the most potent Quipcraft there is, but for some reason, whenever I use it, the amount of time I can remain here would be drastically reduced, so it’s already time for me to return to my slumber” the old pixie explained.

Gu Qing Shan suddenly realized.

It seems like even though the Samsara was willing to accept the pixies—

Pixies are still a race that’s worth being cautious about, especially during a critical time like the Samsara Clash for Supremacy, it doesn’t want a pixie to remain for very long.

The old pixie looked straight at him and said: “Gu Qing Shan, I’ve burned away all the misfortune currently following you, so for the next 3 hours your enemies won’t be able to find you”

“After 3 hours, everything will return to normal”

“Regardless of what you want to do, you must seize your time”

Gu Qing Shan earnestly gave his thanks: “Thank you for your help. In the future, I will definitely think of a way to release you all from this slumber”

The old pixie chuckled happily and said: “Then I’ll be waiting for your good news”

He then changed into a set of indigo pajamas adorned with yellow stars, yawned, and then slowly faded away in front of Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan continued to remain still.

Lines of bloody red text swiftly appeared in the void of space:

[You’ve received ‘a pixie’s luck’]

[For the next 3 hours, no opposing party will be able to detect you]

[As the old pixie said, seize your time]

Gu Qing Shan took a deep breath.

He sped up and entered the valley without hesitation.

Immediately, his surroundings changed.

The entire world had disappeared.

It was replaced by a different, unfamiliar world.

There were mountains, rivers, a sun, a moon, and stars.

Deep within a certain jungle.

Gu Qing Shan found himself standing in front of a cave.

All around him were topless ape people wearing make-shift leafy skirts.

The ape people seemed to not notice Gu Qing Shan at all.

They were gathered in a circle, all respectfully prostrating towards the cave entrance.

Very quickly.

A figure made its way out of the cave.

— it was a considerably older ape man.

Unlike the other ape people, his eyes reflected the shine of wisdom and clarity.

This older ape man noticed Gu Qing Shan right away.

He waved towards Gu Qing Shan, then turned around and walked back into his cave.

Gu Qing Shan wasn't sure what was going on, but since the other party had signaled for him to follow, he had no choice but to follow, even if only to understand the current circumstance.

Not too long after he entered the cave, Gu Qing Shan saw the ape man again.

The ape man was sitting comfortably on top of a rock in front of a firepit, narrowing his eyes to observe Gu Qing Shan.

“I’m not sure where you came from, but it’s obvious that you are from outside” the old ape man commented.

“That’s right, I came here intentionally, but I have no idea where this place is exactly” Gu Qing Shan replied.

“This is the Human realm’s starting line” the old ape man said.

“Starting line?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“That’s right, I’m the one responsible for explaining— for countless years, I’ve always remained here, trapped here for the express purpose of answering the questions of those who enter” the old ape man explained.

Gu Qing Shan tried asking: “Is that your duty?”

“Indeed, that is my duty, because of a mistake that I committed in the past, my punishment was to remain in this primitive era while stuck in the body of an old ape”

The old ape man smiled self-deprecatingly.

“I was born in an era where civilization had advanced to an indescribable degree, possessing peerless knowledge and wisdom, but due to a mistake, I’m imprisoned here in this ancient dark age of knowledge, a primitive and ignorant era”

He stretched his long furry arm, which was very different from that of a modern human, forward, then stared at it as he continued: “No living beings around can understand you, all of your knowledge – even your spirit – are incompatible with the current era, you’re forced to live in eternal loneliness— how could there be any form of suffering that is worse than this?”

Gu Qing Shan commented: "I neglected to ask, but you are——"

The old ape man sighed, then answered: "Young man, in reality, you should be able to see suffering people similar to myself in every era"

"Within this obsolete and ancient era, there is a specific word that people use to refer to someone like me"

"——the prophet"

Chapter 1776

"You... are unable to leave this primitive era and return to your era?" Gu Qing Shan cautiously asked.

The old ape man said: "There is no way, in truth, this is already my best possible outcome—— tell me a bit about the situation outside"

Gu Qing Shan thought for a brief moment, then decided to only mention one matter: "There are some tomb keepers who decided to betray their duties..."

He then explained what happened with the Samsara War Shaman and Samsara War General.

"Ahaha... what a bunch of morons" the old ape man chuckled.

/

"Why do you say that?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

The old ape man explained: "Their duty was to suffer the ravages of the Apocalypse in place of the Human realm, when the Samsara would complete its evolution in the future, they would have been able to enjoy untold glory in the Human realm, but they've instead decided to betray the Samsara and abandon their duty——"

"Their terrible outcomes have already been decided since long ago"

Gu Qing Shan appeared confused.

— the suffer the ravages of the Apocalypse— in place of the Human realm?

Why does that sound a bit strange?

“The Human realm has already been stabilized, so I don’t understand why you said that those individuals were to suffer in place of the Human realm” Gu Qing Shan asked.

The old ape man said: “Do you know about the concept of a ‘backup’?”

“I do” Gu Qing Shan replied.

“Metal-Wood-Water-Fire-Earth, Wind-Lightning-Light-Dark-Sound, as well as the stabilized Human realm that you’ve just mentioned, are all nothing but a backup, a kind of insurance, a means to ensure that no matter what happens, everything would still be able to return to their starting points”

“I still don’t understand” Gu Qing Shan said.

The old ape man slightly tilted his body forward and looked straight at him: “The Samsara is the greatest weapon of the Living Beings Sequence, do you understand this much?”

“I understand”

“And you should have seen the Human realm as well— you don’t actually think that place is the true Human realm, do you?”

“You mean...”

“That is merely a backup location, one that just happened to act as the venue for the preliminary disqualification, which would eliminate Chosen Saints who are inadequate”

“A backup... then where is the real Human realm?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

The old ape man just looked straight at him without answering.

Gu Qing Shan had a sudden epiphany.

That's right.

This place is the 'Human realm Initial Grave'.

Could it be...

Seeing his expression, the old ape man continued: "It seems you've understood. The Human realm is a part of the Samsara, a sharp blade of the greatest weapon, and what begins here is the Human realm Initial Grave"

Gu Qing Shan's expression was filled with shock as he asked: "And what do I need to do?"

The old ape man told him: "You must enter the true Human realm, step by step, search for the grave where it is hibernating, and then——"

"Completely awaken it"

Gu Qing Shan remained silent for a long while before sighing: "So that was how it was"

The old ape man took out a cane and handed it to Gu Qing Shan.

"Take it and stoke the fire, the Samsara will grant you an identity to enter the Initial Grave"

Gu Qing Shan accepted the cane and tried shifting the firewood around.

Clack!

An uneven piece of rock fell out from the fire pit.

There were faint marks carved on the surface of the rock, which could barely be discerned as the character for 'three'.

"It seems the Samsara has granted you a new identity" the old ape man commented.

Gu Qing Shan asked: "What does this 'three' mean——"

"You are the third person to enter this place, tch tch, quite fast if I say so myself" the old ape man praised him.

"Now that I have this rock, what should I do next?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"Take that rock and head out starting from the Human realm Initial Grave, head in search for a more glorious civilization until you find the Human realm Ultimate Grave" the old ape man said.

"How exactly should I do that? Are there any specific requirements?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

The old ape man continued: "Starting from the Initial Grave, you must drive the civilization forward, and with every step that civilization takes forward, you will head one step closer to the Ultimate Grave"

"The ultimate civilization is also the Human realm Ultimate Grave"

"—Arrive there, and awaken it"

Gu Qing Shan thought briefly before asking: "Do all Chosen Saints have to participate in progressing the civilization?"

"——Only Chosen Saints who managed to reach the Initial Grave are qualified to participate in this progression—— of course, the later one arrives here, the later they will begin their journey, and the more difficult it will be" the old ape man answered.

Gu Qing Shan nodded: "Thank you"

He held the uneven rock in his hand.

Immediately, lines of bloody red text appeared in the void of space:

[You've entered the Human realm Initial Grave]

[You've obtained a staring identity: ancient ape man]

[From this point onwards, you and all the other Chosen Saints will dictate the progression of civilization]

[Once civilization has reached its ultimate progression, you will be able to awaken the true Human realm!]

[Attention: The Samsara will bestow Merit corresponding to your contributions]

[With Merit, your strength will be unsealed in stages]

[Begin!]

All the bloody red text quickly disappeared.

Gu Qing Shan noticed that thick black hair was growing all over his arms.

—it wasn't just his arms either, as his entire body was slowly transforming into that of an ape!

The ape stood up and tried moving his body, shrugging as he commented:

“What a strange sensation...”

“You'll get used to it, in time” the old ape man replied with a gloomy look in his eyes.

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“Do you have any advice for me?” the ape asked.

The old ape man looked at him and replied: "I've already said everything I needed to say within the scope of my duty"

The ape said: "Perhaps you didn't notice, but I do recognize that you are a well-learned individual with great wisdom, and I've always respected such people"

"And how did you recognize that?" the old ape man asked.

"The vibes you give off, and your natural demeanor— as a researcher, it is easy for me to recognize someone of the same profession" the ape explained.

The ape then sat down in front of the old ape man, looked closely at him, then whispered: "You've been trapped here for a very long time, and I'm a Chosen Saint, so if there is anything I can help you with, I'd be more than happy to do so"

The old ape man asked: "What is your field of research?"

The ape answered: "Mostly mobile mech suits, but I also know a bit of spatial science and technology"

"What kind of spatial science?"

"Space-warp technology, but I've only briefly studied it, a friend of mine is much more of an expert in that field"

"What is your opinion on your own field of research?"

"I can't exactly explain it to you, but I'll show you how I create mech suits if I ever get the opportunity"

"Ahaha... you really feel like a real scientist"

The old ape man's attitude suddenly became much friendlier.

“I’m asking very earnestly, is there anything I can do to help you?” the ape whispered again.

“Anything else... it’s no use, the Samsara keeps a constant watch over the Clash, so there’s nothing anyone can do to deceive it, or take advantage of any loopholes” the old ape man replied.

The ape sighed.

The old ape man remained silent for a bit before suddenly speaking again: “Since you’re someone from my same profession, I can give you one additional personal advice”

The ape displayed a look of close attention.

“There is no need to show off in the primitive era using ‘acts of god’ or other religious scripts. Some might think that doing that will be easier for them to manipulate civilization as a whole, but that would only cause civilization to head in a wrongful direction”

“—After all, this is the Human realm, not the Heaven realm”

Silently listening to the advice, the ape nodded and gave his thanks: “I understand”

“You can go now” the old ape man concluded.

“Thank you, and see you later”

“See you later indeed”

The ape took the rock and left the cave.

He took a look at the valley outside from the cave entrance.

Only to see an ape man whose body was clad in holy light hovering in the air.

It declared to all the ape people: 「 I am the Ape God, from now on, you all must follow my orders and work together—」

Boom!

A bolt of lightning flashed across the sky as it descended upon the floating ape man.

Without being able to utter a single noise, the floating ape man's body was ripped to shreds.

Clak— clack clack...

A rock rolled up to the ape's feet.

A number was engraved on the rock:

[2]

—so that was the second Chosen Saint.

He had already been eliminated.

The ape sighed and put the rock away.

“Stimulating the progression of the ape man civilization... how should I do that exactly?”

The ape climbed to the top of a tree and silently observed the entire tribe from a tree branch.

—this was obviously a small tribe that had just recently formed.

The ape people are still in an ignorant state, with no clothes to cover themselves and no food to fill their stomachs.

The only thing worth praising them for is the fact that they can already create fire.

How can I drive this civilization forward?

Suddenly, a bestial roar resounded from the distance.

As the ape turned around, he noticed an especially large sabretooth tiger that just appeared from behind a rocky hill.

The ape people all shouted loudly as they scattered and ran.

Only a few particularly muscular ape people managed to suppress their fear and picked up heavy stone axes in their hands.

Another portion of the ape people raised their torches while shouting back at the beast, attempting to scare it away.

Seeing the torch, the beast naturally didn't dare to take another step forward, but it didn't want to flee either.

It was simply sitting at the edge of the encampment, cautiously observing its surroundings and waiting.

The ape on the tree fell into thought.

This animal hasn't left, so it must have some sort of helper, or other means at its disposal.

While the ape people... only have stone axes and torches.

How are they going to fight a sabretooth tiger like that?

Should I join them?

No... if I join them, I'd only be able to prevent this attack, but not stimulate progress for this civilization.

Civilization——

After remaining silent for a few moments, the ape suddenly took out the two rocks that he was carrying.

Still sitting on top of the three, he began to work on the rocks.

After just a few moments, the rock was made into a new shape.

——it had become sharper and pointier.

Chapter 1777

Gu Qing Shan looked down at his hands.

After he was done shaping the two sharp rocks, they ripped his skin a little bit, causing him to bleed just a little.

At the same time, the long black hair all over his arms was shed by a small amount.

——what's happening here?

Would tiny progress with civilization also be reflected by tiny changes on my body?

Gu Qing Shan fell into thought.

/

...

On the hillside below.

The ape people were still shouting out loud one after another.

They swung the torches in their hands, trying to ward away the large sabretooth tiger.

But the sabretooth tiger was only deterred for a short while before it looped back around, seemingly so hungry that it was willing to take risks.

Normally, if the prey noticed its approach prematurely, the sabretooth tiger would usually give up on that hunt.

But today, it was seemingly determined to eat a few ape people.

Noticing the sabretooth tiger's attitude so clearly, the ape people were clearly anxious.

They continued to shout and howl while also waving to those behind them.

All the old and injured ape people were led back into the cave.

Only the youngest and most muscular ape people remained outside on the hillside as they prepared to fight for their lives against the sabretooth tiger.

Even the ape people's 'prophet' had been invited to come out.

Sensing the situation, he also appeared dejected.

Gu Qing Shan jumped down from the tree top and snuck next to him, asking in a whisper: "How do you usually deal with situations like these?"

The ape prophet: "If this animal doesn't want to leave, it must be especially craving ape people, so there's no choice but to fight"

Gu Qing Shan asked: "The number [2] Chosen Saint was killed by a lightning strike, do you know where the number [1] Chosen Saint is?"

"What do you want to do?" the ape prophet asked.

“To cooperate with him, this way, our progress would be much faster” Gu Qing Shan replied.

“The number [1] Chosen Saint didn’t enter from my side” the ape prophet answered.

Gu Qing Shan was briefly surprised.

Oh right.

This is the entrance for the Human realm’s Chosen Saints.

So other than this one, there must exist other entrances for members of other realms.

“You’re the boss here, so how about you order me to fight that sabretooth tiger?” Gu Qing Shan suggested.

If the other Chosen Saint isn’t here, then I need to seize my time.

The old pixie gave me 3 hours of ‘pixie luck’.

——I need to gain the recognition of all the ape people as soon as possible.

That would make my next steps more convenient.

Glancing at him, the ape prophet understood right away.

So the ape prophet raised his wooden staff and pointed at the sabretooth tiger in the distance before pointing it at Gu Qing Shan and loudly ordering: “You, go and deal with that beast!”

Gu Qing Shan stepped out from behind him, walked past all the ape people, and swiftly rushed towards the sabretooth tiger.

At first, he walked, then sped up into a slow run as he moved his arms.

He wasn’t carrying a stone axe or torch, but instead a rock in each hand.

The sabretooth tiger first looked cautiously at him, but that caution was quickly replaced by killing intent.

—only one ape?

A single ape is rushing at me?

The sabretooth tiger felt like it had just been severely humiliated.

So it took a deep breath—

Roarrrrr!!!

The sabretooth tiger uttered a ferocious roar.

Right as it opened its mouth, Gu Qing Shan suddenly threw the rock forward.

The rock flew like it was shot out of a cannon and made its way straight into the sabretooth tiger's mouth.

Its roar was interrupted.

The sabretooth's 10-meter long body collapsed to the ground, which made a loud thud.

—before the sabretooth tiger could react, it was already dead.

Complete silence.

Suddenly, the ape people cheered.

A particularly muscular ape man ran ahead and exclaimed: "That was unbelievable! A rock can't kill that kind of ferocious beast!"

Gu Qing Shan replied: "You're right"

He continued forward and pried open the sabretooth tiger's mouth.

Revealing that there was a large hole on the inside of its mouth, from which blood and various liquids were flowing out of its body.

Gu Qing Shan also held up the other sharp rock he had made in order to show it to the other ape people.

"If we sharpen rocks until they're pointy, they will be able to pierce through the beasts' skin and hurt them!" Gu Qing Shan loudly declared.

The ape people all stared straight at the rock in his hand, then at the corpse of the large sabretooth tiger.

Quite a few ape people had pondering expressions on their faces.

...

2 days later.

Gu Qing Shan was sitting on top of a tree as he looked down just a bit further away.

A leopard had entered the territory of the ape people.

This time, aside from stone axes, the ape people had another kind of weapon.

— stone pikes.

By tying a sharpened rock to a stick, they had become pikes.

Gu Qing Shan silently observed them for a while.

These ape people were obviously so used to using stone axes that they were still a bit awkward while using stone pikes to fight.

— they were unable to kill the leopard in a single strike.

Being pierced by one of the stone pikes, the leopard sensed fatal danger, unlike anything it had felt before, and hurriedly fled using its advantage of speed.

The ape people cheered again.

Although they couldn't take down the leopard, it was already unimaginable for them to be able to defeat it so easily, unlike before.

They all formed a circle, dancing and singing to celebrate their victory.

After observing for a while, Gu Qing Shan got down from the tree and headed back into the mountain cave.

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The ape prophet was still seated at the deepest end of the cave in front of the fire pit, exhaling in a bored manner as he smoked from a type of rolled-up leaf.

“You’ve already done very well, so why do you still look so unsatisfied?” the ape prophet asked.

“Can this really be considered ‘done well’?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“One can only reach this place by passing through numerous Apocalypses and dangerous monsters, not to mention countless tombs, as well as knowing exactly what to look for——”

The ape prophet exhaled another puff of smoke and continued: “Furthermore, the ape people have already realized how to make tools. Compared to before, this was unthinkable, and the ape people civilization as a whole is already progressing at a rapid pace”

Gu Qing Shan raised his arm.

The long black hair on his arm was growing shorter again, but at a much slower pace compared to when he first made a sharp rock.

Gu Qing Shan sighed: “It took two days to successfully craft five stone pikes and learn to use them, during the process three ape people were injured—— there’s still an incredibly long way to go until they learn how to skillfully wield pikes so that they can fight larger beasts”

“You can teach them some of the basics of how to use long-handled weapons to attack—— that way, things would probably move a bit faster” the ape prophet suggested.

“But how much faster? There are too many things that these ape people must learn, they still haven’t been enlightened, they don’t know written language or the basic rules of how the universe functions, sometimes they would even shout to express something”

Gu Qing Shan couldn’t help but sigh and continue: “Even if I continue to teach them more and more—— it would be several generations until they can reach a moderately advanced stage of civilization, which is a process that can easily last for hundreds of years. My evolution would also be lengthened to be as long as their progress”

The ape prophet suddenly laughed.

“I’ve never thought that Chosen Saints would also have to take on a ‘prophet’ role like me”

“——I’ve been here for hundreds of years with nothing but these ignorant fools around me, even if I wanted to teach them something, they would still find it difficult to understand, only able to record everything I said in stone and worship it as gospel”

“But with their meager knowledge and comprehension, they would never truly understand the ‘truth’ behind what I teach”

“I’m alone even with so many around me!”

He was laughing so hard that he was tearing up.

Gu Qing Shan looked at him and waited for his emotions to stabilize before asking: “That’s why I’ve been thinking, perhaps you’ve misunderstood something”

“Huh? What do you mean?” the ape prophet doubtfully asked.

Gu Qing Shan stood up and explained: “I recalling something you told me before—”

“You said that it was because of a mistake you committed in the past that you were punished to stay in this ignorant era, forced to remain in the body of an ape”

The ape prophet nodded: “I did say that”

“And you’ve remained in this era for all this time without venturing into any other age, not knowing how you can escape from this ancient prison” Gu Qing Shan continued.

“That’s right, what are you trying to say?” the ape prophet couldn’t help but ask.

Gu Qing Shan waved his hand to signal him to be patient and went on:

“Your duty was to inform all Chosen Saints who would arrive here that they need to drive the progress of civilization forward, making it so that they would arrive at the ultimate civilization from this originating era and awaken the Human realm”

“Yes” the ape prophet confirmed.

“If that’s the case, all Chosen Saints must surely experience a continuously progressing civilization” Gu Qing Shan said.

“That’s one way to put it” the ape prophet replied.

“Then, how does the Samsara judge the progress of civilization? What are the signs?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

The ape prophet was startled.

“You are being held prisoner in this era, trapped in the body of an ape— but if civilization progresses and you are still a prisoner— will you turn back into human, or remain as an ape man?” Gu Qing Shan pursued the question.

The ape prophet opened his mouth, then hesitantly said: “I only know that providing an explanation is my duty... Are you suggesting that me being a prisoner in this ignorant era was also an implication of the Samsara?”

Gu Qing Shan silently observed him and nodded.

The ape prophet abruptly stood up and raised his voice: “What exactly have you thought of! How can I leave this era? Hurry and tell me!”

Gu Qing Shan replied: “I’ve already said it very clearly”

The ape prophet exclaimed: “But I still don’t understand!”

Gu Qing Shan explained: “The Samsara is having us start from the primitive ape men era and drive civilization forward, but it doesn’t state what kind of standard it’s using to judge, which creates a huge issue—”

“You should know as well, being a proper civilization means it has a distinct ‘type’”

“At certain crucial points in history, science and technology would be more suitable for humanity’s needs, so low-level cultivation becomes obsolete; at a different point in history, magic might instead overpower science and technology; and at another point, martial arts might crush magic; not to mention civilizations centered around Mysticism and Occultism—”

“In short, there exist many undetermined factors, sometimes tiny details that might decide the general direction of a civilization as well as its final ‘type’”

“With that in mind, what are the standards?”

The ape prophet was stunned at this question, mumbling to himself unconsciously: “That’s right, what exactly would the standards be?”

Gu Qing Shan sighed and continued: “This single step will be able to eliminate many people, as they won’t realize that you were actually the Samsara’s gauge”

“Me?” the ape prophet parroted.

“That’s right, you were imprisoned in an ape man’s body, which led to you being trapped in this primitive era of ape people, then... wouldn’t the gauge be this body?” Gu Qing Shan replied.

“This body? My body is indeed my prison, but if we use my body to gauge the standard for this civilization, how should I escape from being an ape man?” the ape prophet doubtfully asked.

Gu Qing Shan whispered: “To escape from your prison of a body, it will be necessary to first consider which ‘type’ you wish to evolve towards, only then would you be able to move on from your initial prison to one of the many possible civilizations”

“This is very interesting”

He picked up a tree branch and began drawing a rune on the ground.

“This rune represents the [Magic], it’s the most basic water condensation technique, capable of drawing moisture from the air to condense around the rune”

“Are you trying to show off miracles?” the ape prophet asked.

“No, I’m not calling myself some sort of god, or trying to deceive the ape people— this rune here is a part of natural Law, a foundational block of a magical civilization; similar to how the stone pike I made was a gauge of primitive human civilization” Gu Qing Shan explained.

The ape prophet looked at the rune.

Only to see tiny water droplets slowly condensing around the rune.

He gradually realized what was going on and said in a low voice: “Then you’re trying——”

“Whether or not things are as I assumed, we’ll find out very soon” Gu Qing Shan replied.

The two of them looked down at the rune and silently waited.

Immediately, lines of bloody red text slowly appeared in the void of space:

[Congratulations, you’ve seen through this Samsara secret]

[Each era is a past grave, which the Samsara had used to seal away the true Human realm, granting it the strictest form of protection]

[Of course, driving the progression of civilization forward naturally would still be a correct decision, albeit a long one]

[But some will notice a different test of the Samsara, they will see through the secret of the Human realm’s graves and leap-frog through each civilization grave, allowing them to move towards the ultimate grave at a faster pace]

[Treating one’s body as a prison and the civilization as a method to escape this prison, that is one method of searching for the ultimate civilization]

[You are about to leave the Initial Grave and move forward]

Gu Qing Shan’s vision blurred.

He felt himself leaving the ape man body as his soul began to float through space, swiftly heading towards a specific direction.

After an unknown amount of time had gone by, perhaps it was only the blink of an eye, perhaps it had been countless years.

Gu Qing Shan found himself landing on solid ground again.

This was a very wide and large location that was filled with miraculous power.

—mana.

A booming voice resounded from ahead of him:

「 From today onwards, you will begin your magic training 」

「 Magic is our foundation and weapon to fight against evil... 」

The voice explained without a pause.

There were many others around him who were of similar age, all of them were dressed in uniform as they stood neatly in line.

Gu Qing Shan raised his arm to check, then looked down at his body.

—-I turned into a boy of about 11 or 12 years old.

I'm not an ape man anymore.

I'm now a human child.

Chapter 1778

This is very obviously a school.

On the stands, someone was in a middle of a speech:

「 After finishing basic education, you will enter different fields and study skills that are individually suitable to each of you... 」

「 Today, the selection process will begin. Teachers, please head onto the stage for preparation 」

Several teachers who appeared physically strong then carried a heavy metal door from behind onto the stage.

「 Very well, now let me explain the process of the Profession Selection... 」

Standing among the students, Gu Qing Shan carefully listened to their explanation.

It turns out that in this Magic-centric world, children who were around 12 years old would undergo a ceremony called Profession Selection.

Children with wizardry talents were to be raised as pillars for the civilization, while the others would be distributed to various other positions within society, where they would become apprentices in other necessary professions.

After hearing that, Gu Qing Shan stopped listening and instead began to think about what had happened earlier.

——how did I escape the ape people era?

At the time, I drew a magical rune that far surpassed the comprehension of that era.

As an 'ape person', I became the representative of the wisdom of the entire ape people civilization, thus being freed from that ape body and traversing several eras to reach this place.

And now, I'm trapped in the body of a 12-year-old boy.

He tried moving his body a bit.

This is a very weak body that can achieve very little.

—if I want to head towards the Ultimate Grave as soon as possible, I need to surpass this era right now!

Gu Qing Shan turned around to leave the hall.

“Gourde, you troublemaker, where are you going now?” one of the teachers asked.

“I’m going to the toilet, sir” Gu Qing Shan replied.

“Go and come back quickly, we’re about to begin”

“Yes, sir”

The teacher nodded without saying anything else.

Gu Qing Shan left the hall and entered a relatively secluded walled-off location, then slightly lowered his posture into a basic martial arts stance.

A gust of wind suddenly manifested around Gu Qing Shan, flowing back and forth without dissipating.

—this stance was taught to him by Lin, a fist technique realized through the martial scripture that she practiced.

This fist technique should have already far surpassed the current magic era.

But nothing happened at all.

Gu Qing Shan still remained a 12-year-old boy.

He muttered: "If the body is the prison of civilization, why can I still not escape after surpassing this civilization?"

After remaining silent for a while, he began to ponder.

The only additional thing I did was to create the stone pike, allowing the ape people to utilize tools in a more refined manner.

If that's the case, the answer is clear.

— to escape an era and head towards the next era, two general conditions must be met:

First, to trigger a drastic paradigm shift within the entire civilization.

Second, to introduce an achievement and turn it into an established basis, this achievement must be a breakthrough that surpasses the current civilization.

If I can achieve both of these conditions, I'd be able to move on.

This way, I will be continuously leap-frogging forward through different civilizations—

This is much faster compared to remaining within a single civilization.

At least, in the beginning.

Gu Qing Shan pulled back his fist and slowly went back to the hall.

At the door, he ran into the teacher from earlier again.

"Teacher" Gu Qing Shan slightly bowed his head to greet him.

"Hm, what kind of trouble did you stir up again this time?" the teacher cautiously asked.

Gu Qing Shan felt a bit speechless.

— I wonder why the Samsara gave me the identity of a troublemaker?

"Nothing sir, I really just had a stomach ache earlier" Gu Qing Shan earnestly replied.

The teacher seemed unconvinced.

After a while, the teacher continued: “Gourde, you usually like to cause trouble and never train yourself, always slacking in your studies as well; but know that whether or not you can become a knight’s attendant during this occasion would be very important to you, so be serious for once”

Gu Qing Shan was surprised.

—so this body’s innate potential was only ever enough to become a knight’s attendant.

To wield magic, one’s body needs to have an affinity with the elements.

This is innate, which means it’s impossible to change this fact after one is born.

This was a ‘truth’ recognized by the entire world.

—but within a Magic-centric civilization, how could one reach the pinnacle of civilization without being able to study magic?

Being a knight would naturally be a good second choice, but they’re commonly recognized to be academically inferior, so the research they conduct would always lack reliability, and the resources they obtain are also different.

After remaining silent for a bit, Gu Qing Shan suddenly said: “Teacher, is there still some time until it’s our class’s turn to be tested?”

“Hm, it’s still quite earlier, the device still hasn’t finished its preparation, and your class is last on the list”

“Teacher, I’m a bit hungry, can I go eat something first?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

The teacher looked straight at him.

He appeared apologetic.

“Everyone else is nervous to hell, and you’re here asking to go eat after you’ve asked to go to the toilet; fine, you troublemaker, go ahead, eat quickly and hurry back here” the teacher sighed as he told him.

“Yes, sir” Gu Qing Shan replied.

He turned around and started running towards the cafeteria.

This body seemed to be carrying a small card with a star on it, probably money for daily use.

There should still be enough money on it for a meal.

Gu Qing Shan quickly arrived at the cafeteria and walked up to the meal lady.

“I want this one, this one, this one, this one, and this one as well”

Gu Qing Shan pointed at a bunch of dishes.

“Scan your card” the meal lady told him.

Gu Qing Shan handed his card to her.

A few moments later, after running back and forth a few times, he finished laying out the food he bought on a table.

If this body’s constitution isn’t good enough—

He took a deep breath and silently equipped the Title [Pure Love Gang].

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Then activated the Title Skill!

[Going Cold: You will temporarily gain the ability of one member of the 'Pure Love Gang', in exchange for experiencing pain]

[The stronger the power you gain, the more pain you will have to endure, to the point that you can go insane, lose your mind, or even die from it]

[—The greater the gain, the greater the pain]

A tiny pricking pain could be felt.

It entered Gu Qing Shan's body from the top of his head, causing his entire body to experience a piercing pain.

Gu Qing Shan exhaled deeply after staying motionless for a little bit.

Lines of bloody red text quickly scrolled across this vision:

[You've chosen the member of the Pure Love Gang: Su Xue Er]

[You've temporarily obtained her ability: Infinite Evolution]

Hunger.

Insatiable hunger began to overtake all his other senses.

Gu Qing Shan picked up a piece of bread on the table and began wolfing it down.

He drank all the milk in a single gulp.

The cake, noodles, meat, and various other dishes were cleaned out without leaving a scrap.

"Excuse me, one more portion please... yes, everything just like earlier"

All the plates were cleaned out.

“I’m sorry, is there anything else to eat?”

The plates were cleaned out yet again.

Until finally, under the cafeteria meal lady’s fearful gaze, Gu Qing Shan finished eating.

He leaned comfortably on his chair and picked up a toothpick.

—now I have enough energy to undergo some basic evolutions.

He closed his eyes and quickly began to heal his body’s hidden injuries.

—even though this body was only 12 years old, some of the inappropriate means of training it had undergone had caused it to accumulate plenty of trauma.

If left unchecked, and if he had continued to train with the same inappropriate methods, this body would most likely break down at the age of around 35, thus becoming a cripple with a body filled with self-inflicted wounds.

From these rough training methods alone, the level of this world’s civilization could be inferred to be quite low.

“Right now, I need to ensure that this body has a better affinity with the elements...”

Gu Qing Shan mused and began to recall this body’s memories.

Only a constitution with a high affinity with the elements would be able to wield magic.

Affinity with the elements...

During meditation, one would be able to communicate with the elements through their mind, resonating one's thoughts with the elements to mobilize a limited amount of them, using them to formulate constructs.

These formulated constructs would then have infinite possibilities.

In that case, to be able to communicate and control the elements, one must at least possess powerful mental strength.

Gu Qing Shan closed his eyes and began to mobilize the energy in his body to stimulate and develop the innate potential of his brain.

A few moments later.

Gu Qing Shan opened his eyes, once again feeling hungry.

—among the types of evolution, the evolution of the brain was the most advanced, as well as the most... energy-consuming.

Gu Qing Shan stood up and walked back to the cafeteria counter.

"Excuse me, I'd like to order—"

"Monster! A monster!" the meal lady from behind the counter screamed in horror and ran away.

"..." Gu Qing Shan.

He looked behind the counter.

Only to see a number of steaming hot meat buns being laid neatly on top of a long dining table.

Gu Qing Shan's thoughts moved.

Several buns flew by themselves through the window before falling into his hands.

"This kind of mental strength... should be quite strong for children already"

Taking a bite, Gu Qing Shan began walking back to the testing hall.

...

After queuing up for a ridiculously long time, it was finally his turn.

"Gourde, head on stage and conduct your test"

Gu Qing Shan ran up and stood firmly underneath the metal door.

—could my mental strength be a bit too powerful?

It's not a good idea to startle others, so I should probably lay low in the beginning, considering I don't know much about this world.

Not to mention, children should know the basic etiquette of self-protection.

Gu Qing Shan felt pleased with himself and subconsciously smiled.

"What are you smiling about?" one of the teachers cautiously asked.

"Nothing sir, I just thought about something funny" Gu Qing Shan hurriedly replied.

"Hmph, you're Gourde the troublemaker, aren't you— alright, today is a big event, so I don't want to waste time scolding you, are you ready?"

Gu Qing Shan retracted his mental strength by half.

“I’m ready” he said, full of confidence.

“Begin!” the teacher declared.

Bang——

A deafening noise resounded.

The metal door suddenly broke and fell down into several pieces.

Everyone was shocked.

Complete silence.

Suddenly, a teacher roared in anger: “Gourde, what did you do!?”

“I didn’t do anything, teacher!”

1

...

Many years in the future, this day would still be remembered by all.

On this day, the legendary Divine Wizard ate a breakfast big enough for 36 people, then broke his school’s Gate of Tests.

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“Gourde, you will never have to participate in a Profession Selection ever again!”

Bam——

Following the teacher's strict scolding, the school's gates were slammed shut in his face.

Gu Qing Shan blankly stood at the school's gates for a while.

The testing door was broken.

No matter how hard I tried to explain, all the teachers refused to believe that it had nothing to do with me.

—furthermore, I WAS actually the reason behind the breaking of the door.

However, the issue is that these elementary school teachers are limited in their understanding, none of them realizes that I overwhelmed the door through sheer mental strength.

I can't even blame them for it.

In this era, never before has there been a case where someone overwhelmed the door's capacity through nothing but mental strength.

—this is the power of evolution.

Gu Qing Shan sighed and prepared to leave the school.

"Young master Gourde"

A voice called out from a distance.

As he turned around, he saw a horse carriage and a middle-aged man in a black butler suit.

"You are?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

The middle-aged man gracefully bowed to him, then answered: "I am your butler— young master, let's get on the carriage before we continue"

He opened the door of the carriage.

Gu Qing Shan smiled as he observed him: “You seem to know quite a bit”

The butler replied: “There was a guide at the initial location, so there are naturally guides in other eras as well”

“I see” Gu Qing Shan commented.

He boarded the horse carriage and left the school with the middle-aged man.

An hour later.

The horse carriage stopped in front of a medium-sized manor.

Gu Qing Shan walked inside and glanced at the paintings of various aristocrats that were hung around the main hall.

“These are the paintings of your ancestors, the lineage stops at your generation, with you being the last heir” the butler explained.

“So this is the identity that has been pre-arranged?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“There are two methods to progress forward through each era, the first of which is to begin at the era of the ape people, slowly but continuously driving civilization forward; the second is to directly break out from your bodily prison and leap forward to the next era of civilization” the butler answered.

“With the first method, there are ‘prophets’ who are responsible for guiding and mentoring; with the second method, there are those like me who make the necessary preparations ahead of time to welcome the Chosen Saints into each era”

“Welcome? Is there anything that you need to delegate to me?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“As the second method is much faster compared to the first method, it would result in a certain degree of imbalance, so the Samsara established corresponding means of adjustment” the butler answered Gu Qing Shan.

He placed a tray in front of Gu Qing Shan.

The tray only contained a single envelope.

Gu Qing Shan took the envelope and opened it before carefully reading the content of the letter inside.

“An acceptance letter into the Grand Divine Church’s Academy?” Gu Qing Shan asked doubtfully.

“Indeed, as you’ve directly bypassed two thousand years’ worth of eras, you need to do something else aside from just advancing civilization” the butler replied.

“Go to school?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“No, you need to destroy the Grand Divine Church” the butler answered.

Gu Qing Shan paused briefly before pondering: “Religions are a part of civilization’s existence and development, why do I have to destroy it?”

The butler chuckled and answered: “It would be no problem if it was a normal religion, as ‘prophets’ like us can easily establish a religion of our own to stimulate the development of a civilization’s culture, philosophy, science, and art”

“Indeed” Gu Qing Shan agreed.

“For that same reason, this Church isn’t the one that you know of, it is considered a type of corrosion within the Samsara, an act of conversion and annexing if you will” the butler explained.

“You mean an Apocalypse?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“No, it isn’t an Apocalypse, it doesn’t seek to destroy everything, but its threat is even greater compared to that” the butler replied.

The butler then moved a trunk onto the table and opened it.

Its content included an aristocratic emblem, clothing, genealogy, the Count’s seal, gems, gold coins, as well as a scepter of historical significance.

“Count?” Gu Qing Shan almost exclaimed in surprise.

“They’ve been gathering dust for a long while, only to be used again if you choose to accept this identity” the butler said.

“What if I decide to not accept them?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“Then please head back to the ape people era and lead the progress of their civilization” the butler answered.

Gu Qing Shan chuckled.

He then took out the scepter from the trunk and said: “Then I’d be more than willing to bypass 2000 years and do some work in this era”

Instantly, lines of bloody red text appeared in his vision:

[You’ve received the scepter: Green Dragon’s Beard]

[All of your healing techniques will be improved by 30%]

[He who wields this scepter will be widely recognized under the Dragon clan’s name and automatically receive the corresponding reverence]

[Attention!]

[You've accepted the proposed identity]

[You've accepted the mission of trial issued by the Samsara: Destroy the Grand Divine Church]

[Begin]

Gu Qing Shan silently nodded.

If even the Supreme Sequence recognizes this, it seems I really will have to get rid of that something or other church.

"When can I set out?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"Right now" the butler smiled.

"Do you have anything else to inform me?" Gu Qing Shan asked again.

"Nothing, I'm only responsible for providing you with a clean and useful identity. Now that my job is done, it's your turn" the butler replied.

"Very well, then do you have anything else to tell me?" Gu Qing Shan emphasized his words a bit more.

"Keep in mind, they're very greedy"

"Got it"

...

Three days later.

A horse carriage that had traveled a long distance finally reached the gates of the Grand Divine Church's Academy.

Two men garbed in dark grey church robes opened the gates, from which an old man with a solemn expression emerged and sternly shouted:

“State your background, why have you stopped in front of the Sanctuary?”

Nobody in the horse carriage said a single word.

Only a small bag was tossed outside, aiming straight at the old man’s face.

The old man swiftly caught the small bag and furiously grunted: “No matter who you are, such gall—”

He suddenly noticed something.

The bag in his hand gave off a familiar and lovable noise.

—that’s right.

No other metal could make such a delightful noise.

The old man immediately stopped talking.

He silently evaluated the bag and estimated a number.

Well, well.

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This amount shows ample respect for me, the best kind of greeting card from one of higher standing.

The horse carriage opened, from which a young man in aristocratic clothing disembarked.

The old man narrowed his eyes to observe him.

This is... a Count's attire?

Which house has such a young Count?

That scepter also looks very familiar, an ink-colored shaft adorned with a deep green gem, these unique characteristics... I seem to remember such a description from historical records.

The Green Dragon's Beard!

So it was the notorious Green Dragon's Beard!

Then this young man must be the young Count of the Dragon clan – they who were blessed by dragons!

The old man placed the small bag of coins away without a sound, then solemnly asked with a ceremonious holy tone:

“Child, what is your desire by coming to the Sanctuary?”

Gu Qing Shan replied: “I wish for the protection of God and to listen to the teachings of Saints”

He handed the envelope to the old man.

Receiving the envelope, the old man felt even more sure of his inference.

He glanced behind himself as a signal.

One of the clergymen swiftly went inside to report this.

—to receive an aristocratic family as dignified as the Dragon clan, some preparations must be made. Especially when the one being received is a core member of the clan, a genuine Count.

“God said, all devout sincerity shall be answered,” the old man smiled kindly.

“Thank you, respectable one” Gu Qing Shan bowed to greet him.

“Child, have you gone through your Profession Selection ceremony?” the old man asked.

The corner of Gu Qing Shan’s lips twitched slightly before answering: “I have yet to do so”

The old man nodded: “Then I shall arrange one for you right now, so that we can foresee the path of your career”

“I give my thanks, respectable one” Gu Qing Shan replied.

Although it was already long past the school’s opening day, the test was still arranged very quickly.

Three bishops and a cardinal had personally arrived to observe the test of a young Count.

“If he does not have talents for magic research or knightly combat, then my History research institute will accept him” one of the bishops whispered.

“He’s only 12 years old, how could he endure being at your place?” one of the other bishops refuted.

“It’s also too early for him to enter your institute, he’s not even an adolescent yet” the first bishop snapped back without pause.

“Cease your disturbance, wait until we see the results” the cardinal said in a heavy tone.

The group then all went quiet and focused their attention on Gu Qing Shan who was standing up on the high platform.

Gu Qing Shan also felt a bit anxious.

Last time, I already pulled back half of my mental strength and it still broke the testing instrument.

This time, I've spent time training my mental strength and made it so that I'm capable of releasing only a quarter of it.

Furthermore, I can choose which element I wish to sense.

—-an instrument of the Church's Academy is surely sturdier compared to that elementary school, right?

He looked closely at the door behind him.

—-this is a dark-grey metal door that exudes an unclear presence, it definitely looks several levels better compared to the metal door I broke before.

"Do not be anxious, child" one of the clergymen encouraged him.

"Everything's ready"

"Very well, Gourde, you may begin"

Gu Qing Shan stepped forward and stood immediately underneath the door.

He took a deep breath and began to release his mental strength bit by bit.

Oom—-

The entire door began to radiate an immensely bright grey light.

The wind howled ferociously.

Everything that could be blown away in the vicinity had been blown away.

Everyone fell into deathly silence.

“MY GOD!” one of the bishops exclaimed.

Bam——

The door then broke into several pieces and collapsed to the ground.

In an instant, all the supernatural phenomena vanished.

Gu Qing Shan sighed and shrugged: “That really wasn’t my fault, I was just——”

The cardinal suddenly flew down and spoke to him in an extremely gentle tone: “Do not be afraid, this wasn’t because of you, it was because the testing instrument couldn’t endure your innate talents”

“Then, will I be accepted?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“Of course, Count Gourde, your background as well as innate talents are more than enough to regain the glory of your clan, perhaps even surpassing their utmost moments of glory in history” the cardinal replied.

Gu Qing Shan appeared shocked and nervous, then asked: “ Then, which institute should I enter?”

“Institute? No, doing that would only be a waste of your talents” the cardinal said.

The others all focused their gazes on the cardinal.

The cardinal’s expression was filled with a fevered fealty as he replied: “I will arrange for a group of only the best scholars to be your teachers, but before that—— please follow me, you need to first complete the Prayers of Corruption Ritual”

“Corruption... ritual?” Gu Qing Shan doubtfully asked.

“Child, the ritual will grant you endless power and allow you to join us”

Following his words, the clergymen all around them retreated, replaced by a group of higher-ranking clerics.

Everyone then placed their hands together into a praying pose before silently reciting the words of prayers.

The cardinal chanted his prayers: “Corruption is the foundation of all living beings, only corruption will separate one from life and death to observe the truth of the world”

Gloomy fog began to manifest out of thin air.

Various shuffling noises could also be heard emanating from the void of space.

One after another, arms reached out from beneath the earth, continuously moving until they covered every single inch of the venue.

The ground seemed to have turned into a gloomy ocean as numerous faces emerged from beneath the earth, all staring directly at Gu Qing Shan.

The clerics around them began to speed up their reciting.

Something seemed to be happening!

Gu Qing Shan didn't expect this situation at all.

“Child, you are about to witness a miracle of God, this is an unparalleled special honor!” the cardinal said, still stuck in his fervent fever.

“It truly is grand, I’m truly honored” Gu Qing Shan had no choice but to follow up with his words.

He looked around, only to see everyone else was in the same excited state.

...this is a kind of power that I’ve never seen before.

It isn’t magic.

How interesting... for there to be a power unrelated to magic in a Magic-type civilization.

Not to mention that this power has also created such a huge religion.

Ah.

This is the middle ages.

And these are a bunch of people who hadn’t seen a concert before.

No wonder they managed to make such a huge religious order from so little.

With that in mind, Gu Qing Shan felt a sense of understanding.

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As they continued their chant, various supernatural phenomena were being manifested.

At first, it was a towering steeple that stood among the clouds, then it was hundreds of thousands of gloomy beings, both humanoid and monstrous in shape.

—some of them were monsters that Gu Qing Shan hadn’t even seen before!

Suddenly, all the supernatural phenomena vanished together with the world around him.

A gigantic tree with ashen grey bark appeared in front of Gu Qing Shan’s vision, so grand that it eclipsed the sky while continuously radiating a miraculous power.

Aside from this tree, there was nothing else.

As Gu Qing Shan looked at the tree, lines of bloody red text manifested in front of his vision:

[Tree of Holy Wishes]

[Basic Corruption-type Holy Artifact]

[It will sign a certain kind of covenant of an undetermined level with you, after which it will help you become more powerful]

[But first...]

[It wants to estimate your strength]

Gu Qing Shan's vision briefly blurred right as the scenery in front of him vanished.

At the very next moment.

The world had been reduced to ruins.

Lines of bloody red text continuously appeared to give him an explanation:

[Corruption Quest: Prove your worth]

[The greater the talent you display, the higher the Tree of Holy Wishes will regard you]

[Attention: If your evaluation is too low, it will forcefully convert you into a low-level corrupted creature]

[There is nothing else worthy of note, let yourself loose and put your worth on display]

Gu Qing Shan felt speechless, then suddenly asked: "So at the moment, it isn't just Samsara and you, but the corrupted holy tree is also observing me?"

[Correct, the only difference is that the corrupted holy tree doesn't know that we are here observing everything] the Sequence replied.

“What exactly is this test about?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

[Most likely it'll have you fight some sort of Sequence, from the level of innate talents you've displayed so far, it will most likely be an Apocalypse Sequence] the Sequence answered.

“Having me fight an Apocalypse? These things are quite boorish” Gu Qing Shan sighed.

[No, it will most likely grant you a certain power of Corruption, using that to lure you into the path of Corruption] the Sequence added.

“Power of Corruption? What's what?” Gu Qing Shan asked curiously.

[An advice: don't immerse in it] the Sequence replied.

It then went quiet.

The scenery around him gradually became clearer and clearer.

A sea of fire.

A city in ruins.

Gu Qing Shan looked down at himself— -- still the body of a 12-year-old boy.

In that case, the only thing I can reveal is my post-evolution mental strength.

Walking through the devastated streets, Gu Qing Shan saw mostly corpses, some locust-like monsters that were around 2-3 meters in length were openly feasting over the bloodied corpses that were strewn across the ground, splashing themselves red.

Gu Qing Shan simply stood and observed from one side.

—while these monsters looked like locusts, they were a lot smarter than normal insects, as they were using a unique language to communicate between one another, and their actions also suggested a sense of order.

Suddenly, a large yellow locust noticed Gu Qing Shan.

Its wings rapidly vibrated as it lightly leapt towards Gu Qing Shan.

The large locust raised its razor-sharp forearms—

Pi—shu!

Its head suddenly exploded, its body swiftly collapsing to the ground.

Gu Qing Shan retracted his mental force and muttered: “Doing this would waste too much energy, I need to come up with something else”

More locusts started noticing the commotion that had occurred.

They gradually stopped eating and began leaping at Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan turned his gaze towards one of the burning buildings.

Instantly, pieces of burning debris began to fly and crash against the locusts.

The large locusts didn't expect something like that to happen at all, so they immediately went chaotic.

A shrill insect noise suddenly echoed from the distance.

—-a more powerful insect is coming!

Without hesitation, Gu Qing Shan began to fly backwards and swiftly left the battle zone.

Clusters of gloomy light suddenly started to manifest around his body.

A voice whispered into his ears:

「 Such immense mental strength, how rare, let the forces of Corruption aid you... 」

The clusters of gloomy light gradually manifested a proper form, transforming into armored female knights.

The female knights all knelt in front of Gu Qing Shan and spoke in a harrowing voice: 『 Following the summons of your power, we have come to be your venerable one's servant and fight by your side 』

Gu Qing Shan took a glance at the female knights.

All of them were wearing grey suits of armor, their faces fixated with an expression mixed between dejection and madness along with eyes filled with desires.

Murderous, insanity, death, as well as—

The most exceptional among the female knights approached Gu Qing Shan and whispered: 『 A-ny-thing you wish 』

Gu Qing Shan felt a sense of realization.

Ah.

So it was this kind of script.

No wonder the Sequence told me not to immerse myself in it.

He opened his eyes wide, then naively asked the female knight: “Big sister, what are you talking about?”

The female knight observed him from top to bottom and chuckled: 『 So you were still a child, but this sister can teach you how to fight—— any form of combat you wish, do you want to learn?』

Insect noises began to resound.

A large number of locusts had already arrived at the street where Gu Qing Shan was.

Gu Qing Shan pointed behind himself: “Time to fight, everyone”

The female knight stood up and brandished the sword in her hand——

A grey warhorse manifested out of thin air, which the female knight mounted.

『 READY—— ATTACK—— 』

The female knights uttered a chaotic battle cry as they charged towards the horde of large locusts.

They each transformed into a grey cluster of fog that nimbly weaved back and forth between the large locusts.

The locusts couldn't even touch them, but each time they attacked, a locust would die without exception.

Without taking too much time, all the locusts had already been slain.

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The leading female knight dismounted her horse and slowly approached Gu Qing Shan while carrying a sharp black insect forearm in her hand.

『 Among all these insects, the strongest article is this forearm, I will help you convert it into a corrupted item 』

After saying so, the female knight began to recite a prayer as she squeezed the sharp forearm with considerable force.

The forearm was immediately turned into a puff of grey fog that entered Gu Qing Shan's body.

Lines of bloody red text swiftly appeared in front of his vision:

[You've obtained power of Corruption: sharp insect forearm]

[You can utilize it in conjunction with one of your abilities]

Reading the description, Gu Qing Shan felt a bit surprised.

The female knight smiled at him, then knelt down so that her gaze was levelled with his.

The female knight then said: 『 Young brother, try to display your excellence as much as you can during the upcoming battle, only then would you be worthy of obtaining even more power 』

All the knights then vanished with a puff of smoke.

Bam——

A giant beetle then arrived from the distant sky, crushing an entire building as it landed on it.

It was a beetle with a considerably colorful shell whose entire body was covered in sharp spikes.

It stared closely at Gu Qing Shan, its compound eyes continuously shifting as if trying to estimate his strength.

Gu Qing Shan looked up to face the beetle.

Without waiting for the beetle to act, he took the initiative——

Immense mental strength manifested into an ethereal sharp insect forearm, which struck at the beetle's back with full force.

Clang!

A single dull noise.

Only faint cracks appeared on the beetle's hard shell, but the insect forearm manifested from mental power had shattered.

"It's tough as expected, but how about this?" Gu Qing Shan said.

He mobilized his mental strength again.

Several sharp insect forearms were manifested from thin air.

Clang clang clang clang clang clang———

The sound of continuous strikes resounded throughout the air, followed by a furious insect buzz.

Feeling pain, the beetle leapt at him with rapidly vibrating wings.

Gu Qing Shan just looked straight at it indifferently.

Over 10 sharp insect forearms appeared at the same time as they swung downwards at full force!

The beetle was instantly sliced into several pieces, which fell all over the ground.

Taking a step forward, Gu Qing Shan crushed the beetle's head beneath his feet.

Lines of bloody red text immediately popped up:

[You are exceptional, both your combat instincts and mental strength]

[Thanks to this battle, your insect forearm will obtain even more profound power of Corruption]

Once again, several insect forearms appeared from behind Gu Qing Shan and scattered themselves to both sides.

These insect forearms had become jet-black, grown considerably sharper, as well as appeared much heavier.

Gu Qing Shan felt a sense of understanding.

—-the more enemies he killed, the stronger the enemy, the stronger the insect forearms would evolve to be.

He turned towards the inner city.

There are countless insects there.

Seemingly receiving news of the beetle's death, more insects started to rush towards Gu Qing Shan like a tidal wave.

"Then let's kill them all" Gu Qing Shan muttered.

He also approached the tide of insects.

The distance between both sides was growing increasingly shorter——

Over 10 black insect forearms suddenly manifested around Gu Qing Shan as they began slicing their way into the tide of insect like flying blades.

Just like that, he continuously moved deeper and deeper into the tide of insects.

As the killing spree continued, the insect forearms gradually took a more radiant color while also growing in number.

He continued to walk straight through the tide of insects until he suddenly noticed that his surroundings had become silent and empty.

Gu Qing Shan trembled slightly.

——so all the insects have already been killed.

"This kind of killing..."

Gu Qing Shan stood still and slightly controlled his mental strength.

In an instant, numerous insect forearms manifested out of thin air, continuously slashing like a layered carapace, causing the air to sound like it was being ripped apart.

“I see, this type of killing would indeed cause people to easily feel immersed in it”

Gu Qing Shan commented with a sigh.

Being able to directly obtain the enemy’s most powerful ability.

And the more you kill, the more powerful you become.

——until eventually your rationale is completely overtaken by murderous desires and you become corrupted.

The ground broke apart.

A beetle that was a few dozen meters in length was lying at his feet.

The beetle spoke in human language:

「 With your unparalleled desire to kill, I shall act as you wish and eliminate all of your enemies 」

Gu Qing Shan looked at the beetle.

Lines of bloody red text silently appeared:

[This Apocalyptic beetle has recognized you, attracted by your power of Corruption, it is willingly offering to become your steed]

Gu Qing Shan chuckled and shook his head.

“This is already considered unparalleled desire to kill? This Sequence sure knows how to stimulate the emotions of living beings...”

——conscripting Apocalyptic creatures for itself.

—as well as tempting living beings of the Samsara to convert them into corrupted beings.

This Sequence truly is extraordinary.

If left to its own devices, the ultimate weapon of living beings – the Samsara – will eventually be converted into a weapon of Corruption.

That's why the Samsara wanted me to eliminate the Corruption Sequence that is attached to the living beings of this era.

Gu Qing Shan slowly understood the situation.

His eyebrows twitched.

Hundreds, thousands of sharp insect forearms flickered in and out of existence behind him, a terrifying sight to behold.

All the insect forearms moved forward together and sliced the kneeling beetle on the ground into numerous pieces with just a single slash.