

Apocalypse 491

Chapter 491: Shocking reward (1)

“Material Bag?”

Ye Zhongming felt he had seen many things after living ten years in the apocalypse but had never heard of such.

He held a brown bag and opened it after fiddling with it.

He noticed this was a piece of small space equipment, but different from the space crystal and Blood Stepping Boots; this was space prepared for materials.

There were ten boxes, and each had some material inside. Ye Zhongming looked and saw that the number of materials was different. He guessed that it had to do with the size. Those bigger ones had a smaller amount, and those smaller-sized ones had a larger amount.

For example, the coiled fern wing was the size of a coin, so there were a hundred sets. The smelly gland branch in the second space was bigger, so there were only two sets.

But it was quite good that two of such meter-long branches could be placed into such a small bag.

He glanced at the ten materials. When he saw the last one, he was stunned and immediately took it out.

Purple Ink Urchin!

25 pieces!

Ye Zhongming found the Indus Sandalwood in the Blue Secret Realm and now found the Purple Ink Urchin. Were they forcing him to create Dancing Sand?

Dancing Sand was the second form of Warblade Moon Sand. The first form was Moon Edge.

Ye Zhongming remembered that Dancing Sand’s passive skill was Sandstorm, which created a two-meter sand field that raised the user’s body qualities and damaged enemies.

This was a really strong ability.

Moon Edge was not good enough against high-level monsters. It was time to make changes, and it would be great if he could craft Dancing Sand.

Unfortunately, he didn’t have the final material, the Decomposing Sand Beast’s heart.

He could only head to its resting place to get it, a dungeon. But Ye Zhongming didn’t know which dungeon, so getting one was tough.

Of course, even if the Purple Ink Urchin wasn’t used to craft Dancing Sand, it could be fed to battle pets to strengthen them. It wasn’t as good as the evolution blood, but still very useful.

He calmed down and placed them back into the bag.

The third reward surprised him.

“Zell’s Head!”

This green piece of equipment looked like a jade skeleton with a handle.

Neutralizing Grasp!

The essential equipment for Alchemists!

Ye Zhongming couldn't use such a thing, but someone from Cloud Peak could. Candy was a growing Alchemist!

Candy had little presence in Cloud Peak, and her status was replaced by her brother, who had not evolved. Now, Tang Tian was a five-star evolved and was one of the team leaders. But Candy didn't have any recipes or materials.

She could craft recovery potions, but they had to find those materials in the dungeon. Cloud Peak was busy with other things, so they didn't have the energy to care about her. Ye Zhongming's recipe for her could only be used under specific situations, so she was in an awkward position.

Now that he was back and thinking about using this strong job, he gained a green Alchemist item.

Ye Zhongming studied it and saw that it was quite decent.

The thing that lit his eyes up was the first passive ability.

"Increase success rate by 10% when crafting recipe items."

Alchemists and artisans were the same, and it was a job that burnt money. In the future, only big factions could afford such jobs.

For such jobs, things that increased success rate were great items. This green Zell's Head could increase it by 10%, a fantastic number.

This ability alone could save Ye Zhongming a lot of money.

Apart from that, the green equipment had two recipes.

"Corrosive Mist Bomb" and "Basic Frenzied Potion."

The former was a poisonous weapon to be thrown, and the latter was a potion that increased one's strength briefly but had negative effects.

The two things were very useful.

He glanced at the materials and heaved a sigh of relief. They weren't rare, and they could find it easily if they used some effort.

Thus, Ye Zhongming picked up the 4th reward excitedly.

"Blueprint: Explosive Lightning Turret (Level 1, can upgrade)!"

Ye Zhongming's eyes lit up, and he went to see the details.

This was a construction blueprint. Apart from builders, artisans could use it. Simply put, this was a defensive structure that could be built anywhere. When controlled, it could fire lightning balls to attack the target.

There were two sources of energy. One was electricity, and the other was demon crystals. The blueprint recorded the detailed amount. After it is built, the person controlling it could use the data to control the energy requirement.

The apocalypse belonged to the battle squads. Apart from mercenaries, merchants, and thieves, they would have their bases. The base defense was the most important. Cloud Peak could only create ancient walls now, which were weak against lifeforms. As time pushed on, this situation became more obvious.

The situation would improve if they had such a turret to assist. Along with Le Dayuan's crystal cannon, at least in terms of ranged suppression, Cloud Peak didn't have to fear any enemy.

The materials needed weren't rare, but the process was complicated and needed time.

But it was a good item, so it was understandable.

The four rewards were good, which shocked him. He looked forward to the next three, which should be better.

Chapter 492: Shocking reward (2)

Ye Zhongming didn't recognize the fifth reward, making him scratch his head. There were too many things in the apocalypse that he didn't know.

He opened the small box that took up half his palm; inside it was... Chocolate?

But why was it red?

Ye Zhongming opened it and smelled a sweet scent. It was similar to chocolate, but he didn't think the wheel would make such a joke.

When he picked it up, he got notified.

"Food: Basic Artisan Heart. After using crafting type job skills will ignore familiarity and upgrade to basic grade, the success rate will increase permanently by 15%."

This...

Ye Zhongming nearly laughed.

What was this like? It was an upgrade scroll. This was the same as many upgrade scrolls, especially for Ye Zhongming, whose job had a prefix, as he had many job skills. This alone was enough to make him excited. He knew how tough it was to get the scrolls.

Next was ignoring skill familiarity. This wasn't much to him as he had filled the smith's few jobs. He didn't have to waste so much material, mental energy, and time if he didn't. He would then save energy and demon crystals to spend on other areas.

Lastly would be the 15% permanent increase. Like Zell's Head, anything that could increase the success rate was good. Moreover, it was 15%.

Ye Zhongming looked at this small food and felt like it was overpowered.

It could probably trade for a six-star potion if he took it outside. If he waited a year, it might even get a seven-star potion.

Ye Zhongming didn't wait and ate it right away. It was sweet.

After swallowing it, he was notified that his Trainee Glory Smith became Basic Glory Smith.

Ye Zhongming looked at all the skill, and familiarity turned to zero.

He resisted the urge to test it by crafting something and looked at the sixth item.

“Life Grain Seed Mother Body!”

He looked at the golden seed in a test tube and was curious.

The Basic Artisan Heart and Zell’s Head were the most valuable of the first five rewards. Those two were basics for crafting jobs and would create value in the future. It was much more valuable than green or even blue equipment.

Using such a standard to judge it, the second last reward should be good too. But Ye Zhongming couldn’t tell what use it had.

But it was still a seed. He was a gardener, so he was looking forward to it.

He held it and received news that made him suck in cold breath.

Simply put, it was a mother body, and after you planted it, it would give you a grain seed called Life Path. If you planted this seed, you will get Life Rice.

Life Rice was food for evolved. If you ate it for a long time, it would increase your body’s strength. It would also increase skill strength.

Even job skills!

This shocked Ye Zhongming.

Normally speaking, there were two ways to increase skill strength. One was the skill upgrade scroll from Basic to Intermediate to High Grade. This was a way to increase strength. The other was when one’s evolution level increased, the skill strength would, too, but it wasn’t as much as the upgrade scroll.

Some specific equipment could also increase the strength of some skills, but they were rare.

But now, this Life Race had such an ability. Ye Zhongming stopped underestimating it.

If this was used well, it was a killing weapon.

He felt excited about how similar skills would be much stronger in their hands.

Of course, it took some time to nurture such things. Large-scale farming required many conditions, but one couldn’t deny its effects. It might not be a huge jump like the upgrade scroll, but it won’t be less than the skill strength increase when evolving.

Ye Zhongming placed the seed back into the test tube and planned to plant it when he had time.

One reward was left in the golden box. If it was as expected, it was the best item.

The Life Rice had already shocked his heart, so what surprise would the last reward bring?

Ye Zhongming took it out earnestly.

It was an exquisite jade box, and on it was a deep carving. Ye Zhongming opened it and saw six dark blue badges made from an unknown material.

“Level 1 Battle Contribution Box (Gold can be upgraded).”

Ye Zhongming didn't think it was very good just by looking at its name. But when he knew its use, he wanted to cheer.

This was good.

The final reward was different from the last life. But since the final challenge was different, he was prepared that it would be, too. But this reward was even better than the one from the last life.

It was split into two parts. One was the box, the level 1 Battle Contribution Box; the other was the six badges.

Rather than say that it was a piece of equipment, it was more like a system, a Battle Contribution System.

The person with this equipment could calculate others in the system. Their actions would gain points, and once they reached a certain level, they would receive the right to get the badges. The badges would also give them some abilities.

Level 1 Battle Contribution Box can add six people, including the user, which were the one big and five small badges. As the box level increased, the number of badges would increase, too.

What made Ye Zhongming think that it was really good was the abilities of the badges.

Chapter 493: Reason for coming

“Ability 1: Share Damage; the badge wearers can share damage based on a ratio.”

This ability was similar to Talking Lady and her cat, but the difference was that they were sharing their lives. This badge was much weaker. It would just help to share some damage that couldn't exceed a limit.

“Ability 2: Communication. Badge wearers can communicate over a short distance.”

This ability was simple to understand. It was a walkie talkie. But after seeing the description, Ye Zhongming knew it was similar to a phone as the weather didn't affect it. As long as you were within a specific range, you could talk. Of course, you might still be affected by other methods.

The communication method was good. Many factions in his last life had similar equipment, and one could say that it was a very practical ability.

“Ability 3, sharing skills. The badge wearer can use the ability of the main badge user. The strength is based on the amount of contribution points they had.”

Ye Zhongming was the primary badger wearer. The others could use the badge to get other abilities. However, there was a very long cooldown time. It was a week. The strength was connected to the contribution points. The ability used couldn't clash with the user's main stat, and you couldn't borrow the equipment ability or use an ability that was a higher level than your skills. It also had to meet the weapon type, etc.

There were many restrictions, so was it useless? On the contrary, it was very useful.

As a simple example, Xia Lei was a blade user, and if she borrowed Ye Zhongming's job skills, apart from her triple blade, she could use the Light Seal Blademaster's ability. That meant that she

would have one more job skill. Moreover, the strength of this skill was really good. After all, Ye Zhongming had a job with a prefix.

For example, Teacher Park wore the badge. She was a support-type evolved. The only attack skill came from her staff. If she could borrow his ability, she would have one more attack skill and be able to protect herself.

From these examples, one could see how this skill raised their strength.

“Ability Four: Accumulating points. The person wearing the badge will provide the main badge wearer buffs. The higher the points, the more the buffs. More badge wearers, the higher the buffs.”

Ye Zhongming saw this and knew that it would benefit him.

He took a close look. That buff wasn’t too high. If one used data to express it, one primary badge wearer would provide him with a 1% buff based on their body stats.

Don’t underestimate that 1%, it was a ratio. Like now, Ye Zhongming would give the badges to core members. They were all five-star evolved, so what was a 1% increase? What would it be when the five of them were added together? What if the box leveled and there were more wearers? What would it be then?

Ye Zhongming couldn’t suppress his emotions just thinking about it. If this thing leveled up, he felt it might even push his evolution level up by an entire grade.

Of course, this was a long process, and he had to take it slowly.

“Ability 5: Contribution accumulation and exchange.”

This ability was special; more accurately, the leveling of the box didn’t rely on external strength but on the wearer’s points.

They could upgrade the box and turn it to level two if they accumulated enough points. Then, there would be three more badges.

The exchange function was similar to the Gate of Sacrifice. When the wearer had points, they could trade for things they needed. With each level the box increased, there would be new items to trade for.

Naturally, this skill was useful, but one had to balance trading for items and leveling the box; if not, there might be conflicts.

But this didn’t mean much to Cloud Peak. Ye Zhongming was in charge, so the others had no opinions.

Five abilities that made Ye Zhongming heave a sigh of relief. He knew that this was a real treasure. Not only did it have abilities like the Gate of Sacrifice, but it could also share damage and allow one to borrow skills. This was a fighting and support item. When the six badges had wearers, they would all get stronger. Moreover, the benefits would increase as the level of the box increased.

This final reward was perfect.

The seven rewards were in front of him, and he felt it was worth it. It was worth him spending so much effort to cause such a trap.

He kept the reward and stretched his body before leaving the room.

He spent two hours studying these few rewards. He first ordered some food before calling those few squads over.

“Who are you?”

This was his question. This eight-person squad didn’t fit into Ying City’s style. They had a waterfront city’s specialties. The leader had a conch, and the muscular guy behind him had a shell shield.

“We are envoys from Cloud Port Alliance.” The leader nodded to Ye Zhongming. He was forced to do it because Ye Zhongming’s appearance was too stylish, and the wheel’s disappearance was shocking, filling him with respect.

“Where?”

Ye Zhongming tilted forward and squinted his eyes.

This terrified the leader. He observed Boss Ye’s expression and wanted to understand.

“Cloud Port Alliance.” He was not confident. He continued, “We are an alliance made of the few factions of the Cloud Port region.”

“Keke, that isn’t easy.” Ye Zhongming rested back in his chair, but his gaze had a glimpse of him reminiscing the past.

That person coughed awkwardly, “External pressure forced us to ally.”

Seeing Ye Zhongming nod, he was slightly more confident, “Cloud Port is a port city, and two months ago, we saw an abnormal situation in the ocean. Then we were attacked by ocean beasts, and these attacks seemed to be getting more intense.”

He paused and looked at Ye Zhongming before continuing, “We guess there might be a large-scale ocean beast wave. If it happens, we don’t have the confidence to block it, so we sent many envoys to contact various factions to discuss working together.”

Chapter 494: Interested to become my spokesperson

Ye Zhongming didn’t suspect what this person was talking about. He had heard about the ocean beast wave in his last life.

But he still said nothing and waited for this person to continue.

Many things weren’t easily described. After everyone understood what was happening, the key was the discussions afterward.

As expected, after Ye Zhongming didn’t express any intentions, this leader knew that this young man was not only really strong but also someone who didn’t want to be taken advantage of.

He adjusted his emotions and previous thinking that he was dealing with a fool and described some details the few alliance bosses told him before he came.

Ye Zhongming listened patiently, but his expression changed.

He understood what was happening, rather than saying that Cloud Port Alliance was searching for people to help, but they weren't willing to pay much. In other words, they were hesitant to defend the Cloud Port.

They would defend if many people came to help and were strong enough. If not, they would give up.

It sounded insincere, but that person kept mentioning a phrase: if the lips are gone, the teeth will feel cold.

Cloud Port Alliance hinted that if they helped them, they would be willing to give you some benefits. But if you didn't, they wouldn't defend it and let the problems come to you. They would leave. When the ocean beast wave came, everyone would have to run. All bases would have to be given up.

This was what they meant. This was also the most normal thinking in the apocalypse.

Bases were important but weren't much compared to one's life. As long as one was alive, they could build another.

Cloud Port was near the ocean, and many people were there. So there were many large zombie hordes. The monsters in the ocean were so much more than those on Earth; there were endless amounts of demon crystals and materials. It was the most suitable place to build a strong base.

But if an ocean beast wave happened, the base near the ocean would have a headache.

Even ten years into the apocalypse, very few factions would be able to defend against an ocean beast wave. Demon Crystal Weapons allowed humans to fight against mutated lifeforms, but not a definite win.

A year had passed, and Cloud Port had grasped that attitude. Thus, they started to work with people around them and didn't force or threaten them. They were just describing the pros and cons.

As for how to make the decision, these factions would have to understand and make their own choices.

Ye Zhongming thought about the conditions that he set. They weren't good, but they weren't bad too.

"Is there a battle squad called 414 Running Squad?"

Ah?

That leader was stunned and shocked by that sudden change in attitude. He said, "I am not sure. I need to ask around, but even if there is, they won't be huge. If not, I would know about them."

Ye Zhongming acknowledged, and a cold face appeared in his mind.

"Apart from this, are there other missions?"

Ye Zhongming's question jumped again, and he said, "I need to see if the other factions in Ying City want to help."

"You don't have to do that." Ye Zhongming waved confidently and stunned the leader.

Don't have to? You are infringing on my freedom?

"The people you want to find will all come to Cloud Peak within five days. You can just talk to them directly then."

He was sent away with a stunned expression on his face.

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The sky was dark when Sha Sha walked in, but the entire Cloud Peak was covered in torches. Although it wasn't bright like it was in the day, it wasn't dark and cold like the apocalypse.

Ye Zhongming looked at Cloud Peak through the window and turned around when she walked in.

"Should I say congratulations or condolences?"

Sha Sha was the first to speak.

Congratulations to Cloud Peak for surviving and obtaining the rewards that she envied. Just the core members' levels told her how much they got.

As for condolences, Cloud Peak's west side had a grave that buried those who sacrificed their lives for Cloud Peak. They just got back today, and many people were working on it.

In the apocalypse, death often meant one with a torn-up body, becoming the food of mutated lifeforms and turning into a pile of poop with viruses. To have a grave with their names was amazing and luxurious. It wasn't hard to do, but people didn't want to spend the effort as people were still thinking about how to live.

But Cloud Peak did it. Sha Sha saw that they were doing it sincerely.

Ye Zhongming would also conduct a simple burial the next morning, so Sha Sha told him condolences.

"Are you interested in being my spokesperson in Ying City?"

"Ah?" Sha Sha's eyes opened wide. She wanted to work with Cloud Peak. Ye Zhongming was the best smith she met, and the equipment he crafted was strong. Although he wasn't the only one, his equipment was cheap, which was what he cared about.

She thought that it would be impossible after this matter. She was here just because she wanted to leave a good impression so that there wouldn't be hate in the future.

Who knew that he would ask her to be the spokesperson?

This was Tong Tu in the past, but what was he now? His wife and he were five-star evolved, each with a silver weapon. Their men were all four-star, the same as Sha Sha!

She was envious! Although she was only envious of the benefits, it was envy, too.

"Tong Hu will remain in Cloud Peak, so I need a new spokesperson in Ying City. Can you do it?"

He looked at the birthmark on her face, which was already very pale. He recalled some things in the past and felt a complicated feeling.

“What benefits?”

Hearing her instinctive reply, he shook his head. This woman was the same as the last life. Even after she slept with you and had a bit of loyalty, she would still separate work and life. She treated her battle squad as the most important thing.

“The benefit is... When it doesn't conflict with Cloud Peak, you can decide things in Ying City.”

Chapter 495: You don't want to do something else

Sha Sha left Ye Zhongming's room in confusion and looked at Xia Lei, leaning on a pillar of the villa. She smiled awkwardly.

Although nothing happened between them, Sha Sha was sure Ye Zhongming peaked at her. If not, how would he know what was on her body? She even kissed Ye Zhongming the night the poppy wheel disappeared. Now that she saw his girlfriend, it was normal to be awkward.

Xia Lei crossed her arms and sized up Sha Sha. After noticing nothing, she stopped caring and just entered the villa.

Sha Sha pouted; she shrugged and left.

She didn't want to hear things that would make her embarrassed.

Xia Lei's expression changed after she entered. She hugged the guy who was looking outside and rested his head on her chest. Her hands ruffled his dark hair and started to massage his scalp.

Ye Zhongming relaxed.

“Good that they cleared the area around. Send people to occupy these areas. Build a base in the villages and towns.”

“En.” Xia Lei agreed. Now that her guy was back, he was in charge, and she didn't have to use her brain.

“We lack people. This is a key point for the near future. Stop the hunts and send people out to find people. Try to recruit normal people. We don't need warriors but farmers.”

Ye Zhongming was not doing this for no reason. He left for some time, so many things were delayed. From now on, the food problem will be an issue. Food storage would change after the year, so not much remained. The things from the wheel were too little and couldn't meet the food demand. Hunted meat could only solve a small portion, and it was not enough.

Ye Zhongming was originally not in a rush to solve this problem as the food crisis was relative. Those factions with skill would not be troubled much. Cloud Peak would not be hungry under him.

But after this incident, he knew he had to pay attention. He faced a few factions, and there might be an intense conflict. Although he said that he didn't need warriors, on the contrary, as compared to

the super factions, Ye Zhongming's gap wasn't in high-level combat strength, not weapons and equipment but people.

The number of warriors was comparable to one division of the Glory Army, at most two.

That was too little. If there was a war, what mattered were numbers.

Moreover, Ye Zhongming was planning to build a super faction. The plan had to change, so the population was a problem he had to solve.

With population, he would have warriors.

"But if there are too many normal people, what about potions?" Although Xia Lei was too lazy to think and just wanted to hug him, she was in charge for so long and asked some questions instinctively.

Now was the evolution wave, and level one zombies and mutated lifeforms were reducing. That meant level-one crystals were getting lesser, and so were one-star potions. Ying City markets would often appear one-star potions trading for close to a two-star potion. It seemed illogical, but it wasn't. To become evolved, many normal people were willing to pay more and were extorted by those who had such potions.

Even Cloud Peak didn't have many one-star potions.

"Don't worry about that, I can solve it." Ye Zhongming clapped her hand, "Clear 20 meters of space below the walls. I will plant something that can help defend and solve the problem of low-level crystals."

She knew her guy was magical, so she didn't ask and just agreed.

"Cloud Hoove eggs?"

"They are in Sister Hong's lab."

Ye Zhongming nodded, but she was suddenly squeezed.

Xia Lei smiled and continued to push half his head into her chest.

"Send people to Ying City to inform all the factions to come to Cloud Peak for a meeting in five days. Those who don't come scram out of Ying City."

Xia Lei was shocked. But thinking about Cloud Peak's current strength, it made sense.

"What other instructions?"

Xia Lei used more strength.

"We might have to help Cloud Port, not only help, but I also need to prove something and earn from there. Moreover, we need to form an alliance, not those life and death ones, but at least for information."

He offended many factions, so he wasn't a fool. He planned to get help. At least, he had to know information that was bad for him.

"I will lead a third of the people over. You can choose. Don't choose those strong ones; mid-level is enough."

Xia Lei memorized it.

"And?"

"Also..."

She used more strength, and the frequency was not a massage but a rub.

Ye Zhongming said a word before stopping.

"We hadn't met for half a year, and you are telling me all this work stuff. You don't want to do something else?"

"Do something else?" He smiled and teased the woman behind him.

But he underestimated her strength. She carried him up and tossed him onto the bed before riding on him. She ripped her clothing.

"This!"

Her body sunk.

Three hours later, the tables turned, and Xia Lei's voice spread out.

"You are a monster..."

Half an hour passed.

"Go find Chuyin, I can't anymore..."

Another half an hour.

"Call Xia Bai, please let me go..."

Another half an hour.

"Anyone, find a few more, let me go..."

Another half an hour.

"Just kill me."

Chapter 496: Equipment upgrade and Ginseng Melon

On the second morning, Ye Zhongming was filled with energy, and he called Mo Ye, Lu Yi, etc., over and repeated what he said to Xia Lei. He had no choice, as Xia Lei probably wouldn't wake up until the afternoon.

Ye Zhongming made use of the time when the people cleared up the city walls and took out the two equipment upgrade scrolls. He analyzed all his equipment and decided to use them on the Treasure Nurturing Gourd and the Demon Nurturing Bee Hive.

Although the Treasure Nurturing Gourd could absorb equipment to increase its energy and upgrade, Ye Zhongming tested it out, and the amount needed to level up was huge. It would take a long time to raise the level of this silver equipment.

So Ye Zhongming used the green scroll to raise it to green level. It could increase its 3rd ability's efficiency, but it could also allow the 1st ability to repair silver equipment and below. These were the current mainstream equipment levels of Cloud Peak.

The second ability could be used, too. Normal equipment could be raised to grey and then to white. This was enough to reduce the pressure on him in crafting equipment. After all, the equipment in the Treasure Nurturing Gourd didn't need mental energy; it just needed time.

When the gourd upgraded to green, Ye Zhongming noticed another benefit: the bigger space.

The repair space of Ability One was bigger, and one could place 50 pieces of equipment in. Ability 2 to nurture treasures could fit 20. When it increased to green, the two increased by 20.

Of course, this was the biggest number that the two abilities could handle. The efficiency would reduce greatly under such a state, be it repairing or nurturing treasures.

Ye Zhongming tossed Moon Edge to repair and then called people to send ten sets of protective gear to test the effect.

Of course, the damaged equipment and the eliminated weapons and equipment were absorbed and turned into energy to provide for the first two abilities.

The other blue scroll was not used on the gourd but to raise the bee hive.

This beast pool equipment gave Ye Zhongming a deep impression—especially the strength of the needle birds when they were gathered together. Survivors without complete defensive abilities or equipment would be caught off guard.

But as the apocalypse proceeded, evolved, and equipment became more common. The mutated lifeforms would also grow. So, the green hive wouldn't be enough. Ye Zhongming raised it to blue, which would be useful for some time.

The benefits of the increased level were obvious. The nest wasn't big, and there were many hives. The number of hives represented the number of monsters inside. Just this change increased the strength of the nest. Moreover, Ye Zhongming felt that the evolution level of the Needle Bird King and its subordinates would get stronger.

After upgrading the two pieces of equipment, Ye Zhongming went down the walls. He chose a place and asked for a few buckets of water. He also took out the Ginseng Melon he got from the dungeon.

This was a mutated earth melon. Of course, people guessed this based on the shape of the branches and fruits.

This mutated lifeform was very special and was like a normal crop. But once life enters its range, its vines and leaves will attack and kill the invading lifeform.

By placing it below the walls, Ye Zhongming tried to use that to help defend. They won't be a threat, but they could leave a warning.

He planted them and activated his Nurturing skill. Ye Zhongming's mental energy surged out. This level-one mutated plant grew and went from a sprout into a flower. It only took a few minutes.

Ye Zhongming used Nurture, and the leaves didn't attack him. Ye Zhongming collected nearly a hundred seeds, picking around 70% that could be replanted.

He dug the melons. These things tasted good, and they could improve the body's strength.

He continued to nurture. He spent an entire afternoon and only stopped when Xia Lei came to find him.

At this point, he had ten thousand seeds and a few hundred level-one crystals.

"This can be eaten?"

Xia Lei held the ginseng fruit and asked innocently.

After getting a definite reply and learning that it tasted similar to earth melons, she wanted to try it.

Her cooking was delicious. Although ingredients were hard to find, one earth melon could make many dishes. Xia Lei thought about making dishes for Ye Zhongming, so she picked a dozen and left.

Ye Zhongming wasn't concerned about her and told people to store ginseng melons in the storage while planting these seeds and leaving small areas to walk.

Each area was wetted with water, and then he would use the Nurture skill to make the seeds sprout. Even then, when these seeds were planted, his huge mental energy was nearly emptying.

After learning the Soul Refining Technique, his mental energy recovered quickly; meditating for a night would recover a large portion.

In the morning, people had set out to Ying City to deliver the letter; the survivors sent to find bases had also left Cloud Peak. Red Hair also led her zombies back to Ying City. The moment they left, Cloud Peak wasn't as exciting as last night. Ye Zhongming turned around and looked at the time. It was still early, so he headed to Liu Zhenghong's lab.

This place was tightly guarded. Ye Zhongming felt a familiar energy. Three core members were nearby, and three digits of soldiers surrounded the area. Moreover, they were all three stars and above.

Ye Zhongming nodded his head in satisfaction and walked in.

This was the first time he entered the place that Liu Zhenghong had built up since he left.

The outer appearance was still a villa, but the windows were tightly boarded apart from the entrance. The walls were covered in a white material. Ye Zhongming didn't know what that was, and the entire villa's structure was changed.

Researchers saw Ye Zhongming and led him underground immediately; that was the core area of the entire lab.

He passed a metal gate. Ye Zhongming saw Liu Zhenghong and a helper standing before two translucent pools. They turned around, and after seeing who was there, Liu Zhenghong's eyes lit up.

"Come, Little Ye, give me a few tubes of blood."

Chapter 497: If Human Creating Hong and Crystal Weapon Father had a kid

As he had left a deep impression on him in his last life, Ye Zhongming respected Le Dayuan. This was what many survivors in the apocalypse felt for this Crystal Weapon Father.

As for Liu Zhenghong, it was more of fear.

Ye Zhongming shuddered when Liu Zhenghong called him that.

“Did I just see that? Boss Ye, who fought solo against a level-seven lifeform, is afraid of me?”

The helper lowered his head and suppressed his laughter. He greeted Ye Zhongming before heading out. He was not in a position to join their conversation.

Ye Zhongming touched his nose and didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Was this sister's personality like this in the last life?

It wasn't a surprise that Ye Zhongming was afraid of her. She was the famous Human Creation Hong, a female demon, and she wanted a few tubes of blood from you! Even those nine-star evolved would be terrified.

But with their interactions in this life, this big sister had loyalty and brotherhood to Ye Zhongming and Cloud Peak. She had a sense of belonging and was the most loyal ally.

Of course, Ye Zhongming felt he was looking at Liu Zhenghong and Le Dayuan with a more neutral view. But as he met them early on, they treated him as their boss.

This filled Ye Zhongming with a sense of achievement.

“How are they?”

Ye Zhongming had three tubes of blood taken from him. He looked at the Liao Brothers in the two ponds and asked.

“Not good.”

Liu Zhenghong pointed at their bodies and a machine, “It was all good, although not perfect, but things were going smoothly. But after the battle, some abnormalities occurred.”

Ye Zhongming didn't understand the data, so he could only frown and listen.

“These...” Liu Zhenghong paused and remembered that Ye Zhongming wasn't her helper and couldn't understand the numbers, “Simply put, after the battle and injuries, their cell functions have dropped ten times quicker than ordinary humans. If they fight, this speed would reach twenty times.”

“Although I am unsure, you can understand it as them getting old quickly. To slow this down, we could only put them to sleep. Then, their aging speed would be five times that of normal people.”

“That refers to ordinary people and not evolved.”

Ye Zhongming understood. Their lifeforce was draining, and had reached a stage where they had to be asleep.

The two were the peak works of Cloud Peak's gene project. For such a problem to occur, the project was a failure.

They spent so much effort, time, and energy to make a one-time-use product. No one would say that it was a success.

"Have you found the reason?"

She shook her head.

"Are there problems?"

Ye Zhongming saw that she stopped in her words, so he asked.

"To solve this problem, we have to find a method. But the equipment, environment, even number and quality of helpers can't satisfy my requirements."

She continued, "If we can't solve this, we can only use other methods to find the answer. The best chance would be God Hall."

Liu Zhenghong signaled to Ye Zhongming to an experiment bed. Ye Zhongming saw a level-five zombie corpse on it.

"Apart from the two methods, I have two new ways of thinking. One is to find the answer from normal evolved like us; the other is from evolved like you. One more is from the zombies."

Ye Zhongming's heart jumped.

Her words made him realize that the Human Creation Hong from the last life might appear.

This woman was famous for merging zombies and humans in her last life. She even attacked survivor camps to do so.

Would her path not change even in the new timeline?

"They were humans before they mutated, and they could continue on this path after they mutated. I think I can find the answers I need from them."

"Where can you find the equipment you need?"

Ye Zhongming interrupted her words, which stunned her, "Naturally, the capital. But it is too far and impossible to get to. Apart from that, there is one near Linhai."

Ye Zhongming thought about it. Cloud Port and Linhai were nearby...

"Research first, I will try to solve this problem. If I can't, then let's discuss it."

Ye Zhongming turned and wanted to leave. Liu Zhenghong looked at the zombie corpse and shook her head, "I know what you are worried about. Don't worry; I am unlike Doctor He, who will make people into such creatures. I am still not married."

"Married?" Ye Zhongming turned around in shock.

Liu Zhenghong's face turned red, but it recovered quickly, "Is that weird? Old Le and I are interested in one another; we were in bed together."

Ye Zhongming was stunned. They were together? When he imagined the two in bed, he only had one thought...

What would their kid be like?

.....

Compared to Liu Zhenghong, Le Dayuan and Ye Zhongming's conversation was much more normal. He showed Ye Zhongming what he had gained in this half a year, pulled him into the lab, and showed him a blueprint. He told Ye Zhongming the parts in detail and asked if he could make it.

Ye Zhongming thought about it and felt he could try it.

But Le Dayuan wasn't going to let him go. He dragged him to the storage and told him to do it immediately.

Ye Zhongming called Le Dayuan and Liu Zhenghong together to have a meal with Xia Lei. After that, he made some parts for Le Dayuan.

He only finished in the early morning. But be it Le Dayuan, Ye Zhongming, or his helpers, they didn't feel tired. They were excited, on the contrary.

After they combined the parts, it was a new crystal weapon.

Demon Crystal Cannon!

Chapter 498: Sky Breaking Series

The Demon Crystal Cannon Le Dayuan designed now differed greatly from the last life. There was a huge difference in size, precision, range, strength, and energy transfer efficiency. There were no signs of that cannon that could threaten a nine-star evolved in this completed piece.

But be it Ye Zhongming or Le Dayuan, who was brainwashed, they were both excited. After all, they had taken the first step.

The Sky Breaking Series was the demon crystal cannon that left Ye Zhongming with the deepest impression. He had personally seen it. Le Dayuan was also the one who personally used the cannon.

He knew it wasn't the strongest series but was still shocked by its strength.

So he gave Le Dayuan some hints that had shadows of the Sky Breaking Series. Thus, the first Demon Crystal Cannon that Master Le designed had clear signs of the series.

Sky Breaking Series was his last life's most famous siege cannon series. It was known for its movement, small but focused attack range. It was a great weapon to siege city gates or tunnels.

Apart from being affected by Ye Zhongming's ideas, Le Dayuan had a huge focus on mobility. He felt like it was best to be able to hit and move. It was too one-dimensional only to guard the walls.

The first demon crystal cannon focused on such an ideal, like a cannon attached to a motorcycle.

“The theoretical range is only 200 meters, but it might be shorter but very powerful. The level-two demon crystal is the energy source, but the transfer rate isn’t high, and it can, at most, fire two shots. The highest energy source would be level five, and there is no exact number it can fire. It depends on the exact situation, but the accuracy is good.”

The basic energy source was to use the lowest level demon crystal and be able to convert the energy. The amount of energy converted was different for the different demon crystal levels. Different weapons would even convert different amounts of energy from the same level-one crystal.

In the last life, as one studied more about demon crystal weapons, the weather, the quality of the parts, the stats of the demon crystals, and materials, they would all affect that number.

So, conversion rate became the most important data for demon crystal weapons.

Le Dayuan has been through many failures in his last life and came to a relatively complete data set. Although Ye Zhongming didn’t know what it was exactly, he had a rough concept. After telling Le Dayuan about it, he took fewer failures and had initial results in this area.

He was a genius. Ye Zhongming’s appearance reduced the time needed, but it didn’t cause the genius to lose his shine.

Le Dayuan and Ye Zhongming came to the northwest experiment field. He told Ye Zhongming some important things before starting the test.

“I can only control the energy output once. Moreover, it depends on the energy level, so we can only select between complete state and half complete state for this cannon.”

He sighed and shook his head like he had failed Ye Zhongming. He didn’t notice how Ye Zhongming twitched when he said those words.

Le Dayuan was discussing a switch that could select the weapon's strength. In his last life, such a thing took a long time to appear. For it to appear less than a year since the apocalypse started and for him to be unhappy about it, Ye Zhongming didn’t know what to say.

Learning that Ye Zhongming and Le Dayuan were experimenting on the cannons, the few core members who knew about this lab came. Little Tiger, Tong Hu, and Young Master Yun were interested. What shocked Ye Zhongming was that he saw Candy following beside Little Tiger like she was his little girl.

Everyone could tell from their actions that these two people were together.

But thinking about Candy’s age, Ye Zhongming couldn’t help but scold him for being an animal.

The target was a level-three mutated animal pinned to a giant steel piece two hundred meters out. Using this as a target had a more practical use.

“Half complete state, first time, fire!”

Few helpers controlled the cannon while recording the data. Shengyuan stood beside Le Dayuan with his shield.

This was the rule Xia Lei made the day the lab was created. When testing products, Le Dayuan couldn't do it. Moreover, Shengyuan had to be beside him to prevent anything from happening to Le Dayuan if the accident failed. Ye Zhongming was impressed with that decision.

Hong!

It was still the signature sound of crystal weapons. It wasn't loud, but unique, and a basin-sized light ball flew.

That level-three mutated lifeform screamed, and its body was scorched but didn't die. It cried with its last breaths.

Two researchers ran over. One was taking photos, and one was using a machine to record something.

Another level-three mutated lifeform was pushed forward, and this time, the complete state killed the target right away. After recording, Le Dayuan checked the cannon, and he was excited.

With Ye Zhongming's help, more than half of the durability problem was solved. From his professional assessment, this test cannon needed a change of parts after ten shots. This was a huge improvement!

"Zhongming, the initial tests are a success; give it a name?"

Le Dayuan slapped his work and told Ye Zhongming to name it.

"Sky Breaking Series, once the final product is made, you can name it."

A bunch of people tested some guns. This weapon was much more advanced than the cannons. With Ye Zhongming's parts, these weapons could be mass-produced.

Ye Zhongming told Le Dayuan to produce a batch of demon crystal grenades. This Master's request for more helpers and materials was agreed to.

Although Ye Zhongming was rich, his eyes were constricted when he heard what Le Dayuan needed. He was emotional. Although demon crystal weapons were good, they burned money. Le Dayuan's list of materials and demon crystals could trade for a six-star potion.

But could he decline it? No, the more he put in, the more rewards he would get.

Ye Zhongming felt poor. He pinched his chin and started to target those people.

He returned to the villa and called Little Tiger over. He passed Zell's Head to this fellow. Everyone knew what he meant: to pass it to Candy and get in her good graces. The two of them would get closer. Little Tiger was so happy that he wanted to kiss Ye Zhongming but was kicked aside.

After Little Tiger left, Ye Zhongming returned to the basement. He had left something there that he needed to examine.

Chapter 499: Activating the Cannibal Flower

This was a place that Sister Rong, Xia Bai, etc., guarded together. Unfortunately, apart from the two of them, the women who defended this place had died one by one after all the battles.

This was where the Fake Ghost Tree was. Behind it were four wheels in the cave, from level two to level five. Along with the three level-one wheels outside, it formed the seven pearls of Cloud Peak.

Ye Zhongming had always suspected that the Heaven Tree that occupied a city in the last life that scared off nine-star stars evolved from the Fake Ghost Tree, so he didn't kill this mutated plant. He only sliced its branches to use as materials to restrict it.

But after entering, Ye Zhongming was shocked. Over ten Fake Ghost Trees blocked the path to the four wheels.

He looked at their levels. Apart from the initial tree that was level four, the others were level two and three.

"What is going on?"

Xia Lei was planning Cloud Peak matters and was too busy, so she sent Liang Chuyin to accompany Ye Zhongming. Ye Zhongming turned towards her when he saw such a situation.

"Spy, traitor, and person with bad intentions."

Liang Chuyin pouted in disdain, "Not everyone has the same heart as us. Many factions want to infiltrate us to get intel—especially the modified potion, demon crystal weapons, and gene technology. Apart from those we killed right away, we fed those we captured alive to Big Yellow. Those lower level ones were given to this tree and could be used to prevent others from sneaking into Cloud Peak."

Ye Zhongming nodded. He had left for half a year, and Cloud Peak had learned how to deal with this matter. It was cruel to deal with spies like this, but the difference in methods between killing and feeding the Fake Ghost Tree helped to leave a huge threat to scare off people.

"Who are these people?"

Ye Zhongming looked at the Fake Ghost Trees. Apart from the level four mother body, the other trees were complete. It was obvious that Cloud Peak members allowed it to happen.

"Many, for example, people who want to stand out, people who wanted to harm their partners, as well as people who tried to target our women."

"En?" Ye Zhongming smiled, "Are you all not letting people chase you?"

Liang Chuyin rolled her eyes at Ye Zhongming before saying, "Are they chasing us? The better ones want our money and bodies to become core Cloud Peak members. The worse ones are like this tree."

She pointed at a level-three Fake Ghost Tree and said, "Three months later, this person thought he was handsome and started to chase Sister Lei. He wanted to become Cloud Peak's boss. Sister Lei exposed his true nature, slicing his four limbs and sending him here. If he didn't have bad intentions, then what?"

That happened? Ye Zhongming squinted his eyes and walked to the tree's side. The branches tried to tangle Ye Zhongming.

A casual kick sent the tree toward the cave. The core demon crystal part was smashed, and it twitched before dying.

"Then why are we still leaving it around?"

Ye Zhongming started to examine the mother tree.

Liang Chuyin spat out her tongue but felt the kick was handsome.

Ye Zhongming thought about it and told Liang Chuyin, "Let it evolve to level five."

The two continued to the stone room where the four wheels were. There was a purple plant at the entrance. When it sensed someone was getting close, it would raise its oval head with a mouth! Under the weird head was a level-four green crystal.

Cannibal Flower!

Ye Zhongming did get something from the Chain Prisoner.

He chose a few places to plant it when he left, but only this one survived.

When it picked up the master's scent, the two-meter-tall purple flower was shaking. The oval-shaped head had a mouth full of sharp teeth. Its thick branches bent and drooped low to express that it was yielding.

Ye Zhongming went to touch it. A fierce aura spread from his fingers to his mind. It was the notification to use his blood to activate it.

Even Ye Zhongming was confused by that notification. This was the first time the Gardener job gave him a notification.

He thought about it, and he chose yes. The head of the Cannibal Flower opened and landed on Ye Zhongming's arm.

Ah!

Liang Chuyin exclaimed and pulled out a whip to attack. But Ye Zhongming's other arm held her back.

It broke Ye Zhongming's skin before letting go. After it absorbed his blood, Ye Zhongming used Activate. Its body shrunk first before a red energy rose on its leaves. Very quickly, the purple flower turned purplish red, giving off this devilish color under the shine of the torches.

The flower started to grow out from the surface. The bald branches had a few palm-sized leaves. The center of each had a meter-long tube hanging down. The tip was very sharp. Apart from that, the flower looked more like a metal, not a plant.

"Level four Gilt Cannibal Flower. Ability 1: Eat evolved lifeforms to provide energy to evolve."

"Ability 2: Absorb, absorb the blood of evolved to increase its defense."

"Ability 3: Corrosive Trap; after it uses this skill, the soil around it will start to break down to raise its movement speed. The trap also can absorb blood."

This... Ye Zhongming was delighted. The activate skill was so good? Skill 1 was nothing much, as the Cannibal Flower evolved in such a way, but the other two were very practical. It was hard to imagine what kind of sick defense and attack the flower would be once it evolved to a high level.

Moreover, this Cannibal Flower could move, and Ye Zhongming could place it anywhere!

This was a surprise!

Ye Zhongming studied it and noticed a small bundle below its head. Inside it were ten seeds!

This Cannibal Flower started to reproduce!

Chapter 500: Cleaning

If one looked solely at the value of the Cannibal Flower, naturally, it wouldn't make Ye Zhongming happy. But anyone who lived a second life would know how tough defending a base was.

Sometimes, a base's survival represented a faction's strength and prosperity.

Ye Zhongming's plan needed a stable and healthy base.

Thus, when this plant that could be used for defense appeared, he was very excited as this was an important part of the defense system.

Overall, the apocalypse's defense was in a few areas: land, human, animal, plant, and infrastructure.

The land was easy to understand. For example, Cloud Peak was easy to defend. Its back was against a cliff, with only one path ahead. Humans meant the evolved level, which Cloud Peak was decent.

Infrastructure referred to the walls, Explosive Lightning Turret, demon crystal cannons, etc.

Animals and plants might not stand out, but they were very important in the future. They might be even more important than geography. There were many bases in the future whose defense depended on beasts or dangerous plants.

Although the Ginseng Fruit was planted below the walls, they were at most a warning. The really useful thing was in the low-grade demon crystals and the fruits that could be eaten. They weren't of much help in a real fight.

But the Cannibal Flower was different. If an enemy attacked and there were Gilted Cannibal Flowers on both sides of the wall...

This was what was exciting.

He looked at the seeds and decided to speed up the process. It was time to make some mutated lifeforms to feed this fellow.

He took the materials like the Fake Ghost Tree's branches. Ye Zhongming and Liang Chuyin left the place. Ye Zhongming still had many things to do in the next few days.

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When Ye Zhongming was firming up Cloud Peak's foundations step by step, the various factions in Cloud Peak received his invitation.

More accurately, he was informing them.

His message was clear: they could choose not to go but would have to scam from Ying City.

It was still that renovated bomb shelter made into a wine bar. Still, that room was the deepest in the place, but only two people were there this time.

Only a week passed, but Bai Feng looked much older. An evolved's lifespan had increased, and as a four-star evolved, aging would only leave traces after 20 years. But Bai Feng's looks terrified Zhao Xingmei.

After the initial shock, the disdain in her eyes recovered.

Bai Feng saw it, but he didn't say anything.

He wanted to go and leave this place, but reality gave him a heavy blow.

The subordinates who cursed Ye Zhongming for being a traitor and working with zombies chose to go against him when he suggested leaving Ying City. The resistance was on the surface, especially after that giant wheel appeared above Cloud Peak.

His men weren't willing to give up on the city they were familiar with. They weren't willing to abandon the promise that the zombie king wouldn't attack normal evolved. They felt like this was the best place to live.

Bai Feng thought about leaving alone. He was a five-star evolved and was an expert everywhere he went, but he didn't. He couldn't forget how tough it was to start over and wasn't willing to abandon his mature battle squad.

He couldn't give up on the habit of enjoying the profits first.

It wasn't much at first; he could just be a turtle. Although he had complicated feelings towards Ye Zhongming, he knew that he was an honest person. The things in the past were over, and he wouldn't take revenge.

But to head to Cloud Peak?

Bai Feng smiled bitterly. He couldn't even be a turtle if he wanted.

He subconsciously found Zhao Xingmei to discuss. In his impression, the two were connected, but this woman gave him a huge blow.

"We are different. I only didn't help Cloud Peak when they were in danger, and Star Beauty Company paid the price. There is nothing between us; this is a chance to work together. If you want an ally, I am not one."

Zhao Xingmei spun the cup in her hands, and her ice-cold tone filled Bai Feng with disgust.

"Moreover, you have made up your mind. You called me to ease your mind and find a reason to make yourself feel better."

Bai Feng stared at her in rage, but she stared back.

"Walk your path."

After saying that, she didn't even look at him and left. Leaving Bai Feng, who drank cup after cup.

Cloud Peak, inviting factions in the name of Ye Zhongming, swept Ying City. People cursed, people were suspicious, and many were discussing what was happening.

But no matter how badly they cursed in the dark, on the second day of the message, some factions headed towards Cloud Peak.

This was a message. In just two short days, the survivors in Ying City all left for Cloud Peak!

Not long after, a bloodbath would occur.

.....

Most factions chose to head to Cloud Peak, but some didn't go. Jill Warrior Squad was one of them. In terms of strength, they were the strongest.

As they joined the Glory Army, Ye Zhongming even killed their deputy leader, killing a third of their members in that square; both sides were enemies.

So when Boss Wengang returned, he chose not to head to Cloud Peak.

He couldn't get to Cloud Peak on time, as three days had passed since the message was spread. Two guests appeared at the Jill Warrior Squad's base.

Wengang was already a five-star evolved and was one of the most elite people in Ying City. But when he saw the two women, he was sweating.

"Tell me the answer, and then scram from Ying City!"

There was a cold voice, and the scythe that gave off a silver light reminded them of the Grim Reaper.

"I... Can't say." Wengang's voice was hoarse.

Xia Bai looked at Red Hair, who was even colder than her, and smiled, "Then die."

A few thousand zombies drowned Jill Warrior Squad's base a few minutes later.