

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

### Chapter 9: Gene Stimulating Agent!

Another five months went by, and like any other infant, the six-month old Ling Lan could finally flip over and had started her evolution into a crawling creature. Ling Lan felt that her tongue was still uncooperative though, only allowing her to utter lone syllables — even so, her mother Lan Luofeng was overjoyed. Compared to other children, Ling Lan was already very articulate, and Lan Luofeng felt as if she could almost understand what Ling Lan wanted to say.

Ling Lan was almost moved to tears — she could finally make it known to her mother when she needed to go to the restroom. During this time frame, despite her best efforts, she had had trouble communicating with her mother who was on a different wavelength, resulting in several unfortunate accidents ... causing her no end of embarrassment for having wet the bed again after twenty seven years of life.

Well alright, let's just put aside all those shameful matters that happened in the past six months. There were too many to mention, and Ling Lan did not want to think about them anymore. She had decided that she would wipe this period of life from her memories.

This day, the moment she woke up, Ling Lan felt something different in the air. Chamberlain Ling Qin's expression was tight, and her mom had dressed her with special care, helping her put on special underpants that would hide her secret from any angle.

Ling Lan felt that the underpants were really quite comfortable ... well, if she could ignore the two soft spherical pseudo-testicles inside.

Not long after, several strangers in British-military uniforms suddenly descended upon the Ling household.

Ling Lan observed the men in shock. She did not know if all soldiers who returned from war had the same imposing presence, but Ling Lan could keenly sense the honed edges hidden under those uniforms. This was most certainly a troop of combat-savvy, blood-soaked, veteran soldiers.

Ling Lan put on a blank face and pretended to play by herself, but she kept her ears wide open. She was extremely thankful that the family she was born into ten thousand years later was still Chinese, and that the language being spoken was still Mandarin. This allowed her to skip having to learn a new language and meant she could gather information from others' conversation even as a baby.

When the troops introduced themselves to her mother, Ling Lan finally understood. They were here to deliver the premium military benefits Ling Lan had inherited, and would continue to do so every six months from now on.

This was also the day that Ling Lan found out what the premium military benefits actually were. A large part of those benefits were gene stimulating agents which were used to raise potential and body stats.

There were four grades of gene stimulating agents available on the market, from grade-1 to grade-4. Grade-4 agents were the worst, while grade-1 agents were the best. This grading was based on the purity of the gene stimulating agent. Grade-4 stimulating agents had a purity of 30%, grade-3 had 45%, grade-2 60%, and grade-1 75%. The higher the purity of the stimulating agent, the less harm it did to the body — it would allow the user to absorb most of the agent, and hence receive a higher boost to his potential and body stats.

Therefore, the more agent a child's body could absorb, the better his development would be, building up the solid foundations necessary for potential IN mecha operators.

However, these gene stimulating agents were horrifyingly expensive. Let's put it this way — a commoner's hard-earned life savings may only be enough to afford one bottle of the lowest grade gene stimulating agent. To get an agent just one grade higher, the price would have to be multiplied by ten. As you can imagine, grade-1 gene stimulating agents could only be afforded by those with either great power or great wealth, while the rest of the common people could only look on in envy.

Of course, this didn't mean that there was no chance at all for commoners to receive better resources. Every newborn child could be assessed at a public assessment centre and receive one of six rankings from the assessment.

Those assessed as [F] rank would not receive any aid from the government. Until their bodies were unable to absorb any more agent, [D] rank babies could receive two bottles of grade-4 gene stimulating agent per year, [C] ranks could receive two bottles of grade-3 agent per year, and [B] ranks could receive two bottles of grade-2 agent per year.

Meanwhile, [A] rank babies had two options. They could accept two bottles of grade-1 agent per year and grow up freely, or enter the military and receive organised military training and receive an endless supply of grade-1 agent. However, with the latter choice, the child would have to spend his entire life serving the military.

[S] rank babies would be immediately taken away for specialised training by the military, but the possibility of that happening was extremely low. As mentioned previously, this formidable ranking very rarely appeared among commoner children — in a nutshell, genetics decided everything.

Meanwhile, someone like Ling Lan who inherited premium military benefits was entitled to the premium-grade gene stimulating agents kept for central military use. These agents were even purer than the agents available on the market, almost reaching 90% purity. This was the best the military could do at the moment, since research on agents had hit a plateau. True 90% purity was just out of reach, but no one had been able to make the final step.

This time around, the military had sent over a whole ten tubes of premium-grade agent. Because these ten tubes were worth cities, the military had no choice but to send out some of their ace mechas as an escort.

Very quickly, Ling Lan had been stripped down to her special underpants. One of the men who seemed like a military doctor took out a long syringe with a sharp needle from a box he was carrying, and then used it to draw out the gene stimulating agent from one of the tubes.

Ling Lan turned a blind eye to all of this. That was all she could do — which six-month old baby knew to be afraid? At this moment, Ling Lan was grateful for her experience with needles. During her past illness, she had been injected so many times every day that she had become numb to the sight of needles, which was why she could face these injections so calmly now.

The syringe was rapidly plunged into her arm. The military doctor was very skilled — Ling Lan only felt a slight sting and an itch as the needle went in, very much like a mosquito bite.

The military doctor pushed the agent into Ling Lan's arm gradually, his demeanour stern as he observed Ling Lan's reactions. Some babies were incompatible with the agent, and there were also some babies who had been shown to have allergic reactions. In short, the greatest care must be taken when giving a baby their first shot of gene stimulating agent to avoid any accidents.

Before Ling Lan could sense any difference, Little Four had already rushed to the forefront of her mind without any warning.

"I sense something delicious! It's a taste I know well! No, that's not right, something's different ... yuck, what is this trash?! Why does it have impurities? This affects the taste too much!" Little Four was very unhappy. It felt that it had been tricked.

Hearing Little Four's voice, Ling Lan hurriedly closed her eyes. They say the eyes are the windows to the soul, right? She would live to regret it if anyone noticed anything strange from her eyes. Ling Lan said huffily, "Why did you come out?"

Little Four felt wronged. It had thought that the great thing in its memories had appeared, only to be presented with this knockoff. It said sadly, "I thought something

great had appeared, but it's just a knockoff. There are so many impurities inside ... if left uncleaned, your body will be harmed."

Hearing that it was harmful, Ling Lan asked anxiously, "Little Four, can you clean it for me?"

Little Four perked up immediately at her words, and said smugly, "Of course I can, who do you think I am? I am the smartest king mecha learning device from the Mandora star system! I can help my contractor do many things, such as expel any harmful substances from the body."

Ling Lan chose to ignore Little Four's self-aggrandizement, asking in confusion, "If this thing is harmful to the body, then why do the people here want to inject it into babies?"

"This is actually a great thing which can improve your body stats and potential. It's just that the technology here seems to be unable to achieve 100% purity, which is why there are impurities remaining which will harm the body. However, even so, the benefits still outweigh the costs. The only thing is that this agent cannot be absorbed indefinitely, because once the impurities have accumulated in the body to a certain degree, the body will lose the ability to absorb any more agent," explained Little Four.

Ling Lan was relieved. As long as the outcome was good, and there was no danger to her health, she would still be able to accept it. Besides, Little Four had already promised to clear out those impurities.

Very quickly, the first tube of agent had been absorbed by Ling Lan, and the military doctor started injecting the second, and then the third ... by the time the military doctor picked up the eighth tube, his forehead was beaded with sweat, and his hands, which had remained steady so far, actually trembled a little.