

Crossing to the Future, it's Not Easy to Be a Man

Chapter 11: Learning System Activated!

That afternoon, on the Planet of Doha, in the chief's office in the logistics headquarters of the first military regiment of the Federation, a young officer was reporting to the Chief of Central Logistics on the urgent news delivered today.

"Chief, it has been confirmed that there is nothing wrong with Doctor Mu's report. The reports of the six mecha pilot escorts match up with his report perfectly," reported the young officer, flipping through the notes in his hands as he stood respectfully facing his seated superior.

Behind the desk flipping through another set of notes sat an energetic middle-aged General. He nodded as he listened, before asking, "How many people know about this?"

The young officer paused for a moment, stunned by the unexpected question, but he quickly recovered and answered, "Chief, this matter was handled by me personally. Other than my assistant and I, and those directly involved, no one else in the military is aware of the details."

"Very good. Designate the information on Major General Ling Xiao's inheritor as S-class — those below the rank of general are not allowed to access it. Also, put out a gag order for those who already know of the matter. As for the follow-up on that inheritor, let the same group of men be in charge of it."

"Yes! Chief." The young officer saluted and left the office with his orders.

Alone in the now empty office, the middle-aged General sighed softly, "Ling Xiao, this is all I can do for your child. Hopefully he doesn't attract the attention of anyone else in the military."

Ling Lan was very lucky. Completely unbeknownst to her, a certain someone had taken special care to protect her so that she would not be controlled by the military and be forced to become a fighting machine. What this gave her was time — precious time to grow up and enjoy her childhood.

However, at this moment, Ling Lan had no thought to spare for how the military wanted to treat her. Although she had been worried that her unusual absorption rate would

attract the military's attention, after ten peaceful days of nothing happening, she had put it out of her mind and moved on to do other things.

She had always been an optimistic girl, which was why she had managed to survive twenty-four years of unbearable pain with her sanity intact.

Of course, another reason why Ling Lan had put away her concerns about the military so quickly was the fact her attention had been drawn away by some wonderful news.

Early this morning, Little Four had announced, with great aplomb, that she was now qualified to access the learning mind-space.

In Little Four's mind-space, a spacious circular hall was Ling Lan's entry point. Surrounding her were a circle of tightly sealed doors. Ling Lan had tried to open some of them, but every single one had been shut tight, and would not budge no matter what she did.

After Little Four had had his fun watching her make a fool of herself, he had explained that the doors would not open until she met specific learning requirements. As for the details of those requirements, Little Four refused to say and had given her no hint at all.

However, Ling Lan still had a good guess that the requirements had to do with her physical fitness, as Little Four had reminded her more than once to work hard on her training.

Knowing that this was not up to chance, Ling Lan suppressed her burgeoning curiosity and settled down to focus on her regular training. This would not only aid her in her quest to eliminate the hidden threat to her health, but it might also provide her with the key to accessing the materials hidden behind the doors of Little Four's learning space.

In truth, Ling Lan was only approaching this matter with such urgency because she was completely bored out of her mind. Every day she just lay in bed, eating and sleeping, sleeping and eating ... or else she was playing on her own. These days as a baby were just too boring to endure. Even when she had been bedridden in her past life, she had at least been able to go online and surf the net to relieve her boredom, or perhaps even read some novels or whatnot ...

Of course, the other reason why Ling Lan was feeling suffocated was that her mom was being extra vigilant in fears that her secret would be exposed. Her mom did not even dare to take her outside, much less take her visiting. As a result, Ling Lan had unfortunately spent the seven months since she had been born in only three places — this bedroom, the grand hall, and the balcony — giving her no chance to truly observe this strange new world.

Just when Ling Lan thought that she was going to go crazy from boredom, Little Four showed up with the good news, making her so happy she could cry.

And so Ling Lan was on her best behaviour today. After being fed by her mother, she did not fuss to be taken outside as usual, but instead quickly went to sleep (which was in fact entering into the mind-space created by Little Four).

This time, when Ling Lan entered the mind-space, she noticed that the space had changed a little since she had last been there. This little change was a great source of joy to Ling Lan.

Among the many tightly sealed doors, one door was shining with an eye-catching red light. On the surface of the door, two large Chinese words could be seen — Physical Skills!

By her side, Little Four explained, “I have updated the language system so that it now uses your current writing system and verbal language, so you won’t have any trouble understanding it.”

Ling Lan was so touched by this that she pulled Little Four over and gave him a quick kiss on the cheek in gratitude.

Little Four blushed, turning completely red, and starting to mumble bashfully, “Don’t think you can win me over by being nice! I, Little Four, am an upstanding being, I will never go against my principles no matter what ...”

Oh, Little Four. As you’re saying this, can you not wriggle your butt around? And while we’re at it, the corners of your lips are quirked a little too high, aren’t they...? His words had no credibility whatsoever.

Ling Lan did not notice Little Four’s mumbling — all her attention had been taken up by the door before her. She slowly walked up to the door and gave it a good shove, and the door swung open.

Ling Lan did not hesitate. She walked right in, and the open door slammed shut behind her.

Suddenly, the room went dark. Ling Lan was shocked by this sudden turn of events, and shouted out, “Little Four, where are you?”

Little Four’s voice did not ring out through the darkness. All was silent around her, and the room was as dark as before. The eerie combination of darkness and silence caused Ling Lan’s heart to pound violently, but she fought the instinctual terror and stood still, deciding to wait it out. She had faith that Little Four would never harm her.

Ling Lan did not know how long she waited, for in the dark silence, time stretched endlessly, making the wait feel much longer than it really was. After a while, the cloistered darkness made Ling Lan recall her time as a fetus, and her rapid heartbeat started slowing gradually until it returned to normal. She shut her eyes and tried to

remember how it felt to be within her mother's body, and was suffused with a tranquil calmness. Her fear and anxiety faded, and she entered a semi-conscious semi-dreamlike state ...

After an indeterminate amount of time, Ling Lan abruptly sensed that the dark world around her had become awash with light. She squinted at the sudden brightness, and slowly surfaced from the depths of her inner calm.

As her eyesight adjusted to the light, Ling Lan found that she was standing in an open square. The area was as large as a football field, no, even larger. Ling Lan felt very small in this wide expanse of space.

Right then, a slightly mechanical voice spoke tonelessly from behind her, "Psychological resilience [SSS] rank. Highest level of physical skill training authorised."

Apparently, the beginning was just another test. The system had been evaluating her psychological resilience based on her reaction — if she had reacted too badly, the system would have kicked her out and made her try again another time. On the other hand, if she did well enough to pass, the system would assign a ranking based on her score, which would be used to determine what level of training she'd be subjected to.

Of course, even if Ling Lan's performance was terrible, the system would still have allowed her to start learning the most basic level of physical skill training eventually, but her training would have been inevitably delayed. It should be noted that the earlier a contractor can learn the skills available in the mind-space, the better — which is why the Mandora star system chose to have newborn babes bound to these learning devices.

Still, what the child can accomplish in the end is also dependent on his innate qualities. A heaven-blessed genius would be able to achieve much more by completing the courses provided by the learning system, becoming more and more outstanding, while a mediocre talent may just while away in mediocrity ... if the learning system is activated too late, the difference in levels would be impossible to bridge.

Undeniably, Ling Lan had the great advantage of having two lives worth of experience, netting her the highest psychological resilience ranking of [SSS] from the system at first try. But we should also remember to shed a tear for Ling Lan — true to its name, the highest level of physical skill training was not an easy course to master ... it looked like Ling Lan would soon be living a miserable life of being tormented by the system.

Ling Lan spun her head around to look for the source of the sudden voice and saw a uniformed male soldier standing there, eyes cold as he observed her.

Don't ask Ling Lan how she knew the man was a soldier — it was a gut feeling. Ling Lan felt as if he were an unsheathed sword, sharp and precise, and she found it difficult to breathe just from being under the pressure of his gaze.

