

Dungeon S 71

Chapter 71 Interim Leader Shi Zuo

"I did not encounter the zombie abomination before when I was in this dungeon earlier on." A Grade 1 customer said out loud as everyone in the store who was looking at the 49 Inch TV at the top of Station 6 saw the playback of how the Zombie abomination came onto the scene.

"Yeah, me too. Boss Jin, is that some secret encounter?" A customer who was waiting for his turn asked.

"No, each and every zombie dungeon instance was modified to suit the team of cultivators' average competency. This is especially applicable for returning cultivators that participated in our dungeons. Remember the stats profile in your Pandamonium app?" Jin asked them.

"Are you saying you took into account our strengths and weaknesses along with the stats of other cultivators to create a dungeon instance suited just for us?" Another customer with spectacles asked.

"Mhmm. For Station 6, there are two Grade 3 cultivators as you can see the stats on the wall mounted TV. Both of the squads each have a Grade 2 Peak cultivator as well and the rest are Grade 2. The zombie abomination was created to challenge the Grade 3 and Grade 2 cultivators." Jin explained.

"If your team consists of mainly Grade 1 cultivators, the zombie abomination will not appear and that particular team will be able to focus on learning how to fight and handle the pressure of many enemies."

"Oh my gosh, Boss Jin. Can I call you my master?" A customer wanted to bow down and prostrate in front of Boss Jin.

The other customers who had heard the reasoning of this new dungeon instance started to respect Boss Jin. They did not expect Boss Jin to go so far thinking and caring for the growth of the cultivators participating his dungeon instances.

"Boss, now I understand why your dungeon instances have such exorbitant prices attached to it. You are actually tailoring the fights for the whole team while personalising it based on our stats." An office lady gave a thumbs up to him after noting that the price of the zombie dungeon instance was at 350 Yuan. Some of the newer customers saw him in a different perspective.

"It is all about the experience. Subsequent dungeon instances will follow this model in the future unless explicitly stated like the Goblin and Zither Mistress dungeon instances." Jin smiled at them.

"I wholly agree about the part on dungeon experience and I respect Boss Jin for it too. Tailoring the dungeon instances required a lot of information and complex manipulation of the dimensional space. Seeing how high tech your dungeon instance is, you must either be a highly specialised computer expert with good knowledge in the creating dimensional spaces or you hired an excellent team of developers." Mr Know It All customer happened to speak out and some of the customers started to bootlick Boss Jin even more.

"Does that mean you recorded all our information and powers into your database system? Is it really secure? Although I know we indirectly allowed the collection of personal data as stated in the dungeon supplier's general terms and agreement. But what if other people are able to hack your database and access it?" Suddenly, a concerned customer started to ask.

"Nope, that will never ever happen. Rest assured, all your information will be protected with the highest guarantee. If it is gone or had I been hacked, I will behead myself and put it in a toilet bowl for you to use." Jin confidently affirmed the concerns of his customer.

"Seeing how he sells such cutting edge technology embedded in these dungeon instances along with all these awfully cute animal AIs, I have full confidence in Boss Jin's data security." Mr Know It All backed up Jin and other customers started to believe in him too.

"Thank you for the compliment but let's continue watching. I believed Shi Zuo is about to do something." Jin smiled and gestured his hand towards the TV.

"Shi Zuo, what's your plan?!" Bu Dong did not mind letting Shi Zuo lead the battle. He was, after all, more of a competent fighter rather than a strategic leader in the battle.

"You still have that black talisman that Captain Hei gave you right?" Shi Zuo seemed to be searching for something in his storage ring as Yue Han guarded him. Currently, Xiong Da the Hippo was the only one in the clash with the zombie abomination.

"Yes, but he had not given me any information regarding its uses. I just assumed it would be useful if we are in a pinch." Bu Dong blocked a punch from a zombie with his sword and immediately slashed it down.

"Guys, hurry up! I do not have all day to play with him". Xiong Da was getting tired and had a bit of difficulty trying to dodge the blows of the abomination. Thus, he was using his two handed war club to parry its blows else he would take the blow like a staunch hippo. However, he would not be able to hold long if Squad B could not think of something fast.

"Found it!" Shi Zuo used some strength to pull an item out from the storage ring and it was an ancient looking two handed iron axe with a stone grip. What was mind boggling about it was its size. It was as large as Shi Zuo himself and he had difficulty dragging it forward.

"Bat! I need you to divert its attention and have its back facing me. If you are able to bring it close to me, that would be great because this weapon is so freaking heavy!" Shi Zuo told his commands to Yue Han the Bat but he got nervous.

"What if-- Damn it! Fine! I will do what I can!" Yue Han swallowed his nervousness down his throat and was determined to move forward. How could he be frightened at this point when everyone was trying their best?

"We will provide you support too!" Apparently, some of the Panda foot archers were able to eavesdrop on their conversation and the cultivators realised it could be due to the open voice transmission channel which Captain Hei talked about.

"Tortoise, how are you holding up?" Bu Dong headed over to Kong Xian the Tortoise and assisted him with the zombie killing.

"Not too bad but your presence lifted some pressure from me." Kong Xian wiped his sweat off his forehead.

"I remembered you had a skill...erm a shout that provoke enemies." Bu Dong continued to transmit his conversation to the open channel.

"Yes, the Tortoise War Cry but if I do that, I might be overwhelmed by other zombies. Why would you want me to use that?" Kong Xian stabbed his two handed sword through two zombies.

"Bat will be distracting the abomination right? That will leave Hippo free from the Zombie abomination's attention. Let Hippo join up with Tortoise since Hippo's area wide attacks will do the job against that many zombies." Shi Zuo spoke in the open channel as well.

"Panda Archers, I noticed you occasionally used fire arrows. Can you use them on the zombie abomination to slow it down as Bat distracts it!" Shi Zuo was decisive and firm in his orders. While he might be playing around with his girlfriend Luo Bo, he was actually very serious when it comes to his work. The attention to details could have made him a respectable worker in the company but his playfulness left a deeper impression on most coworkers.

Five of the Panda foot archers on the Great Wall acknowledged and readied their bows. "Big Bro Hippo, break off on my count!" Yue Han ran in the opposite direction of the zombie abomination and into the woods.

It was not obvious what Yue Han was doing to the rest of the squad but he was actually gaining as much momentum as he could to activate his sword art. His speed became fast enough to jump between trees in order to climb higher into the air.

"Sword Art! Descension Sword of the Blind Bat!" Yue Han shouted and his chi propelled him upwards to the sky to about 60 metres in the air. While in mid air, he immediately aimed his sword towards the zombie abomination and started to dive down in an angle considering the distance between him and the abomination.

"Sword Art! Shadow Sword of the Blind Bat!" This time round, Yue Han's cultivation style, the Blind Bat Style, portrayed two bat silhouettes right above him swooping down. His body started to emit chi which temporarily altered the properties of his body into a semi translucent shadow form along with his sword.

"Now!" Yue Han yelled.

The chi emitted by two sword arts was sufficient enough to catch the zombie abomination's attention and Xiong Da the Hippo took this precious opportunity to sidestep and smashed his war club on its feet. The abomination turned to face Xiong Da which was ironically the direction towards Shi Zuo.

The Zombie abomination was now crippled and hence an easier target for Shi Zuo later on. It also gave Shi Zuo enough time to gather his chi for his attack against the zombie abomination.

Although there was some movement by the zombie abomination, Yue Han was able to adjust his trajectory and struck with tremendous force. Although it was a deep flesh wound, it was not strong enough to nearly cut its arm away.

In the shadow form, Yue Han was able to pierce through the zombie abomination without colliding into it. He then landed safely without damaging his body from the dive because of his shadow form.

However, the chi consumption was high so he had no choice but hope he was able to lure it as near as he could to Shi Zuo.

Xiong Da took out the same few chi generation bottles he used earlier and threw to Shi Zuo and Bu Dong. "Drink it! The chi regeneration from this bottle is superb!" For the team to succeed, Xiong Da believed it did not matter to share some of his consumables.

"This will be a great help!" Shi Zuo raised the bottle up to thank Xiong Da. After drinking, he smashed the bottle on a zombie's head that came too close to him and later used the half broken bottle to pierce its neck.

Meanwhile, the team of Panda foot archers who listened to Shi Zuo orders took aim with a fire burning at the tip of their arrows. They simultaneously loosen their arrows and all five fire arrows accurately lodged itself on the zombie abomination. There was one shot that went into the wound that Yue Han had previously created.

As if the abomination understood pain, it raged and flailed its hands even more wildly but at a much slower rate due to the burning fire arrows. Bu Dong saw it and suddenly thought that his intermediate sword art might actually have a chance against it and thus his confidence grew back.

Xiong Da immediately aided Kong Xian after drinking his bottle of chi regeneration and passed the last remaining bottle to Kong Xian. "I will cover you for a while, drink it and later attract the zombies away from the abomination."

"Thank you for this kindness." Kong Xian nodded at Xiong Da and started to drink while Xiong Da smashed a few more undead skulls into oblivion.

"Bu Dong! I might need more time!" It was obvious Shi Zuo's output of chi was increasing but controlled to prevent it from attracting the attention of the zombie abomination. Yue Han was also steadily luring it closer to Shi Zuo but he was reaching the time limit of his shadow form.

Considering the situation, Bu Dong took out the black talisman with the red symbols from his storage ring. It started to glow warmly as he held it on his hands.

"I hope this will really help."

Chapter 72 Black Talisman

Bu Dong held the black talisman up with two fingers and focused a small amount of chi into it.

"Activate!"

He immediately placed the black talisman onto the ground and an elaborate magic circle with a luminous image of a yin and yang with other peculiar symbols surfaced right before him.

The customers that were watching the dungeon instance buzzed out in excitement! Even Jin folded his arms and leaned forth the bar counter to catch the scene as it unfolded right before them.

A thick fog arose right before Bu Dong and a fairly enormous furry figure was summoned out of the magic circle.

"Oink!"

"That black talisman summoned Mr Oink?!" Most of the old customers including Bu Dong was shocked! Wasn't the black talisman supposed to help them and not complicate the situation even more?

"Continue watching." Jin snickered a little as he folded his arms.

"Did Captain Hei actually gave wrong information?" Bu Dong's brain was in a mess and he readied his sword to fight against the eight-legged boar which he previously encountered in the Goblin Dungeon.

"Oink! Oink!" The eight-legged boar seemed happy in spite of its grunting as it saw Bu Dong. At the same time, it actually gazed keenly at the zombie abomination. Bu Dong could not comprehend the next scene when Mr Oink actually lunged itself towards the zombie abomination. "Bat! Yue Han! Watch out! Mr Oink is coming!" Bu Dong hurriedly exclaimed.

However, it was too late when Yue Han heard the warning. He suddenly saw a familiar figure dashing towards him and the zombie abomination. Thankfully, his shadow form was still in effect when Mr Oink collided into him. Hence, all he got was some blunt trauma at the side of his body.

The boar furiously rammed into the zombie abomination which inadvertently helped Yue Han to move it nearer to Shi Zuo. Not only that, the leg injury which Xiong Da inflicted earlier took effect and the zombie abomination fell to the ground. It was not able to get up in time to prevent the next consecutive strike from Mr Oink.

Meanwhile, everyone was cheering for Mr Oink for no particular reason. "This is amazing! Does that mean the same thing might happen from Bin Yong's black talisman activation?" One of the returning customers who knew Boss Jin's dungeons well enough questioned him.

"Perhaps," Jin's smiled broadly and returned to the Panda Port to attend to a new customer.

Seeing how the abomination was on its knees, the boar lowered its head and pierced its tusks into the abdominal area of the zombie monster. Mr Oink used all its muscles to lift the zombie abomination up before slamming it down to the ground. The ground trembled and even cracked from the impact due to the continuous assault by the eight-legged boar. It seemed to cause some degree of internal injury with sounds of bone cracking and blood spewing from the wound inflicted by Mr Oink' tusks.

The abomination roared in an unknown language for every zombie in the vicinity to hear and its intentions were clear. It commanded the zombies to attack the boar and demanded them to sacrifice themselves to heal it.

"Oh no, you don't. Towering Tortoise Technique! The Aggravated Cries of the Tortoise!" Kong Xian spoke loudly in a firm voice. While it seemed ironic to say the name of a technique to produce the provoking war cry, it was the way how eastern cultivation techniques and weapon arts worked in this world.

Words itself are a form of power. A praise, an insult or even just a sentence of reason could invoke the chi within to be released out of the body. To date, the concept in the power of words igniting chi from within could not be fully comprehended by martial arts grandmasters, past scholars or even modern researchers. There were theories but the evidence to most of them was at most flimsy.

However, that did not stop any cultivator for fully utilising it into their cultivation styles. Thus by saying the name of the technique or weapon art, the words imbued the cultivator's chi allowing it to be shaped and formed into the desired effect of a technique.

While most techniques required the incantation of its name before executing the attack, some techniques from certain cultivation styles allowed one to attack first before stating its name. Most of such cultivation styles were mainly used in an assassination. However, in the case of Jin, his Nineteen Lazy Astral Panda cultivation style utilised a different sort of concept.

Kong Xian's thunderous shout enabled him to emit a huge breath of chi causing the zombies to move towards Kong Xian in order to satisfy their hunger pangs for chi. The shout overpowered the commands of the abomination, rendering its cry for help useless.

Seeing how he succeeded in luring the majority of the zombies, Kong Xian quickly proceeded deeper into the forest with Xiong Da alongside him.

All thanks to Mr Oink, Yue Han was finally alleviated from the mounting pressure he had faced against the abomination and stepped aside from the battlefield to catch his breath.

"Good job Yue Han! You confronted your fears with determination." Shi Zuo took a deep breath in and dragged the gigantic axe towards the abomination. "It is time to face my fear too." Shi Zuo feared his technique would fail him.

Meanwhile, the abomination, despite its lack of intelligence, noticed that reinforcements would not be coming and for the first time, it struggled to get Mr Oink's tusk out of its body by persistently striking the boar until it managed to break one of the tusks out of its head.

Mr Oink experienced such an excruciating pain from the broken tusk that it finally withdrew itself from the scuffle and the abomination shouted in victory. Without delay, it commanded the zombies residing in its mouth to emerge and mend its wounds.

Unfortunately, its victory and respite were short lived.

"Intermediate Great Axe Art! The Divide between the Mountains of Mad Monkey!" Shi Zuo was seen unleashing a tremendous amount of chi in an instant. The cultivation of the Mad Monkey was portrayed above Shi Zuo with two monkey silhouettes banging their hands in midair. Suddenly, a third monkey silhouette materialised from nowhere and joined the two monkeys.

"Grade 3!!!!" The customers roared with exhilaration in their hearts as they saw Shi Zuo jumped from Grade 2 Peak to Grade 3.

The great stone axe he held up became larger to the extent it was similar to the build of abomination. With two hands barely grabbing onto the great Axe, Shi Zuo swung it down with all his might aiming at the mouth which was positioned at the back of the monster. The force was so vehement that Shi Zuo thought that his backbone would have cracked by just swinging the great axe.

As predicted, the zombies within the mouth came out trying to halt the swing of the great axe but it was fruitless. The axe was so heavy that it sliced and smashed every zombie in the abomination's monstrous mouth as they tried to block the attack. Finally, the axe was lodged into the zombie abomination's back and the weight of the axe made the abomination completely immobile.

"Now! Bu Dong!" Shi Zuo fell to his knees but Yue Han caught him in time and carried him further away from the abomination.

"Intermediate Sword Art! Lacerate in the Blazing Edge of the Angry Ape!" Bu Dong was already running towards the abomination and simultaneously preparing to activate his technique without the distraction of the zombies.

His sword instantaneously turned bright orange red and heat was being radiated out of it. Bu Dong stabbed the abomination with all his might and plunged his sword deep into it. At that moment, the flesh of the abomination started to turn scarlet red in colour and a fire was ignited within the monster. Black smoke was seen coming out of the abomination's orifices and within seconds, the stench of dead flesh burning diffused into the air. The fire within the monster started to burn fiercely and in minutes, the whole body was on fire.

The customers cheered loudly at Squad B victory and at the end of the pile of burnt flesh was the great axe which returned to its original size. Yue Han high fived Bu Dong as Shi Zuo sat for a while.

"Leader, there is no time to rest. We must assist Tortoise and Hippo." Bu Dong offered his hand to Shi Zuo.

Separately, Squad A Leader Bin Yong was having a bit of trouble on the third floor of the Watchtower. "Leave me be! Rabbit and Bellflower, take this white gem to the next floor!" After throwing the white gem to Jia Le, Bin Yong panted as his buckler was raised up high to protect his face and his sword pointed towards a zombie.

A Zombified Grade 3 Cultivator.

Chapter 73 White Gem

The zombified cultivator portrayed its cultivation of three buffalo silhouettes but all of the buffaloes were being infected and gave a crazed look in them.

"No! We cannot leave you alone here!" Both ladies argued that Bin Yong could not win this alone. The injuries they received from the zombified cultivator was not grave but it posed a concern to Bin Yong.

"Get the gem up to the top floor and we will win the objective of this dungeon!" Bin Yong was insistent.

"No! This is a matter of principle. I will not abandon a comrade to die." Jia Le shoved the gem to Luo Bo and glanced at her as if she was looking for approval.

While Luo Bo had the urge to stay with Bin Yong to provide some assistance, she realised that it was a chance for Jia Le to prove herself in front of Bin Yong and provide them with some personal space.

In addition, she was a cultivator specialised in long ranged attacks and her presence might inadvertently hinder them.

"No! What if there is another zombified cultivator on the next floor, at least one of you will still be able to complete the objective." Bin Yong reasoned as he defended himself from the attack by the zombified cultivator.

They did not encounter the cultivator until they cleared the entire 3rd floor of the watchtower. It slowly walked down from the top floor when there were no other zombies to interfere with their duel.

During the ascent of Squad A, Jia Le managed to block each and every stair with her cultivation technique Root Barrier of Bellflowers, which allowed her to create a physical barrier made up of roots that entrapped and slowly drained any zombie that wished to pass through it.

"Jia Le, Bin Yong is in your care!" Luo Bo placed her hand on Jia Le's shoulders and subtly nodded at her. Jia Le knew where Luo Bo was coming from and in return, she passed her a kunai with a small white talisman attached to it.

"This kunai of mine was inscribed with a one-time chi technique. Use this to trap and kill your opponent if needed." Jia Le explained to Luo Bo the use of her kunai. Without turning back, Jia Le headed forth and assisted Bin Yong to the best of her ability while Luo Bo changed her short bow to an automatic hand crossbow from her storage ring.

Jia Le practised the Breathtaking Bellflower style for her cultivation. It gave her control of her chi to cast limited earth elemental spells. Unfortunately, she mostly used it for art practices as she was growing up. However, she did learn some cultivation techniques to protect herself from danger and to participate in dungeon instances with her friends but most of it was defensive and support spells.

"Why did you come back?" Bin Yong was a little disappointed and angry at the same time when he saw Jia Le running towards him.

"As I said, I really can't leave you alone." Jia Le took out another Kunai from her pack that she strapped on her leg.

"I..." Bin Yong became conflicted. He does not want Jia Le to get hurt from this zombified cultivator again but he was also happy she stayed to help him despite what he had said.

After a minor clash with the zombified cultivator, Bin Yong noticed the zombified cultivator was lacking in speed for a Grade 3 but its strength and accuracy were heightened by at least two fold. Not only that, the cultivator seemed to have an intent to kill Bin Yong and Jia Le as compared to the mindless zombies who just wanted to fulfil their hunger pangs for chi.

"Then let's defeat this quickly." Bin Yong took out the Black Talisman which Captain Hei said to use during a pinch. As he was in the watchtower, he did not know of the situation outside of the watchtower.

"Activate!" Bin Yong shouted and he experienced the same magic circle which Bu Dong had witnessed.

"Ke ke ke ke!" Three small greenish figures appeared right in front of Bin Yong and he had the same shock which Squad B perceived. Instead of words to convince Bin Yong, the spear goblin took the initiative to strike the zombie cultivator with his spear but the zombie deflected the strike with its sword.

The dagger goblin gave no quarters for the zombie after it deflected the spear goblin's strike and went straight for its vitals. The zombified cultivator was not able to escape quickly and the dagger was pierced into its neck. However, being an undead, the cultivator turned its head and tried to bite the dagger

goblin but the goblin had quick enough reflex to move away. The poison on the dagger which the goblin usually coated it with had no effect to the zombie as well.

With a few simple hand signals, the sword goblin signalled Bin Yong to cooperate with it and Bin Yong agreed with some hesitation. "I guessed the goblins are really helping me instead of attacking me this time around. Does that mean the black talisman summoned creatures from other dungeons to aid me? Guess my enemy then is my ally now." Bin Yong charged forth with his buckler raised.

"Bin Yong, I will help too! Kunai Art! Entrapping Fields of Bellflower!" Jia Le did the same technique she used helping Luo Bo. The roots appearing from her kunai raced towards the zombified cultivator and grabbed its legs and hands.

Regrettably, they were not strong against the Grade 3 zombie and it ripped one of the roots apart before it could be entrapped. However, the distraction was sufficient for Bin Yong and the sword goblin. Suddenly, two goblin silhouettes appeared above the sword goblin and its sword was infused with its own chi.

"The Goblin is actually a Grade 2?!" Bin Yong felt that he should not be beaten by a goblin. "Shield Art, Ramming Blast of the Beetle!" Bin Yong's shield was infused with his chi and he slammed his shield to the zombified cultivator. As the shield touches the zombie, it automatically released a minor gas explosion which caused the zombie to lose its right sword arm and part of its right shoulder too.

Bin Yong then rolled forward after his attack to give the sword goblin some space to execute its attack. The sword goblin slashed downwards furiously before picking up the zombie's sword that fell to the floor a second ago. After which, the goblin spun and slashed upwards, creating a long slash wound starting from the abdominal area and exited from the left side of its chest.

As organs and blood gushed out from its wound, Jia Le threw a kunai at the zombie, hitting it right in its mouth. The kunai activated and roots and branches sprouted from its mouth and subsequently into the body and out from the zombie's wounds again.

After a minute, the zombie stood there lifeless in a sort of artwork meshed with flesh and plants. Subsequently, a few bellflowers started to bloom from it and it was bizarrely beautiful yet enchanting. Bin Yong panted and thanked the three goblins before they disappeared into thin air while Jia Le fell to her knees feeling exhausted.

Bin Yong's heart raced a little but he took out his phone and snapped a few pictures of the zombie artwork. Bin Yong then turned his head to peek at Jia Le but realised too late that she was already staring at him.

They stared at each other a while longer without breaking any eye contact before Bin Yong decided to open his mouth. "It's...actually quite pretty." Jia Le immediately giggled at his comment followed by a series of laughter which both of them shared.

Separately, Luo Bo found some resistance on the top floor and coincidentally cleared the entire floor at the same time Bin Yong and Jia Le defeated the zombified cultivator. She took out the white gem of Turn Undead and placed it on a pedestal with the handwritten A4 paper sign attached on it.

"PLACE WHITE GEM HERE." There was even a panda pawprint to sign it off.

Chapter 74 Gold Panda Medal

Once Luo Bo placed the white gem on the pedestal, the gem floated up off of it and energy burst out from it.

Like a shining beacon from a lighthouse, the watchtower sent a magical bright shockwave through the entire area, causing the undead to stop moving all of a sudden. The zombies then slowly crumbled into dust and if someone had been paying attention to the chi in the environment, they would have been able to discern that the tension in the air was lifted and a sense of relief washed over the area when the entire horde of zombie perished into the ground.

Members of Squad B who were fending off the undead overheard a loud blast come from the far end of the Great Wall and turned to see a burst of white magical shockwaves coming from the watchtower.

"They finally did it." Shi Zuo wiped his sweat off his head with his shirt sleeve. Yue Han hollered loudly while the rest of them sighed with relief while some with a smile on their face.

They were not the only ones celebrating. Even the customers in the store cheered loudly for showing them such an exciting stream of a dungeon run. The spirits were running high and some of the customers even offered to buy drinks for strangers, which was still a fairly rare scene in Jin's store on a normal day, or any store for that matter.

Meanwhile, Squad A was reunited on the top floor and Luo Bo was pleasantly surprised to find that both of them survived the encounter with the Grade 3 zombified cultivator. "It was a good thing Captain Hei gave us that trump card. Looks like Boss Jin had some compassion to not make things too difficult for us."

"Hahaha, I heard from some of the customers that there is a Normal+ mode for the goblin dungeon and a team actually completed it. Maybe, he would like to cater to all sort of cultivators, which I believe it is a good thing." Luo Bo commented as the three of them walked down the stairs with Jia Le deactivating the plant barriers she invoked previously to prevent zombies from overwhelming them.

When they were out of the watchtower, the members of Squad A noticed a small platoon consisting of Panda foot soldiers and foot archers standing in a square formation right in front of them.

"Salute!" Sergeant Panda ordered and the soldiers straightened their pose and lifted their paws, placing them on their left chest. The coordination and discipline of the soldiers were very obvious to Bin Yong and the rest of the cultivators and indicated that they went through harsh training.

"A sincere thank you for eliminating the zombies." The Sergeant Panda ordered the remaining panda soldiers to be at ease and they started to clear the area up and assess the situation. At this point, a grey falcon screeched and descended near Bin Yong. When it landed, it seemed to signal them to board it.

"Is this not the falcon we saw before we got here?" Jia Le asked.

"Then that means Captain Hei is close. Come, let's get on board and perhaps we will be able to meet the rest." Bin Yong jumped up onto the falcon and unknowingly extended his hand towards Jia Le first before realising Luo Bo was closer to him instead.

"Oh oops." Bin Yong clumsily moved his hand away from Jia Le and then towards Luo Bo. She accepted his offer and grabbed his hand to get up onto the back of the gigantic falcon. When Jia Le got up, Luo Bo winked and smiled at her, as if to indicate that she did a good job influencing Bin Yong.

The falcon took off from the Great Wall and travelled a fair distance before meeting the brown falcon in midair which Captain Hei was piloting. "Ah! The remaining members of Squad A looks like you are all back safe and sound too." Hei beckoned them to join up with the other cultivators on the brown falcon and they did.

Bu Dong went up to Bin Yong and congratulated him on the success of his mission objective as well. "Aha, it's not me who did it. It was Luo Bo here. Also, we could not have succeeded without the aid of Jia Le." Bin Yong refused the praise but directed it to Luo Bo.

However, Luo Bo ignored Bu Dong and ran to hug Shi Zuo. "You stupid! How could you just leave us alone? That Bin Yong was so useless today. All he has been doing was protecting Jia Le and not me!. He will forget about us soon! Uwaahhhh!"

While Shi Zuo was a little dumbfounded, he was glad to hear a summary of what had happened in the watchtower. He gave a thumbs up to Bin Yong and sent a private voice transmission to him. "Emerald Mountain Hot Spring instance! Chance!"

"Shut uppp!" Bin Yong replied to the private transmission and gave an angry yet contented kind of look at Shi Zuo before Shi Zuo continued to comfort Luo Bo.

In the meantime, Jia Le wanted to tell Bin Yong that he did a good job too but there was too much drumming in the corner of her heart. "Perhaps...I should just take it slow for now and I think I am already quite content with the progress today." Jia Le lied to herself as her emotions in her expressed a blaring 'No' to her instead.

"Alright, hold on tight, I am going to bring you all to somewhere." Captain Hei took another straw of wheat from his officer shirt pocket before he patted the brown falcon's head. Upon receiving the command, the falcon dashed through the skies with great speed.

Meanwhile, Captain Hei erected a shield barrier to protect the young cultivators from the piercing winds during the flight of the brown falcon.

After a moment, the falcon came out from the clouds and the cultivators saw a colossal mountain right in front of them. The view below was magnificent too. As the falcon got closer to the mountain, they noticed a large cave with a red double iron door.

Captain Hei signalled the falcon to land at the side of the cave and everyone got off. Captain Hei then threw a dirty bronze key to Shi Zuo. "You are the MVP for today's dungeon. Open the iron door and you will find the rewards that the Panda Nation had left for you and the two Squads. Till then, may the cultivation be with you, Pandawans."

"He called us Pandawans? Which means we are not recruits to him anymore?" Xiong Da was amazed and laughed at the change of attitude by the Panda AI.

"What does Pandawan even mean?" Bu Dong never heard of such a word.

"I believe it's a parody of a title in Moon Wars that meant apprentice. Maybe we could ask Boss Jin about it later." Xiong Da commented.

"Ask later, treasure first!" Shi Zuo hurriedly placed the key into one of the red iron doors and it clicked. Everyone was so excited that they chattered and imagined what kind of treasure would be in there. Hence, all eight of them coordinated to push the red iron doors apart and they were stupefied by the sight of what was in the cave.

A tattered cardboard box.

"WHAT THE PANDA!" Yue Han was always the first to be dramatic.

"Did they cheat us?" Kong Xian was extremely displeased.

"Let us just check the box first." Jia Le decided to walk towards it before Bin Yong stopped her.

"Wait! What if it is a trap? Like a test by Captain Hei?" Bin Yong made a bit of sense but he did not notice that Shi Zuo had ignored him and walked towards the cardboard box.

"It's a bunch of keys with another note and a small rectangular wooden box." Shi Zuo reported as he unboxed the contents in it.

"HA HA HA HA! The Polar Phantom Gentlebear Strikes Back! If you want your loot, come and find me! This is one of the keys that you will need when you enter my instance! However, do not say that I am selfish. I am gentlebearly enough to leave a part of the treasure for you! (Well, actually my bag was already brimming with loot, and I did not have any other space for that.) Till then!" Luo Bo took the piece of note and read it out loud.

"Perhaps a dungeon puzzle piece?" Xiong Da felt extremely delirious from that possibility as he saw the bunch of keys were identical in nature and there were exactly eight of it. He loved mystery and to put it into dungeons? He was definitely looking forward to it.

"OH MY GOSH!!!" Shi Zuo opened the wooden box and found eight gold panda medals and everyone was delighted by that reward alone.

"Does that mean the gentlebear would have a ton of gold medals with it?!" Bin Yong could not control his jealousy when seeing that such a generous reward had been stolen. A few seconds later, a female announcer stated that the dungeon was completed and they would be teleporting back soon.

Meanwhile, in Jin's store, the whole crowd was bursting with lots of questions again.

Chapter 75 Emerald Mountain Hot Spring

The eight cultivators came out gradually from Station 6 and they were bombarded by praises and questions for each of the cultivators from the curious customers. Meanwhile, the teams that were next in queue did not hesitate to jump into the station for their turn.

While they wished to know what had happened, they did not want to waste any more time due to the adrenaline rush they experienced watching the eight. Perhaps they might learn some answers once they got out from their instance.

The zombie dungeon instance was actually meant for four players but in lieu of time and the number of customers Jin had in his store, the modified instance by the system allowed multiple teams to join. This was to save time and increase customers' satisfaction while teaching them how to play as a group.

"Brother Xiong Da! You improved a lot since the last time I saw you!" Mr Know It All shouted at him and shook his hand as a congratulatory action. "Ahaha, you humbled me too much. If not for Instructor Milk's help and a bit of yours, I would not have been so confident for this dungeon!" Xiong Da thanked Mr Know It All and turned towards Jin to acknowledged him for giving him such an opportunity.

"Who is Instructor Milk?" a few fellow customers saw how strong Xiong Da became, they queried who that was.

"Milk was the AI instructor that I hired who was recommended by Boss Jin. The price may be slightly hefty but you really can learn a lot from her. I was nothing until she whipped me up into shape. Within a few weeks, this is the result of my training." Xiong Da continued to talk and his charisma as a lawyer had influenced many to hire the AI instructor.

"Boss Jin! I'd like to book her for tomorrow!" A customer shouted across the room but Jin shook his head and said no reservations allowed. "Ahh that's sad but it is fine. I will come tomorrow since the wait here is not as bad as other dungeon suppliers and I will be able to watch how other cultivators fight." The male customer sighed at Jin's refusal.

"I do agree. It is indeed a good experience to learn from the cultivators that clashed with the monsters." Another bespectacled customer deduced.

"I am actually more interested in what actually happened in the dungeon. What was with that reward?! Gold Panda medals?!" A female customer with long hair asked

"Check the leaderboards and you might have a clearer picture. Although some had already completed the dungeons. This is technically the first clear for the zombie dungeon on a modified difficulty of Grade 3 hence higher rewards."

The eight cultivators who took a look at the board and saw the following.

"Great Wall of China Instance (Modified Difficulty: Grade 3) (Number of Players: 8)

Mission Clear Time: 2 hours 10 minutes 12 seconds

Cultivators:

Grade 3 Hong Bu Dong

Grade 3 Zha Luo Bo

Grade 3 Mei Shi Zuo

Grade 2 Peak Nu Bin Yong

Grade 2 Peak Hen Kong Xian

Grade 2 Wa Xiong Da

Grade 2 Ma Yue Han

Grade 2 Xu Jia Le

Zombies killed in total: 4589 and 2 Bosses

"100 zombies for one bronze medal and every subsequent 100 zombies will yield an additional bronze medal. If you score 500 zombies and above, you will yield one silver medal." Jin explained with patience.

"However, the zombie kill score will be average out to each cultivator and each will receive reward appropriate to their actions since some cultivators are specialised towards support healing or defensive type of cultivation, it would be unfair to them too."

"For example, if you scored an average total of 499 zombies, you will only get 4 bronze panda medals. If you scored an average of 500 zombies or 1000 zombies, you will get 1 silver panda medal as your reward."

"The two bosses with variable strength will only appear for teams with an average cultivation of Grade 2 and higher. Each cultivator will yield five bronze medals if killed. However, killing the two bosses and getting an average kill score of 500 zombies per cultivator would trigger the Phantom Gentlebear event." Jin was reading out what Yun had told him when the tattered cardboard box scene happened in the instance. If not, he would have suffered a panic attack if the customers bombarded with questions.

"Why did you not tell us about all this information beforehand?" A customer was a little frustrated that there were hidden mechanics within the dungeon.

"What's a dungeon without any surprise? Since you people saw it with Bu Dong and his teammates, I would not mind revealing it out now." Jin tried to defend his initial sense of cluelessness.

"Guys! I had written down everything that Boss Jin said in the Pandamonium app!" A high school student customer shouted out loud while waving his phone to the crowd in the store. The newly upgraded Pandamonium app had an inbuilt forum where cultivators who experienced Boss Jin's store started to put in dungeon walkthrough guides and experiences they had encountered.

Some other cultivators even gave their own advice on cultivation and when a walkthrough guide became popular through the number of likes and comments, it would be automatically be pinned for newcomers or returning cultivators to browse through.

It had only been less than a day that the Pandamonium app was upgraded and the forum was already bustling with activity with various cultivators' experience with Boss Jin's dungeons. Each instance had their own subthread and it was easy to keep track of the notices.

"Then what is the value of the silver and gold medal?" An office worker customer asked.

"One silver panda medal is equivalent to 10 bronze panda medals. One gold panda medal is equivalent to 10 silver panda medals." Jin answered.

"Wow! This gold medal is worth 100 bronze medals?! That means I can buy a new weapon from the underground store!!" Yue Han was ecstatic!

"Same, I could buy a few more of those chi generation potions by Boss Jin. It was so effective." Xiong Da nodded his head in agreement.

Meanwhile, some of the customers were shocked "There is an underground floor to this store?" Some of the returning customers immediately pointed at the direction of the inconspicuous glass door right beside the stairs leading to the 2nd floor. Even Bin Yong and his gang did not know the existence of that underground floor.

"One more question Boss!" the same office worker asked once more and Jin gave him a stare with his bored lazy eyes.

"I promise! What is the Phantom Gentlebear? A new upcoming dungeon?"

Jin was becoming a little irritated by this customer and after all the explanation that he had to do, he answered back with a shrug. "When it comes, it comes. Till then collect those keys if you wish to enter it in the future."

Since Shi Zuo was in possession of those keys and the gold medals, he immediately beckoned the other seven to gather as he split the loot among them. They withdrew their items from the storage miniature panda beside Station 6 and kept their keys along with it. As for the gold Panda medal, there was a QR code at the back of the gold coin and they immediately captured the code to increase their medal stock.

Separately, Shi Zuo asked Bin Yong and Jia Le to join the next instance with them. "Bro, I confirmed with Boss Jin, the Emerald Mountain Hot Spring instance is indeed on the second floor."

Jin accidentally overheard it and was relieved that the so called toilet instance as Yun had dubbed it, was renamed to his liking. He doubted no one would have bought the service instance ticket if it was still named as the toilet instance. "Why do both the system and Yun have such bad naming sense?"

With the renaming of the service instance, many of the customers initially thought it was a dungeon instance and Jin had to explain it was not. After repeated explanations to several customers, Jin finally learnt the right phrases along with some tact and was able to fully explain what a service instance was.

Bin Yong and his friends went up to the second floor and saw a considerable revamp of the area. "Ah! This is the penguin statue!" Luo Bo went to touch it and asked Shi Zuo to take a picture of it with her. Though he appeared to be reluctant, he actually took quite a number of pictures and even asked Bin Yong and Jia Le to join for a group selfie.

"So all I had to do is to scan my phone here at this penguin statue?" Bin Yong was a little confused at how it worked since Shi Zuo was the one who introduced it to him.

"Yea, just accept the teleportation, the statues for each gender are separate." Shi Zuo nodded his head and let Bin Yong entered first. "They are separate if you wished to go into a public service instance, but I registered for a private instance with Boss Jin." Shi Zuo chuckled along with Luo Bo and they high fived together.

"What are you waiting for? Get in there, Bellflower." Luo Bo held onto Shi Zuo's arms and both of them were getting ready to enter the female penguin statue.

"I ..." At this point, Jia Le's heart was pumping furiously as if it wished to burst out of her chest. Her flushed face was so obvious that people might have thought she was drunk with alcohol. Luo Bo sighed at her hesitation and helped Jia Le to pick her phone out of the bag and assisted Jia Le to place her phone on the male penguin statue.

"In life, there are three things you cannot recover. The word after it's being said. The moment after it's missed and the time after it's gone. Do not hesitate and grasp that moment if you really liked him." Luo Bo gave a slight nudge and stepped aside. Jia Le took one deep breath and accepted the instance teleportation.

"Do you think we are rushing them a bit too much?" Shi Zuo questioned Luo Bo but she smiled and entered a separate service instance from Bin Yong and Jia Le.

Chapter 76 If Only Jia Le Was Here

"What a view!" Bin Yong entered the Emerald Mountain Hot Spring service instance and was taken aback by the magnificent scenery on the top of the mountain surrounding the hot spring. He purposely went to the edge of the mountain to have a better view of the greenery of the entire area.

The temperature was slightly colder than usual but it was nothing he could not handle despite the blue checkered shirt he was wearing. The air was also calm with little to no wind and Bin Yong took a deep breath in before exhaling. "Even the air is filled with a presence of chi in it. Not many places on Earth can simulate such an experience."

He also noticed there was no one around despite such a spacious hot spring and he guessed Shi Zuo could have booked a private hot spring instance for the both of the guys.

"If only Jia Le was here...instead of him hahaha!" Bin Yong's crude thoughts arose from the depths of his mind since he did hand her a hot spring ticket before coming into the store. A few moments later, a number of penguins came out from the cabin area squawking loudly.

"Hiiiiii! Welcome to the Emerald Mountain Hot Springs! Enter the cabin to remove your clothes and use the sitting shower cubicle before you enter the hot spring!" One of the AI penguins articulated its instructions well.

"These penguins sure are cute." Bin Yong squat down to touch their fluffy short feathers and the penguin enjoyed the occasional rubbing under its beak. Another penguin interrupted by asking Bin Yong some questions.

"Customer, would you like to have some plum sake along with your partner?" The penguin asked.

"Sure, why not?" Bin Yong assumed Shi Zuo would like some alcohol while they share some personal man to man conversation. Perhaps, Bin Yong could also learn some tricks from him to woo Jia Le though deep down, he did think about Luo Bo. But he knew he had to move on in life.

"Would you like a massage during your stay with us?" The penguin asked Bin Yong once more.

"What kind of massage services do you provide? Do I have to pay for any of them?" Bin Yong asked.

"Oh no, you had already paid the highest premium package, so all services rendered are included in it. We provide two main types of massage service. The first is the facial and head massage by our talented Penguin Massage Therapist during your dip in the hot spring." Even without any fingers, the penguin used its flippers to demonstrate a 'One' sign.

"The second is a full body massage which will be conducted in the cabin by our trusty three stars certified Panda Massage Therapist. Rest assured you will feel refreshed after the instance. However, if you wish to have a massage service focused on a certain body region such as the back or the legs, do inform us."

"Alright, I will take both of them since it had already been paid for." Bin Yong was delighted that Shi Zuo treated him to such a magnificent package deal.

"Understood, please change and we can proceed with the massage." The penguin bowed and walked away as if it began to prepare for Bin Yong.

"Strange, what is taking Shi Zuo so long?" Bin Yong then realised Luo Bo could be holding him back or he was the one still hanging onto Luo Bo. In addition, the time dilation of instances would mean he had to wait for a while longer for Shi Zuo if he did not teleport at about the same time as him so Bin Yong decided to proceed without him.

After Bin Yong removed his clothes in one of the rooms of the cabin, he took a large green towel from the cabinet beside him and wrapped it around his waist and a small black towel to wash his body in the pool. The large green towel was particularly fluffy, similar to what he felt when he touched the penguin.

He then took a shower at the sitting shower cubicle and later dipped into the hot spring pool. The hot water initially gave him a little scare before he submerged himself fully into it. He felt his pores opened immediately and when he put his head out of the pool for a breather, the cold air in the mountains quickly cooled his head. It was an exceptionally satisfying feeling.

What was unique about this hot spring was that there was a Maple Tree in the centre of the hot spring pool and at times, the occasional falling of the red leaves oddly brought peace to his heart. He also realised the hot spring seemed to rejuvenate his chi points in his body and began to experience a sense of contentment in the pool.

"Sir, your plum sake is here. Do you wish to have a drink first or a massage?" The penguin was holding a wooden bucket with the plum sake and a two small wine cups in it.

"I would like a cup before proceeding with the face massage." Bin Yong went to the side of the pool to grab the wooden bucket from him and place it near the stone perimeter of the hot spring.

The penguin acknowledged his request and skillfully opened the glass bottle of the plum sake with its flippers. The action of pouring the sake from the bottle into the cup was an artistic sight to behold.

"You are absolutely amazing Mr Penguin." Bin Yong praised it.

"Thank you for your generous praise." The penguin placed the sake glass bottle and the wine cup down. Being an artist, Bin Yong briefly admired the little penguin art design of the wine cup before he drank the wine cup with one gulp. When the plum sake went down his throat, it had the right sweetness and does not hurt his throat a single bit.

"Boss Jin should sell this plum sake in the stores... this is ahhh~!" Bin Yong had never drunk such high quality plum sake.

"Shall I start the massage?" Bin Yong nodded at the penguin's question and it provided him with a soft and comfortable pillow at the side of the stone perimeter of the hot spring. He laid his head on it and the penguin whistled for the massage therapist to start working.

"Customer, I am Mr Patsu" Bin Yong looked up and saw a white penguin with greased spiky feathers at the top of its head. "I will be your massage therapist for today." Mr Patsu dipped a small towel into a bucket filled with hot spring water and placed the towel on Bin Yong's eyes.

It then did the same again and laid another wet on his neck area. "I will be starting the massage right now." Mr Patsu took some jasmine scented ointment and started to apply on his face and head. The flippers at work were remarkably phenomenal as Mr Patsu massaged the pressure points of his face.

"So so so comfortable..." Bin Yong really enjoyed this until he heard a teleportation sound. "Bro, you are late....this is the best massage I have ever had." Being in a moment of bliss, he did not care much and enjoyed Mr Patsu's massage.

"Customer, welcome to Emerald Mountain Hot Springs! Enter the cabin to remove your clothes and use the sitting shower cubicle before you enter the hot spring!" The same AI penguin repeated the exact same thing but this time, there was no reply.

"Would you like a massage?" The same conversation ensued but Bin Yong heard no audible reply from Shi Zuo but still did not care a single bit. The massage was simply heavenly when Mr Patsu started to focus on the head area. As Mr Patsu resoaked towel that was covering Bin Yong's eyes, he took a peek at the direction of the cabin to see that the door was closed in a jiffy.

"Hmph, maybe Luo Bo rejected him from going into the same hot spring instance as her. Served him right to prioritise his woman instead of his good friend." Bin Yong smirked and rested his head on the pillow again for Mr Patsu to continue the massage.

Minutes later, he heard the cabin doors opening again and the showers turned on. "Bro, why so quiet? Luo Bo rejected you?" Bin Yong still hear no reply but decided to not care too much for that dejected friend of his. "Ah Mr Patsu, higher a little. That spot is itching for your skilful touch."

"Understood." Mr Patsu moved its flippers slightly higher up his scalp and the feeling was terrific.

Bin Yong eventually heard someone went into the pool and he felt a familiar presence sitting beside him on his left. He asked Mr Patsu to stop for a while as he turned his head to the right to take a wine cup. Bin Yong filled it to near the brim of the cup "Bro, don't be sad. Have some plu-"

Jia Le was blushing in full redness with a green towel wrapped around her petite yet slender body. She tied her ponytail higher which revealed an elegant nape right beneath it. Without hesitation, Jia Le gently took the cup which Bin Yong was holding and drank the whole cup.

At the first mere sight of her, Bin Yong was in such a shock that he felt like his heart was blown off a 1000 metres away from this mountain. His unsightly mouth could not say a single word out and suddenly he felt that the hot spring was getting so hot that he felt like fainting.

Chapter 77 Mr Patsu and Friends

Emotions were running high in the hot spring until Mr Patsu broke the silence. "Since all the customers had arrived. Would you like to partake in a mini game? There will be rewards if you win the mini game."

Mr Patsu's words broke Bin Yong's daze and he managed to return back to reality. "Erm, sure. Jia Le, would you like to join?"

Jia Le was a little frustrated but largely relieved. She herself could not bear the intense beating of her heart and it might have further worsened since Bin Yong appeared to have feelings for her, based on his reactions.

"Okay, I will join." Jia Le nodded her head lightly as she pulled her towel further up her chest.

Mr Patsu clapped its flippers and two penguins swam towards them with a medium sized parcel each in their beaks. "Quickly wear the yukatas prepared in the parcels and come to the side of the mountain right at the front."

The two acknowledged Mr Patsu and stood up together but soon realised that both were scantily clad with just a single green towel. They looked away from each other with faces flushed in pinkish red as they collected the parcels from the penguins.

Jia Le got out of the hot spring and opened the parcel to reveal a gorgeous sakura flower pattern on her yukata, a casual Japanese garment usually made of cotton fabric. She changed on the spot by wearing the yukata over her towel and tightening her sash after removing the towel. When Jia Le was tying her sash, she could not help but turned her head to peek over at Bin Yong. However, it was too much of a coincidence between them as Bin Yong turned at the same time to peek at her.

"Oh!" The two embarrassed adults returned to focus on their clothing but Jia Le could not seem to tie a proper knot on her sash. "Do you need some help?" Mr Patsu asked Jia Le whether she needed assistance and she hastily shook her head.

"Customer, please assist your partner. She seemed to be having difficulty tying her sash." Mr Patsu ignored Jia Le and gestured Bin Yong to help her since he was already done with his. Bin Yong slowly walked towards Jia Le with his head looking sideways and downwards.

"Do you need help?" Bin Yong finally glanced upwards and saw Jia Le in the eye. That abrupt eye contact was all that needed to ignite their hearts again on fire but both were still in some awkward denial.

"Mmm. Please help me." Jia Le closed her eyes while holding on to her yukata and her sash tightly. Bin Yong indecisively took over the sash and his hands trembled as he assisted Jia Le with her sash.

While he was doing that, he whiffed the same but now faint fragrance of strawberry he remembered smelling from the office. All he needed to do was to untie the sash and perhaps everything might fall into place.

For Jia Le, her senior and idol, whose artwork she always looked up to, was now right beside her. All she had to do was to grab him by his collar and she would be in his embrace. Even if it was just for a second, she believed it was worth it.

Not known to each other's feelings, there was indeed a tightening tension...a fiery desire in them which they wished to release out in the open and as they were dying to relish the touch between themselves. Nothing was stopping them in this service instance for unleashing their bestial cravings from within except for the respect and inculcated courtesy for each other.

However, Bin Yong controlled real hard to hold his blazing urges and tied the obi and looked at Mr Patsu once he was done.

"Alright, please follow me." Mr Patsu led them to the side of the mountain where there was a deep gradient slope where one could fall and never return. The base of the mountains was filled with forests but both Jia Le and Bin Yong noticed something was coming.

Meanwhile, two group of penguins were having trouble transporting parts of a rather heavy looking crossbow to them. The penguins eventually installed the large crossbow in between two rocks which seemed to be crafted and designed well for the placement of the crossbow despite its natural aesthetic.

The penguins then installed a large magnifying glass and a seat at the top of the crossbow which looked ridiculous and useless while another group of penguins were carrying buckets of soap bars towards Bin Yong and Jia Le.

At this moment, they heard a frightening bellow from the forest and something...emerged out of the forest. It looked like an enormous pile of foul mud moving slowly towards the top of the mountain as it left its remnants which rot the earth and plants that were in contact with it.

"That is Mr Muddles. He always like a bath every alternate week at the top of this hot spring and while we do welcome him grudgingly, we prefer him to be clean before enjoying our hot spring pool as a sign of respect to other customers using the pool too." Mr Patsu shook its head as it offered an explanation to Bin Yong and Jia Le.

"Hence, your objective is to make him as clean as possible before he enters our pool. Shoot the soap bars at it and he would absorb it to cleanse himself." Mr Patsu demonstrated how to load the crossbow and he shot the soap bar at Mr Muddles. Unfortunately, it missed badly.

"One of you need to get up and occupy the spotter's seat and use the magnifying glass while the other fires the crossbow. Do not worry, since there are only the two of you, the penguins will continuously hand over the ammunition to you but you have to do the reloading yourself." Mr Patsu clapped its flippers once more and the penguins jumped into action with much noise.

"Do you want to take the spotter seat?" Bin Yong asked Jia Le. This time round, with the attention redirected to something else, he was more confident of himself.

"Okay, but I don't exactly know how the spotter works." Jia Le looked at Mr Patsu hoping it will have some explanation.

"Ah Customer, it is simple. Get up and use the control screen. It will be intuitive from then on. Oh and there are special power ups once in a while. Do remember to use them!" Mr Patsu explained once more.

"Come, I will give you a hand to get onto the seat since the yukata might hinder your movements." Bin Yong remembered she might not be wearing any undergarments and had genuine concerns for her one and only clothing to maintain her decency.

Jia Le accepted his help and Bin Yong held onto her waist to lift her up to the spotter's seat. "Thank you, Bin Yong." Jia Le voice now became a sweet melody to him.

Jia Le took a closer look at the magnifying glass and realised there were touch screen functions on the screen including the adjustments needed for Bin Yong to calibrate the crossbow.

"Bin Yong! Turn the knot beside the crossbow until you hear two clicks and you are ready to fire." Jia Le gave instructions and Bin Yong did as instructed then he fired a fairly big piece of soap. From the side of the crossbow, he saw the soap bar flying into Mr Muddles.

It immediately produced some white steam from its body and bellowed even more. "We need more attacks in! It seems to be moving slightly faster!" Jia Le readjusted the magnifying glass to have a better view. "Yes fire now!" Jia Le gave the order and Bin Yong fired.

Within minutes and a few large soap bars disappeared into the Mr Muddles, a power up skill appeared in front of Jia Le. That came at a crucial time as they saw Mr Muddles had climbed half of the distance up the slope of the mountain. However, the rot seemed to lessen as Mr Muddle climbed higher but Bin Yong was getting tired from the reloading and firing which made him pant a little.

"Do you want me to take over?" Jia Le was a little concerned seeing how Bin Yong was getting exhausted. "No its fine, you are doing great giving me those instructions. They were clear for me." Bin Yong gave a thumbs up to her and focused his enemy on his crosshair.

"Do not worry, I have obtained a power up, it might help!" Jia Le waved him a fist to encourage him to press on.

"Then, let's do it, baby." Bin Yong unknowingly said it out loud which Jia Le noticed his affection and her lips curled into a smile.

"Firing!" Bin Yong shouted as he sent another large piece of soap bar towards Mr Muddles. Right when he fired the soap bar, Jia Le pressed a button on the magnifying glass indicating "Enlargement."

The soap bar that was flying immediately grew in size and became gigantic. Since Mr Muddles could not evade, it could only closed its eyes to meet its impending doom from the soap bar of death. The soap bar hit its target so hard and fast that Mr Muddles only swallowed it partially with the rest hanging out of its mouth.

In a short while, Mr Muddles swallowed the rest of the mammoth soap bar and with a bright light emanating from its body, it was reborn into a transparent jelly pudding slime. Mr Patsu and the rest of the penguins cheered by squawking incessantly as Mr Muddles happily climbed its way up to the mountain and jumped a little in joy. It then approached Bin Yong and Jia Le to thank them for cleansing by hugging the both of them simultaneously.

Unfortunately for the two, the hug by Mr Muddles brought them close together that they felt each other's skin. Bin Yong could no longer resist and hugged Jia Le without any hesitation.

"I am really sorry, but I think I might have feelings for you." Bin Yong shouted out loud with all the courage he had in his heart while trying to tone his confession down as he was afraid Jia Le was all along just being kind towards him.

"Don't be sorry. You can start by bringing me out on a dinner date." Jia Le returned the hug and both embraced each other tightly. Jia Le closed her eyes and smiled widely. She was glad her gamble paid off.

"Promise." Bin Yong slowly let go of her as Mr Muddles released them and they subsequently enjoyed each other's company in the hot spring instance together.

Chapter 78 Trash Items

The weekends were extremely busy with the new Great Wall of China instance which proved to be a hit among new and old cultivators alike. There was also some great feedback from the Emerald Mountain Hot Spring service instance as well and many were pleasantly surprised by the mini game it had incorporated.

Unfortunately, not many customers grasped the idea of a promotional loot box since the Qixi Festival dungeon instance was not up yet according to Jin and even fewer went to the third floor as most people thought the playback rooms were still there. Those who took a peek at the third floor even got confused by the sudden change of scenery of a zen gallery and decided to return to the crowd on the first and second floor.

The underground floor, on the other hand, was very popular with many of the customers visiting the store service instances to get new clothes, items and weapons. For those who completed the Great Wall of China dungeon instance, the generous reward from it allowed the new cultivators to purchase improved weaponry and armour.

Jin also noticed that there were lesser customers who bought tickets to the Goblin and Zither Mistress dungeon instance due to the substantial reward from the Great Wall of China dungeon instance. However, it was not exactly a bad thing since the zombie dungeon instance allowed multiple teams to join and it increased the rate of customers turnover which indirectly raised his profits.

It was the end of Sunday nearing 12 am midnight and Jin finally closed the shutters to his store. He retrieved his phone at the bar counter to check the store accounts app. The sales were simply splendid and the profits earned during those two days were staggering for him.

"Question, why is the system giving such generous rewards for the zombie instance? It was so stingy when it came to the Goblin and Zither Mistress. Right now, it felt like those two dungeon instances are more or less going to be thrown aside if this keeps up." Jin picked up the used dishes and utensils and placed them in the dishwasher.

"Why, isn't it good for the customers? They can finally upgrade and equip themselves with better clothes with stronger inscriptions." Yun materialised from nowhere and stretched herself a little before taking a can of Bamboo Juice and a piece of the Triple Cheese Pizza from the bar counter to have a quick supper.

"But will it not cost a lot for the system to create such items? I mean 1 Bronze Panda Medal was roughly 25 Yuan based on the Goblin dungeon instance and 1 Gold Panda Medal would be like...2500 Yuan? The zombie dungeon instance only cost 350 Yuan! Hence, the system is losing about 2150 Yuan for that first clear!" Jin got a bit annoyed even though he knew that it was the system that was losing money and not him but who knows? Maybe that might affect him indirectly if the system lost too much money.

"But that was just the first clear." Yun munched at the Triple Cheese Pizza as the additional cheese from the pizza was being pulled away from her mouth.

"Well, the subsequent clears still gave quite a fair bit of Panda medals. Cultivators who managed to kill the two bosses in the zombie dungeon would be rewarded an additional silver medal. According to that thought logic, it would roughly be 500 Yuan per zombie dungeon clear and that means we are losing 150 Yuan for every successful dungeon runs." Jin felt he was in distress after calculating the numbers out.

"What if I tell you, almost every item made in the underground store cost lesser than a bronze panda medal?" Yun drank her Bamboo Juice to clear her throat.

"Huh, how is that possible? I personally entered the store service instance and noticed how fantastic the quality of each of the items is. How could they cost less than 25 Yuan each?" Jin was really confused so he stopped what he was doing and hoped Yun would provide an explanation to him.

"Remember the Parallel World theory I told you about?" Yun chewed the remaining piece of the Triple Cheese Pizza.

"The system combed far and wide through many worlds and found hundreds of suppliers that sell these items. For example, there is a world where clothing triumphs everything and another world where inscriptions were taught since young. What you saw here are actually the lowest tier of items in their world, the trash of trash." Yun signalled Jin for another slice since she was still hungry. He promptly took another from the bar counter drawer and placed it on her plate with a pizza peel.

"Thank you. Anyways, one man's trash is another man's treasure. The quality of items we have in our underground store was marked as inferior in those worlds but to us, it is actually one of the best in this world due to the severe lack of technology and craftsmanship making all of these. Peace in this modern society has kind of eroded our need to fight or I should say directed to other means of security. Hence, we are actually ripping their money off for selling such trashy items." Yun proceeded to take a large bite of the Triple Cheese Pizza.

"Besides, having your customers equipped with 'decent' equipment, allow them to fight better in subsequent dungeons. If not, they will never progress forward and we cannot sell stronger dungeons out in the future." Yun laughed at the entire scheme created by the system.

"Alright, if that's the case. What shall we do for the Goblin and Zither Mistress Dungeon Instance? I mean, I really like the new model of dungeon instance the system had created with the Great Wall of China but I believe we need to revamp the older dungeons to catch up with the new trend." Jin reflected on the two days of sales and also realised something.

"Some of the customers also feedback that we do not have enough food variety and some are asking for the plum sake wine from the Emerald Mountain Hot Spring to be available in the store too." Jin showed a look of concern through his deeply furrowed brow.

"Jin, you are demanding too much. I do not think you could complete everything you want that quickly" Yun chuckled a little.

"To be the best dungeon supplier, I think it is fairly reasonable to be demanding a lot of myself." Jin shrugged his shoulders.

"Then I shall be expecting a lot from you tomorrow and I would like a coffee, please." Zeru mysteriously appeared which he then sat beside Yun.

"Good Evening Master Zeru, here to check on your disciple?" Yun asked Zeru as she gobbled the last part of the second slice of pizza and patted her stomach.

"Actually, it's already morning and yes you are right. I am telling him the objectives of his training so he would have some mental preparation for tomorrow's training." Zeru thanked Jin for the coffee.

"That is actually quite kind of you. Usually, most masters do not even reveal their plans to their disciples." Yun commented.

"So what are the objectives for tomorrow's training, Master?" Jin asked.

"You said you wanted to improve your dungeon instance and you do not have sufficient food variety. In addition, I need your proficiency in Bam and Boo up. So how about we do all three at once?" Zeru explained to Jin before he sipped his Black Ivory coffee.

"Ah, such wonderful coffee." Zeru enjoyed it.

"Then I guess, it will be a rough day tomorrow..." Jin sighed but he knew what he was getting into. He needed to improve himself to get stronger monsters and if Zeru can help him obtain food ingredients, perhaps he might not need to always rely on the mission rewards.

Zeru wanted to make some small talk after his coffee but it was getting late so he took his leave to not bother Jin for too long.

Just as Jin and Yun closed the store and were walking back home, Yun remembered she had forgotten to mention something to Jin. "Oh yes, Jin. You had completed the Level 2 Dungeon Supplier mission after the tremendous sales from the past two days. I shall reveal to you your rewards after your training. Perhaps this might be some motivation for you."

"Hahaha! Although I look forward to it, I am a little scared since its Zeru." Jin bitterly laughed.

"Just try your best. You will prevail." Yun smiled at Jin as they both returned back home.

Chapter 79 The Start of Zeru's Training

Jin knew that he had been expelling the bad waste from his body for the past week or so. Hence, instead of cultivating in his room, he went to the toilet near the kitchen to cultivate. It had a bigger space than the bathroom in his room. It was a rather pitiful place to cultivate but it was easy to clean the waste away in the morning. Not to mention, he could just wake up, have a shower and in a few steps, there would be food available in the kitchen.

"I think I could not get any lazier..." Jin woke up after a restful cultivating sleep early in the morning. Being at Grade 3 allowed him to sleep less and still be able to perform his daily work without harming his health. He figured at Grade 4, all he needed was two or three hours of uninterrupted sleep to survive each day. However, that would inadvertently affect his cultivation process since his cultivation style was based on sleeping while cultivating: the Nineteen Lazy Astral Panda technique.

Jin changed into a black tracksuit with a white shirt so it would be easier for him to move around later. A notification appeared on his phone and it was Zeru stating that he would be waiting for him in the shophouse.

"Yun, I will be leaving first!" Jin shouted out loud before he left the house and took a jog to the shophouse. As he got in from the side door, Zeru was already sitting at one of the barstools with his eyes closed and hands folded.

"Have your breakfast, then we will proceed," Zeru continued to speak with his eyes closed. Jin acknowledged his orders, took a few onigiris from the bar counter cabinet and started to eat in peace. Jin then noticed that Zeru was in a different outfit than his usual green hakama. It was maroon red in colour and it suited his long yellow hair that was tied into a ponytail.

"Ready?" Zeru opened one of his eyes and stared at Jin.

"Yes, I am." Jin nodded his head as he hastily swallowed the last bit of rice from the onigiri to drink a cup of water.

"Good, now put this on." Zeru threw a parcel at Jin and when he opened it, he discovered a set of green wristbands and ankle bands.

"Are these the infamous 100kg wristbands and ankle bands once they are activated?" Jin asked in a tongue in cheek manner to lighten the mood a little.

"Close enough. Just wear those and we will start training. Yun gave me permission to open portals just for your training." Zeru maintained his seriousness and snapped his fingers, opening up a portal, while Jin followed as he put on the bands.

When Jin arrived from the other side of the portal, there was nothing in sight but barren land all around him with a campsite prepared beside a large tree. The soil was grey in colour and the sun was shining so brightly that Jin felt like he was burning up. Thankfully, the enormous tree provided some shade from the blazing sun.

Right behind him was Zeru wearing a circular straw hat he picked up from the campsite. "They call this place the Farm World and the system assisted me to purchase this land from the authorities." Zeru seemed to be untying a small satchel from his waist.

"The land in this world is extremely fertilised and they have the blessing of their earth elementals which allowed the land to produce crops within a day or two. I have checked the time dilation with Yun and it is about half a day for 2 hours of your current Earth."

"So I have roughly a day's worth of time here before I start my shift back on Earth?" Jin checked his watch.

"Yes, and this is your objective." Zeru passed the satchel to Jin and when he checked it, he found a bunch of seeds.

"I will be generous to you as this your first time training. Grow these seeds within 5 days or I will leave your Bellator group." Zeru eyes glowed intensely and Jin realised he was not kidding.

"But Shifu, I have no knowledge regarding farming at all and if I do 10 hours worth of work simultaneously, it might jeopardise the store's intake of customers." Both Jin and Zeru had a mutual understanding that they should not affect the shop's opening hours. However, the way Jin phrased his reply sounded like an excuse since Zeru noticed Jin was already showing some mental distress at the scale and magnitude of the task at hand.

"Do not worry, I will take care of the necessary details, All you need to do is plough the land, place the seeds, and water them when needed. When you are not around, I will freeze the germination of the seeds." Jin heard a voice from behind but all he saw was a tree. A tree...? Jin quickly looked up and realised it was indeed the tree that was talking.

"Aren't you the Sakura Tree Treant in the Zither Mistress Dungeon?" Jin was taken aback that he felt the monster looked very familiar and it was talking to him in his own language.

"Hah, I am more than a thousand years old. I have listened enough to speak the language of Human." The Sakura Tree Treant replied with a hearty guffaw.

"This is Shu, he will be the caretaker of this farm when you are away tending to your store. Old Shu, I will be leaving my disciple in your care." Zeru thanked Shu for his cooperation in the training of his disciple.

"No worries, it has been a long time since I have bullied a new budding. Hahahahah!" Both Shu and Zeru laughed loudly and left Jin feeling slightly awkward.

"Anyways, those bands that you wore are magnetic bands." Zeru snapped his finger once more and Jin immediately fell to the ground with his legs closed together and his arms spread out wide like a cross. Jin felt an intense pain in his torso area as both of his hands were repelling each other. He then gathered some chi to power his muscles to maintain the movements, but it was barely enough to not feel any pain for the moment.

"The armbands will repel while the ankle bands will attract. If you put all four bands close enough together, you will probably be squeezed into a ball." For the first time, Jin saw Zeru smile widely.

"Is he a closet sadist?" Jin struggled to maintain his chi in his arms and shoulders.

"With this handicap, plough the land, sow the seeds and water them. Shu will handle the rest of it. I will be back in 2 days time to check on your progress." Zeru waved his hand and teleported away.

"Understood, Shifu." Jin bowed his head even though he was on the floor.

"Haha Budding! Although the ground is extremely fertile, which makes it easy for your seeds to grow, you need lots of strength to break the ground, else you would be going nowhere." Shu spoke as he looked at Jin trembling.

"I will do what I can..." Jin was not adept in the circulation of his chi. For the past few fights that he was in, all he do was blast the chi via his technique. Learning how to control his chi to maintain his muscle movement from the properties of the magnets while ploughing the land would indeed be a hassle.

"I have to do this, if not Zeru will leave the group..." Jin gritted his teeth and tried to stand up. He knew this Master was the real deal and it would be his loss if he could not complete his training.

"Hahaha, seeing a young budding struggling again. Brings back some memories." Shu thought to himself as he watched Jin silently for now.

Chapter 80 Young 'Budding'

"Come on Budding, move your feet. We do not have all day!" Shu was waving its branches, trying to encourage Jin to stand up. However, each time he tried to do that, the magnets on his wristband would be attracted to his right ankle band. It made him adopt a fetal position where his back was leaned forward, head bowed, limbs were bent and drawn closed to the torso.

"Just a question, why are you calling me Budding? Not bud or seedling?" Jin asked with his face planted on to the ground. He was getting tired of not being able to move the way he wanted.

"Ohhh, are you lecturing me now?" Shu uprooted his own root and smacked Jin lightly with it.

"Ouch! Why are you hitting me?" The root somehow managed to hit his butt.

"Then why are you lecturing me? I am older!" Shu attacked helpless Jin again.

"That does not mean you are right! Ow!" Jin managed to evade the strike for the first time. The root broke the ground effortlessly but Jin was too busy trying to avoid its attack that he did not notice. Nevertheless, he got smacked at the butt again by Shu. At the rate of Shu being needlessly provoked, Jin will indeed have a flower budding out of his butt by the end of the day.

"I will call you whatever I like. Budding!" Once again, Shu lifted his root and wanted to smack poor Jin but Jin rolled around on the ground. It was the basis of Panda Tumbling a movement skill he had read briefly in the cultivation manual. Jin did not know that it would be useful in this situation. However, the more he tried to evade, the more violent and frequent the thrashing became.

"Well. you do not make any sens- Wait wait wait I'll like to parley!" Shu finally withheld its root and gave Jin a chance to talk.

"How about a compromise? You call me seedling and I shall do a favour for you!" Jin was gasping for air after rolling crazily around on the barren ground.

"How about accepting the word budding!" Shu was still angry that Jin tried to correct him.

"Before that, why are you insistent on the word budding?" Jin was really curious. Was Shu really arrogant to not change his ways or did something happen to him?

"Because..." Shu was dumbfounded by Jin's question and tried to search his memories but all he could remember was a scene of a married couple carrying a newborn baby girl. He clearly remembered that was the first time its sakura flowers were beginning to grow.

"Look! The tree is finally budding!" The mother was rocking the sleeping baby girl as she pointed at one of the sakura buds from the tree.

"Hahahha, our efforts to revitalise this ancient tree worked! How about commemorating the tree's revitalisation and her birth by inscribing her name on this tree? If she ever feel that she lost her calling, this old ancient tree may act as a symbol of strength and stability for her?" The father spoke with much kindness in his voice as he kissed his baby child on her forehead.

"You druids trust your trees too much." The mother asked her significant other to hold the baby and she weaved a spell in midair with two fingers.

A magical symbol appeared and an egg emerged out of the magical symbols. The moment the mother grabbed the egg, it cracked and a small white snake with red eyes popped out in front of her. To her pleasant surprise, the baby snake had its first contact with their cute little baby girl and it immediately slithered towards her to lick.

"Well, that saved me a lot of effort for imprinting my gift to our baby girl." The mother chuckled

"Then I shall say the same to you. You beast summoners trust your animals too much." The father laughed heartily as he passed the baby to his wife.

"Not funny, dear. What are you going to name our child?" The mother gently caressed the bark of the ancient tree.

"Have we already not decided? Ke Mi. Cute and sweet." The father laughed loudly again as he inscribed the name on the Sakura Tree with a few other druidic symbols on it.

"I do hope the seeds of these young budding sakura flowers will eventually grow into magnificent trees too." At that point when the father placed the druidic symbols on the tree, Shu was born.

As Shu was reminiscing the past, it unknowingly released his chi through the gentle swaying of its leaves and infused with the memories of his past. Jin who was in desperate need of chi from the overexertion of his chi absorbed Shu's chi and learnt the past of his awakening.

Treants are fairly unique creatures as they were one of the many helping hands of nature. The chi they released were similar to how normal trees produced oxygen. Both the environment and cultivators can easily harness the chi treants released into the ecosystem or body and converting it for their own use.

"Isn't that the Zither Mistress?" Jin remarked to himself.

"You know her? I will call you seedling if you can find her for me." Shu heard Jin and realised he could be absorbing its chi and possibly read its memories too.

"Hahahahah! What are you talking about? That girl is in the same dungeon as you!" Jin could not believe if Shu was joking.

"What? How can that be? That girl with that evil aura within her? You must be kidding me!" Shu shook its branches vigorously.

"I am clearly not joking with you." For some reason, Shu's chi was churning wildly within Jin and he managed to get up slowly from the fetal position although it took a lot of concentration.

Jin painstakingly took his phone out of his pocket and tapped the monster app with all his effort to show Shu the stats of Zither Mistress. Suddenly, a bright light shone out from his phone and Zither Mistress was riding the Great White Snake right in front of Jin.

"How did she even appear?" Jin immediately looked at his phone and saw that the picture of Zither Mistress had disappeared from the stats profile.

"Is that really her?" Shu bent its trunk and looked at her closely. However, instead of letting Shu look at her, the Great White Snake brought Zither Mistress to the back of Shu where the druidic symbols were inscribed.

It signalled her to touch Shu and though she was initially hesitant, she plucked her courage up and laid her palm on the symbols. At that instant, a burst of warm light enveloped Zither Mistress and the Great White Snake. "It really is her..." Jin saw a tear dropped from Shu's face on its upper trunk. The lush green foliage it initially had, immediately grew young buds of sakura flowers out of its stalks.

"Ke Mi..." This was the first time the Zither Mistress spoke and she teared upon touching the druidic symbols. The young buds immediately bloomed into sakura flowers and petals started to fall as if to reminisce the scene when Shu had first awakened.

"Seedling. You have done me a great service for finding my creator's daughter." Shu bowed slightly to Jin.

"Please Shu, I didn't do anything at all. The system conveniently placed the two of you together." Jin waved off and refused to accept any thanks.

"Ahh, regardless I believe the first part of your training is completed." Shu chuckled as it asked Jin to look around him. The majority of the thrashing that Jin evaded had thoroughly softened the land. In addition, the tear fell from Shu's wooden eyes was a Tear of the Treant. A fairly precious item, if collected, which had the ability to enrich this barren land.

"All you need to do now is to plough the land. For an old treant, I'm really nice aren't I? Now, off you go Seedling. Continue your training as I catch up with young Ke Mi." Shu shook its branch as if asking Jin to move away from them.

"Oh, and the copper hoe is right beside the tent." Shu then started talking to Ke Mi, the Zither Mistress.

"Speaking of copper, I guess the system's phone is indeed omnipotent for it not to be affected by such strong magnetic waves." Jin thought to himself as he controlled his muscles and walked like a tin man towards the tent.