

Mystical 791

Chapter 791: Qualifier Match 1

As he was watching the news in his dorm, someone knocked on his door.

Garen switched off the tablet, stood up and opened the door.

Aier walked in with a rather angered look on her face.

“What happened to you?” Garen felt strange.

“It’s nothing. It’s just that I’ve got a clear picture of Mina’s condition back at home,” Aier closed the door as he sat down and poured himself a cup of water. “What were you doing? Why is there a strange medicine stench in the room?”

He frowned as he looked at the messy dorm. There were still papers left on the ground, which had previously been used to hold the stones a moment ago. There was still a little bit of remaining White Peacock Powder on it.

“Let me clean it up,” Garen rolled the papers on the ground and threw them into the dustbin. He then went to take a cloth and wiped the powder clean from the ground.

Aier watched Garen bustling about as he leaned onto the sofa and continued speaking.

“Mina’s family had failed their business investment and had lost a huge sum of money. They now owe a huge amount of debt.”

Garen recalled the girl who kept visiting him when he was admitted to the hospital. Although he didn’t have all of Nonosiva’s memories, he wouldn’t forget people who had treated him well. From his point of view, he could see that Mina was truly being friendly towards Nonosiva. There was no intention and she really just wanted to be friends.

"How much does it affect her?" he pondered for a while before asking.

Aier sighed as he was not surprised by Garen's calm tone. Nonosiva had always been like this, quiet and introverted. For him to ask this much meant that he was very concerned with the topic at hand.

"It may affect her tuition fee next year."

"Tuition fee..." Garen nodded. The Blackboard's annual tuition fee was seventy thousand. It might not be a lot for the wealthy students but this amount was astronomical to the typical households. Seventy thousand was the entire income of a typical family for a year and there were many families who couldn't even earn that much.

"I'll think of something when I get back," Aier stayed silent for a while before speaking once more.

"What idea can you come up with? Where's Mina? What does she have to say about this?" Garen poured himself a cup of water, sat down and drank it.

"What else can she do? She plans to head out and work to earn her tuition fee for next year. There was another girl who was in the same situation as her. It was her junior and her family wasn't well off as well and decided to work outside so that she could afford to study. The job was introduced by her junior." Helplessness was written all over Aier's face. "Before I came to your place, I'd visited her and she looked very tired and had lost a lot of weight."

Garen nodded.

"Don't get hasty with Mina's situation. I may have some idea."

"You? What idea can you have?" Aier's voice was raised by a few octaves. "You yourself owe the professor at least a hundred thousand."

As he noticed that Garen didn't seem anxious in the least, he started to feel uneasy about the whole thing.

“You’re being impatient,” Garen shook his head. “Impatience won’t solve anything and will make everything worse.”

“Yes... I’ve lost myself...” Aier himself realized that he had lost his cool as he lowered his head and tone.

“It’s exactly because I’m a hundred thousand plus in debt that I have to think of a plan on my own...” Aier broke him off before Garen managed to finish speaking.

“Whatever. I’ll go home and tell my dad about it and hopefully he has some useful idea. You should take your time to rest.” Aier didn’t wish to speak further as he stood up. “I’ll go first.”

Garen watched as he stood up and slammed the door as he left. Afterward, he stood up, didn’t say a word and just sighed. There was currently social unrest as the state of the economy was heavily dependent on the policy of the government. With the policy being changed every now and then, this sort of scenario would surface every once in a while. This was the current state of the world where the people had no power and could do nothing but to stand around and be butchered.

The Blackboard’s qualifier match was being held in the shadow underneath the huge battleship. This shade was Blackboard Academy’s safest place.

A silver circular light beamed down from the battleship above. From afar, it looked like a very fine silver gauze that could barely be seen. Inside the silver gauze was a huge circular arena that spanned thousands of meters in diameter.

The white arena had been segregated into a lot of divisions, and each division was surrounded by robots that constantly maintained a protective barrier. Teams from every faculty started to pour into the arena.

The teams walked in one by one as the cheers from the student spectators could be heard in all directions. There even were family members and students from other academies who came to witness the match. Cheers came in waves and there even were holograms of fireworks as well.

“The current teams that are entering the arena are the teams from year B2. The top three representatives are surprisingly all women and by comparison, there was only a male competitor who barely qualified. This year seems even more one-sided...”

The broadcast was filled with passion as it excitedly introduced each qualified teams.

Other than Garen who stood among the class C5 members, there also was Fervale and the second-ranked Sara who stood straight. Fervale, as the first ranker, stood slightly in front of her and these three didn't stand out so much among the other outstanding contestants from other classes.

“Look at the class in front of us on the right,” Fervale suddenly whispered. Among the cheers from the crowd, his voice went directly into Garen and Sara's ear through the communication device. “Be cautious of the black-haired woman in the middle.”

Garen and Sara's gaze shifted towards where he'd mentioned and in the middle of the three-man team of that class, a black short-haired woman was patting a fragile looking fan with long pink hair on the shoulder as she talked to her. She seemed very relaxed and an unparalleled confidence could be seen through her gaze. Her hair was thorny and by her hand gestures, she seemed to be very bold and gave off a vibe of extreme confidence.

“That girl is Merseus, one of the top two in year C. I lost to her last year and didn't last one minute against her,” although Fervale said this calmly, a glimpse of dissatisfaction could be seen in his gaze. However, no one really knew he was angry or sad as he didn't express himself a lot.

“Merseus' melee Control is at least Level Two and she is a very powerful opponent. Both of you are ranged shooters so be careful to not let her get close to you,” Fervale cautioned.

“Understood,” Sara and Garen nodded.

Garen had tested his combat capabilities without the Moonfang and he knew that he wasn't even qualified for a level 1. With his actual skill, he could only run with the Mech but couldn't evade any incoming attacks. Compared to the real elites, he was extremely weak.

His strengths were actual combat outside the Mech but he was a complete novice in the Mech. Although he had experience in controlling the Buddha Mother, this world seemed different as the spiritual control was totally different than of the Buddha Mother. In this world, Willpower seemed to be the will of every single cell and was related to the cells' biofield.

Garen wondered if his Willpower would improve he increased his Living Secret Technique, the Hellfrost Peacock Technique to a certain level. However, the current him was still very weak.

With his current condition, his opponent, Merseus was considered a very powerful foe.

"Other than this person, there's another person who is considered the strongest in our year C," Fervale was telling them the situation inside the arena. His household held some incredible amount of power and he naturally had all these intel on the enemies. In order to raise his year's overall rank, he decided to feed his team members the opponent's information to slightly increase the chance of winning.

"His name is Bally Visalia, but everyone calls him Bally. He hasn't arrived yet but that man is extremely powerful so you have to be extremely cautious against him!" Fervale started to look frightened even by just mentioning his name.

"Powerful?" Sara squinted her eyes. "How powerful is he?"

Fervale glanced at Sara, "Bally has a nickname called the Mech Grinder. At least half of his opponents have had eighty percent of their Mech's body ground to dust with just his hands. His weapons are a pair of high-speed arc saws and have torn apart at least ten Mechs, killed three and heavily injured twelve people during the academy's entrance exam."

Huff...

Sara inhaled a mouthful of cold air. While the arc saw was incredibly powerful, it required a lot of energy as well. With two arc saws, a standard mech model could only last half a minute. This meant that the person who used this sort of weapon was either crazy or very confident with himself.

"Bally and Merseus..." Garen understood that he was determined to obtain the champion title during this competition. As a new student, he had his privileges where being the top three of a faculty would

allow him to be admitted to the academy's elite teams. He could also win a good amount of a hundred thousand Universal Unit as a reward or at least ten thousand Universal Units for placing in the top ten.

Rumor had it that one could even order a custom mech as a reward if one was placed first.

To have a personal Mech, especially the unique ones where it could be controlled by Willpower, was something very luxurious. Practically every Mech in this world was made with the biomechanical nuclear as the core, which could tap into a person's Willpower. It was a very advanced technology.

Hence, even a Mech of the most basic model would cost at least a hundred thousands Universal Points.

Most importantly, the first placed would even be awarded a Mech Control Certificate. This certificate was as powerful as the other international certificates where one could legally own their own Mech, which was equivalent to a Pilot's certificate.

What troubled Garen was that his Willpower was still too weak. Without the Moonfang, moving would be incredibly hard and the Moonfang was obviously not suited for a drawn-out battle.

"I can only end the battle quickly," he was very determined.

"Now let's welcome the representatives of the class C5. Among year C, the most promising student and top five student is Fervale, the class' first seat..." it was their turn to go into the arena. Fervale led the way while Garen and Sara followed behind. The trio wore a unique red competition uniform as they walked on the black carpet, entering the circular arena through the entrance. Students of the same class shouted from both sides and there even were people whistling endlessly.

Chapter 792: Qualifier Match 2

At these times, the class would see everyone as their classmate. They would unite and cheer on the three with sincerity, and as the rank of the class increased, the students would be treated better. For example, with every increment in ranking, their tuition fee would be discounted by ten percent. Hence

their ranking would affect their tuition fee. If they were ranked third, then they only had to pay for thirty percent of the original tuition fee. If they were ranked first, then they only had to fork out ten percent of the original tuition fee and also receive permission to use the privileged facilities in the academy. These unique facilities were only opened to the talented students and hence were used as a means to intensify the competition among the students.

The strong would become stronger and the weak would become mediocre if they didn't put in more effort.

As Fervale walked on the aisle, he looked very calm and casual. On the other hand, Sara felt a little uncomfortable; after all this was her first time in this situation. As for Garen, he acted in such a way that he was slightly uncomfortable as this would suit his identity and family background.

Compared to the cheers towards Merseus, the three of them didn't stand out and the only ones cheering were their classmates. The cheers could only be heard from their back as they walked past.

The crowds on both sidelines were like boiling water as they started to release their negative emotions.

"Arelo! Arelo! Arelo!"

"Bally! Bally! Bally!! Shred him!!"

Their supporters started cheering loudly.

The areas that spanned less than two hundred meters on both sides were spacious black fields, which were filled with students shouting everywhere.

Two teams walked on the black carpet.

The leader in front of the team in front of them was a muscular man with yellow spiky hair. He had a scar that propagated from his right lips as if someone had tried to slit open his mouth to the right and it looked rather brutal.

The team in the middle was lead by a blue-haired man who had a pair of silver earrings. With a faint smile on his face, he looked very seductive with his fit body, He too had a faint scar on the side of his face, giving off a wild vibe.

Fervale turned his head around and looked at his team members behind him.

“Caus Arello should be ranked number three in terms of strength for our year. He’s better than me and his strength is currently unknown. Rumor has it that he’s the strongest challenger against Bally. As one of the first seat that appeared out of nowhere, he basically has no reputation.”

He looked at the two of them by his side. Sara’s fear could be seen in her eyes and while Garen looked very calm, his fist was clenched ever so slightly, which was a sign of him losing his cool.

“Nono, you have to be careful. Arello is the brother of the trial member you’ve injured. He will most likely target you during the competition.”

Garen nodded without saying a word.

As the contestants entered the arena, they entered into their designated sections.

The whole arena was separated into sections by huge amounts of Source Mechs and the schedule of the match was decided by the previous ranking.

Garen and the other two were in class C5. After their previous class’ seniors were promoted to class B, they had left them the rank of thirteen, which was neither low nor high. However, only those who were in the top ten were able to enjoy the tuition fee reduction and special facilities.

There were a total of fifty-six classes in their year and it was undoubtedly difficult to be in the top ten while competing against these elites.

The sweet sounding female broadcaster started to arrange the schedule for all the elites.

All classes would be arranged according to their previous rankings during this qualifier match. Two teams would go against each other and the winner would proceed to the next match. This elimination process would continue until the final match.

After broadcasting the rules, while waiting for their opponents to arrive in the arena, each competitor was put under their respective coaches' care and arrangement, who escorted them before the competition started.

Instructor Hamm stood together with the Mech battle class's teacher Wesson as they talked to the three of them one last time. They were standing by the wall that separated the arena into a square box. Instructor Hamm didn't seem to be fazed by the loud noises and staff walking past them as he patted Fervale's shoulder firmly.

"Fervale. Remember your key moment! Your attack is smooth enough but as a melee Mech, the only thing you have to take note of is to get close to them. Since your marksmanship isn't bad as well, I suggest you can fight in both close and long range so that you can fully utilize your advantages. If needed, you can throw the gun away and focus on melee combat."

Fervale nodded.

"I understand."

Hamm softened his grip and turned to Sara.

"Sara, you're best at shooting a moving target while moving. You will be fine as long as you do this. I know you couldn't utilize your full strength during the trial, but I hope you can give it your all now as this isn't just for the class, it's for you yourself!"

"I understand," Sara nodded her head as she tried to calm herself down.

"Lastly, Nono," Instructor Hamm stood in front of Garen. "I know that your body hasn't fully recovered yet and you're not at your best. Don't feel burdened by this. You have a lot of potential and you're as good as Sara when it comes to shooting. Perhaps you can fight in a style similar to hers."

"I understand, Instructor," Garen nodded as well to show that he was prepared.

"Come have a drink!" the nutritionist behind Instructor Hamm came forward as he passed the nutritional drinks to them. He then pulled Fervale, who was about to drink the water to a side as he personally coached him. It was very obvious that he had placed all hopes onto Fervale.

Garen and Sara then sat quietly in their seats as they waited for their schedule to be broadcasted.

Soon the schedule was released.

"Class C6 will fight against class C5. the opponents will be chosen freely and the time of the competition is..."

Soon it was their time to fight. While the schedule was slightly delayed, C5 was still a class that ranked at the front.

After finishing the schedule announcement, the first match had officially begun.

A lot of huge monitors appeared in front of the crowd, which were at least ten meters tall. They were placed in all directions so that the spectators knew of the situation inside. What was shown on the screen were the minute details of the situation and the scene within the arena. Everything could be clearly seen as the protective barrier was transparent.

The whole setting was similar to the ancient Colosseum as the nobles, students, instructors, and even family members shouted passionately. As if it was a concert, some people had even created huge banners with some students' names on them.

Bam!

The first gunshot was fired and the battle had begun.

Suddenly, the whole arena was filled with excitement as countless pink light effect petals slowly descended. A levitating metal stage, which was the referee's seat, was placed underneath the battleship. There were dozens of referees and they were all designated to their respective battles.

The first match of the students had officially begun.

Garen listened quietly to the loud cheers which came in waves as he looked at the two black and white Mechs on the big screen.

"Every Mech is the same and the only difference between them is their colors," Sara, who was sitting beside Garen whispered.

"Now that we know who our opponents are. What plans do you have to fight against Class C6?" she seemed rather anxious as she tried to find a topic to talk about.

"There's none," Garen shook his head. "We just need to perform as usual." What he said was the truth. Although his Willpower was much stronger as compared to the original Nonosiva, his strength was dramatically reduced without the Moonfang.

The most important thing to him for this qualifier match was the hefty monetary reward and the qualification to be enlisted as an elite student, which was the ticket for him to enter the core of the academy. Once he had entered successfully, he would be able to know the academy's true strength.

Furthermore, he wouldn't be able to obtain upper-level training methods without being a part of the strong ones. As a precaution, the highest training method that could be bought in the market was only level 3. One would require solid backgrounds to obtain a level 4 training method, which could only be bought by the military. This meant that this world's strongest power was monopolized by the strong ones.

"If we can be ranked in the top three individually, then we will be able to be of great help to Mina by reducing the tuition fee and I would be able to repay Instructor Hamm for paying my surgical fee," deep down, Garen understood. "In addition, I will be able to become an elite student by placing in the top three. I will gain support from the academy's higher-ups and become a disciple of a professor inside the academy. My social status will definitely change instantly and my family's condition will improve greatly. Rumor has it that the family members of the elite students are so well taken care of that they get to

enjoy a huge bonus annually. In addition, they would definitely become a Field Level Officer if they were to enroll in the military. According to the Blackboard's arrangement, the elite's family members will be continued to be taken care of even if the elites have passed away."

Everyone who lived in Blackboard district would want this kind of valuable resources.

However, Blackboard was very strict towards this as they would choose their candidate through an elimination process. They even had a system to calculate the mortality rate of the elite students and at the same time, there was absolutely no loophole for favoritism and fraud.

During the past few days, Garen had done his research on the family background of the student that he'd injured. They'd bought out all the faculty instructors and a few general instructors to dismiss the application for surgical expenses at the regular meeting. One of the instructor's identity was an elite student alumnus.

Boom!

Suddenly a huge explosion forced Garen back into his senses.

The victor was already announced between the battles of two Mechs in the huge screen as the Black Mech raised up his Long Rifle and bowed in all directions.

The other white Mech was lying on the ground as smoke oozed out from its body. The pilot was dragged out of the Mech by the personnel and placed onto the rescuing machine as it sent him away. His condition was unknown.

The screen then clearly gave out a headline, detailing the condition of the injured.

Broken bones on both legs, a hole pierced through the abdomen and a portion of the intestines were plunged out. His head was drenched in blood and was currently in a coma. No one knew if he's dead or alive and he looked seriously injured. Perhaps his life would be in danger if he wasn't treated properly.

The students who didn't study in Blackboard gasped as if they'd seen the cruel side of the Blackboard Academy.

Garen understood well that it wouldn't be weird to have a few dozens heavily injured elites when thousands of elites were participating in the competition. After all, there even were injury incidents from the other academies. The Academy believed that one could only release their true potential when they were placed in a life-threatening condition.

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The matches began one after the other.

The highlights of the many competition areas kept flashing past the large screens, and at the same time, above the entire arena, there was a white anti-gravity warship. There were countless statistics about the wins and losses in the many arenas on the ship, as well as the scores between the different streams and classes, and the way the matches were going.

Garen watched the arena in front of him for a while, but it was not that interesting. They were all very standard shooting, or textbook examples of fighting. Although it looked very smooth, they were not actually very strong in true battle.

He glanced at the stats projected on the suspended screen.

'Bally: 1 win. Merseus: 1 win.'

This meant that both of them had already completed their battle. To be able to finish off their opponent in such a short time showed just how strong the two of them were.

The time passed by slowly, and finally, the announcer's voice reached them.

'Fervale from C5 vs. Carrie from C6.'

Beside him, Fervale stood up. As Instructor Hamm encouraged him on, he walked straight towards the entrance to the arena that had automatically opened up behind him.

Not far away, their classmates sitting in the audience stands all got up and looked their way. Mina and Aier were also among them, looking at Garen, but when they saw that he was still sitting in place with no intention to move, they sat back down as well.

Amidst the chaotic arena surroundings, they could only vaguely hear their classmates' cries of encouragement. That little bit of motivation was drowned out by the other sounds.

Garen sat quietly in his seat, one of his aims was to obtain top three in the qualifier match. If he wanted to get the true high-level training methods for free, he had to join the academy's elite squad. He knew this world very well now, the way to the top was held in the hands of those in power. If he wanted to obtain information about the power system here, the best way was to join a faction with sturdy influence and roots.

He heard the voices rising and falling around him, there was the commotion in the distance, and the surprised cries nearby.

Garen's heart was completely calm. According to Instructor Hamm's intel, if all went as expected, the top three this year would end up being a race between Bally, Caus Arelló, and Merseus.

"I think our Grade C has the competition in the bag this time. Bally, Caus, and Merseus, these three should be the main candidates for first place. The competition is actually just a match between the few of them," a young man sitting on Grade C's seat at the adjudicators' table said with a laugh.

On his right, a woman with red eyes and a ponytail looked down at the match below. The woman wore a Digital Monocle over her eye, with large amounts of statistics and information flashing across it. When she heard that, the woman pressed the lens and straightened up.

“Teacher probably made us come this time so that we could observe Merseus and Caus, to see which one of them was better suited to join us. Although they’re about the same in skill, their family backgrounds and personalities require a certain degree of deliberation as well.”

“Actually, some of the other candidates are pretty decent too, but the only ones whose overall abilities reach Level 2 are just the three of them. Even if the other excelling students have parts where they’ve reached Level 2, that would still only be for a subject or two, their overall power would not have reached a fundamental shift yet,” the man said, observing the other matches casually.

“But we can’t say that for sure either, what if there’s a black horse somewhere? Look, Verna and the others are also looking at the students this time, I bet they’re aiming for that Bally.” The woman’s gaze moved to another side.

There was a bearded man dressed in white, who was cleaning his teeth with a toothpick as he nonchalantly read the suspended display board.

The man glanced at them, and twisted his mouth.

“That guy’s a wild animal, he hasn’t given up since you beat him up last time. All he does every day is fight, how much of the academy’s resources has he used up on Mech repairs alone?”

“Exactly, if only everyone was like Angecena.” The red-eyed woman nodded slightly.

“What, you mean if they were all traumatized by you like he was?” The man gave the woman an odd look.

Not far away, at the adjudicators’ table on the other side.

Verna noticed that the two of them were looking his way.

“It’s that woman!” His expression grew rigid. “That crazy bitch is here too...”

“One of the three Level 4 Elites, Red-Eyed Medero. In the internal battles, many of her opponents sustained permanent disabilities thanks to her, and she has several tens of thousands of people’s worth of blood on her hands. She looks like an inconspicuous female student, but she’s a terrifying executioner who’s even more violent and bloodthirsty than our group,” a bespectacled male student said from behind Verna.

“That’s the woman that even First Seat Black Star once said stands the highest chance of inheriting the title of Black Star next.” When Verna saw that woman’s gaze move over to him, he felt as though someone had poured ice down his back. But in order to protect his male ego, he had no choice but to act wild and reckless, completely fearless. And he also took a toothpick out to clean his teeth...

“Be careful, in Medero’s faction, her teacher Simis is the vice principal. They’re one of the academy’s three main factions and have deep-rooted power. Recently, their influence in the school has been expanding, Vice Principal Simis seems like she might be planning to fight for the position of principal. The principal is getting on in the years now, there’s a high chance that their faction can win it,” the bespectacled boy reminded him softly.

Verna accidentally stuck the toothpick into his gum, and the pain made him sweat profusely, but still he maintained his tough-guy act. Sensing that the red-eyed monster over there was still looking at him, his heart began to bleed...

“Those monsters come here every year to grab the fresh blood, but you were just unlucky that you happened to bump into Red Eyes, who you offended before.” The bespectacled boy had also noticed that Verna’s mouth was bleeding, and he instantly looked sympathetic.

“As expected of Verna, you’re hard on others, but even harder on yourself. The toothpick drew blood, and you’re still completely impassive.” In the distance, Red-Eyed Medero looked impressed. “Back then, I let him go precisely because I admired this tough-guy style of his, our academy needs more hard-headed people who fight to the bitter end.”

The man beside her instantly looked at her strangely.

“Nonosiva from C5 vs. Bankar from C6.”

Before the match, Garen stood up, watching Fervale walk down with a calm expression. His opponent from the previous match was the other side's First Seat, the First Seats always fought each other, that was the academy's unspoken rule.

The other guy did not cause him much trouble, both were experts in high-speed movements, and they collided after zipping around for a bit.

Fervale's specialty was close-distance combat, so without using up too much energy, he used some of his basic sword techniques. From amidst the cold light, there was a shot of white light, as he had also managed to secretly prepare his Laser Cannon in the middle of the high-speed combat. That one shot landed on the opponent's cockpit. The C6 students from last year were very impressive, and managed to get very high positions, but the freshmen this year were nowhere near as capable. Their First Seat could fight with fluid movements, but that was the extent of it.

After winning with relative ease and getting off the stage, Fervale patted Garen's shoulder.

"Be slightly more careful, and you can win."

"Got it." Garen nodded, and walked towards the tunnel entrance behind him. As per usual, Hamm hugged him and instructed him softly, telling him not to panic no matter what, and what he should do.

"Nono! Good luck!!" He looked at the stage, and suddenly heard two voices. They were barely noticeable amidst the many cheers of the crowd, but Garen could still tell instantly that they were Aier and Mina.

He turned around, and waved at the two of them.

"Go! Cream 'em!"

Instructor Hamm pushed Garen lightly with a smile.

Garen gestured 'ok' behind him, and quickly entered the tunnel.

He wanted to use this Qualifier Match to test himself, just how far could his power when he merged his battle awareness with the Moon Fang.

Walking into the tunnel and into the Mech Room, he saw several pillars of white light shoot out from the inside, hitting the surface of the Mech.

This was a white humanoid Mech, it had square pieces of armor on its shoulders, and also two armguards on its arms and forearms. There was a spike like a fang coming from its chin over its shoulder, and like a cicada, the spike kept curving downwards and extending to his crotch. It seemed to be there as a protection system to help out with defense.

“This is one of the academy’s standard issue Mechs. A standard Level 1 Mech.” Garen looked at the humanoid Mech, five meters tall, with satisfaction.

Beep-beep. Beep-beep.

The reminder message beeped. He did not delay any longer and got onto the elevator. Rising with a whirr, he jumped out and into the open cockpit at the Mech’s chest.

Smack smack smack!

There were several sounds as the lighted control panel was powered on. He put on his helmet, and looking at the 360 degree view in front of him, the surround control system lit up with many small green LED lights and spinning model screens.

“Blackboard Model 1 Mech, activating...”

A deep digital voice spoke.

“Stat Mod, running...”

“Weapons System, running...”

“Power System, warming up...”

“All systems, final check.”

Garen put both hands onto the control panel, and placed the Moon Fang on the edge of the panel to his right, taking a deep breath.

“C534, Nonosiva, take off!!”

Psst!!

The huge Mecha abruptly shot out, flying out with a trail of blue flames coming from its back. It followed the pitch-black Launch Tunnel out into the outside world, like a white bird spreading its wings.

Kar slid out of the launch tunnel lightly, landing on the arena’s alloy floor and finding his footing. The Mech’s padded feet muted his footsteps on the floor.

The pitch-black humanoid Mech held two pitch-black short swords in its hands. Using his family’s special short sword fighting techniques, Kar could beat all the others and stand here as a representative of his class, facing the other classes. This was already a symbol of his strength, or so it seemed to him.

Listening to the rise and fall of the cheers and angry shouts outside, Kar felt as though that was the glory that rose up for his sake.

“Standing in an arena like this sure gets the blood boiling...”

He felt slightly self-intoxicated, felt his body begin to burn slowly from top to bottom. His condition was unprecedentedly good, and he was already one of those rare competitive fighters, the more high-pressure a situation was, the better his condition would be.

Soon enough, the opposite arena wall opened up automatically to reveal a tunnel, and his opponent's Mech also slid out lightly, landing steadily. The opponent had chosen two Laser Cannons that had come with the Mech, the pitch-black barrels as large as a bowl. With one long and slender white cannon on each side, it did look somewhat gruesome.

"Let the match begin!" the mechanical voice spoke.

"Heh!" Kar activated his Mech abruptly. His overall power was Middle Level 1, so he rushed straight at the opponent, his Mech moving along a somewhat difficult S-shaped path.

But he had barely gone a hundred meters out when the opposing cannon barrels suddenly lit up with two beams of white light. Kar felt his scalp go numb, the two white light cannons were aimed at exactly the place where he would land.

"How is that possible!?"

Brr!!

Two lasers precisely hit the same spot, the black Mech's cockpit, with an eerie sound, and blew through the Mech's defensive armor in almost an instant.

Bam!

The black Mech exploded, and the safety system shot Kar out just in time. He flew out high, and was intercepted by the medical robots around the arena.

Kar's disbelieving face was still lingering in the rescue cabin.

He had no idea how he lost, but the battle was already over.

"Battle complete, time taken, five seconds. Winner, C534 Nonosiva," the mechanical voice announced directly.

The white Mech Garen was controlling stood on the spot, not moving an inch, the two Laser Cannons on either side of it smoking slightly from the barrel.

Sitting inside the Mecha, he was completely calm.

He glanced at the Moonfang beside him, it was not really stirring. It had just flashed with a little white light just now, but now it was completely quiet again.

"Try to reduce piloting and battle times as much as possible, settle it quickly." This was Garen's plan.

In the first match, Kar was given an instant KO.

This shooting technique that concentrated the two Laser Cannon shots in one split second was wholly reliant on Garen's powerful battle experience and his piloting precision. Using the Moonfang's control as the main element, he tweaked it slightly, and achieved such a powerful offensive effect.

This instantaneous battle also attracted many gazes straight away.

Beside the arena

“The rascal! To think he has such a trick up his sleeve.” Instructor Hamm could not keep the smile off his face. “Twin Laser Cannon Concentrated Fire, this is a Level 2 Laserfire Control technique, at the very least! I never thought that he would reveal such a hand out of nowhere like that. And he fired while his opponent was moving so quickly, too.”

Fervale’s expression was solemn as well.

“Very impressive, even I would have a hard time against that hit.”

“His combined powers are already approaching Level 2, just with that alone,” Sara could not help but say with envy. “Given that it wasn’t just a coincidence.”

Nonosiva had always been quiet, and was unknown in his class. No one would have expected him to have such a powerful skill.

“Shouldn’t we be happier the stronger he is?” Hamm laughed out loud, and patted their shoulders. “Go on and prepare for the next round.”

In the audience stands

Enviously, Aier looked at Garen’s Mech, standing in the arena after having killed his opponent in an instant.

“That guy’s actually this strong? How come I never knew?”

Mina’s mood was improving for once. Although her face was still somewhat pale, she was still genuinely happy for her friend’s win.

“This is the first time the freshmen are showing off their true power in battle, and this was his progress so far this year. Who knows, he might actually be able to get that tuition fee exemption. Nono had been exceptional ever since he took the entrance exam, it’s perfectly normal for him to have improved like that.

She was also very tempted by the tuition fee exemption, after all, that would save her a large amount of money. Right now, her family had practically stopped paying for her tuition fees altogether, her father was deep in debt and on the run, while her mother drowned herself in her tears all day long. It was hard for them to even live, they relied on her to work part-time every day and bring back just enough money to make ends meet.

When Aier heard that, his expression turned guilty.

"I misjudged him. Later I'll apologize to him properly.

They lost two out of three matches, so Class C6 gave up and entered the loser match-ups.

In the second round, they fought against Class C8. Just like in the first round, Fervale finished off his opponents easily. He seemed to have been triggered by Garen, so he just rushed up and immediately hacked around, his sword unnaturally swift, fierce, and precise. Within a few strokes, he had already chopped the opponent's First Seat into sticks, and victory was his.

As for Garen, he still used the same Twin Barrel Concentrated Fire, but this time the first Concentrated Fire missed because they were too far apart. His opponent nearly closed the distance, but the second hit still landed at close distance, and the result was the same as the first match. His opponent was frustrated that they could not use any of their moves at all, other than running, they could not show off any other skills before their cockpit was insta-killed. The opponent that came down was a pretty little girl, who fell face-first into the female instructor's arms and cried her eyes out.

When Garen walked out of the Mech tunnel, he was still as expressionless as ever. The Moonfang could control the Laser Cannon Fire easily, but the Concentrated Fire skill was a product of his own refinement. If it weren't for the fact that performing too excellently would seem unnatural, he would have finished off his opponent with the very first shot.

The third round, the fourth, the fifth...

The matches went on and on, but Garen barely used any energy at all.

And he had also figured out the rhythm of the Moonfang's usage, if he was just using it normally, for a duration of fewer than fifteen minutes, there would be no problem. And once he approached the fifteen-minute limit, it would grow hotter and hotter. This thing seemed to be the core component of some high-level instrument.

As the matches continued on, the opposing classes of the same level also began to understand Garen better.

He faced several opponents consecutively, but not once did he shoot more than three times. He would always finish off his opponent within the first or second shot, even the First Seat of C5, Fervale's performance was outshone by his.

After defeating more than ten battles in a row, Class C5 was solidly placed in eighth place. If Sara had not lost a few matches, they would be unbeaten now.

And Garen, after beating several opponents in a row, finally met an opponent that could not be defeated in one hit that afternoon.

'C534 Nonosiva vs C1153 Cassardin.'

The mechanical voice spoke.

When the voice spoke, be it Garen or Fervale, their hearts both gave a little jolt.

"No, wait! Cassardin is Class Eleven's First Seat! Why would they have the First Seat placed third!" Instructor Hamm started yelling, getting out of his seat abruptly.

Beside him, Fervale gripped his fist tightly, lowering his head slightly.

"Isn't your First Seat Nonosiva, who's been hiding in third place?" a sarcastic voice said from beside them. It was a young man with a thin face, looking at Instructor Hamm with arms crossed in front of his chest and a cold gaze.

When he heard that, Fervale's head went even lower.

On the other hand, Garen sat quietly by the side, leaning on the wall, closing his eyes for a breather.

"Besides, it's just an unspoken rule in the academy for the First Seats to face each other, it's not compulsory. It's up to me how I want to arrange it," the thin-faced instructor said calmly.

"Pillbo!" Hamm glared at him angrily. "What are you thinking!?"

"What am I thinking? Hehe..."

The thin-faced instructor, Pillbo, gave a low laugh.

"I'm warning you! Don't mess around!" Hamm yelled loudly.

"Warning me? Hah!" Pillbo laughed coldly. "You're as naive as ever, Hamm."

"Nono's overall level is close to Level 2, he might not necessarily lose even when fighting the opponent's First Seat," Fervale interrupted suddenly.

The First Seat had to be at least Upper Level 1. Fervale seemed to be having a harder time winning sometimes, and it was not always as clear-cut as Garen's matches, but that was also because his opponents were stronger. And Garen had always been fighting their second or third seats.

This time, however, he was facing the First Seat. Now, this would really be troublesome.

Hamm hesitated.

"No problem, I can handle this," Garen replied calmly, opening his eyes.

He had always been facing garbage opponents, so he wanted to really fight once as well, to test just how strong he really was. Otherwise, there was no point in him fighting nothing but trash that died in one hit, no matter how many shots he had to fire.

“Be careful! That Pillbo is really heartless and cruel...” Hamm looked at Garen worriedly.

“It’ll be fine.”

The mechanical announcements began again.

Garen stood up, this time he was fighting as the First Seat. Once the match-up was announced, the audience on this side of the arena all started watching.

For a First Seat to face a Third Seat, there was nothing to say except that Garen’s earlier performance was extremely eye-catching. The match-up this time garnered a lot of attention as well. Slowly, as more and more classes got eliminated, the audiences behind these classes began to shift their attention to the opponents who had defeated their classes, hoping a new opponent would appear to take them down.

‘C534 Nonosiva vs C1153 Cassardin. Let the battle begin.’

Garen sat in the cockpit, looking at the black Mech opposite him carefully. It was used Twin Pistols, just like his previous Weapons System.

Before the starting call even faded, his opponent had already darted out with a whoosh, not to approach him, but instead moving at high-speeds to the right.

It was a very strange movement, they would pause occasionally, and sometimes take a small leap back. It seemed rather floaty and completely irregular.

Brr!

Garen's Twin Cannons fired simultaneously again, the shot ringing out abruptly, aimed straight for the black Mech's head control system. And then... for the first time, he missed. The black Mech tilted its head slightly, and the shot just brushed past, without causing any damage whatsoever.

"Eh?" Garen's heart grew serious, he had definitely felt 90% confident in that shot, it definitely had a high accuracy rate. But somehow it had missed.

The opponent was still constantly moving irregularly, and two gunshots shot out with a whooshing sound, but Garen dodged those as well.

Compared to his moving techniques, the opponent's shooting techniques were easily seen through by Garen.

"Should I try again? Is it a coincidence?" Garen pressed down the uncertainty in his heart.

Ka-chak, the twin barrels moved slightly, and a white light rose in the barrels slowly.

Brr!!

Two rays of white light drew out two white paths, shooting straight for the opponent's body like a bolt of straight lightning.

And then... they missed again.

The lasers bunched into one, and shot past from under the black Mech's hips and crotch, hitting the protective barrier behind it. It caused a series of ripples and then vanished.

"It's not a coincidence..." Garen's heart gave a jolt, and he watched the opponent's steps carefully. "These steps..."

“These steps... Gehrs Dance Steps... It’s the Gehrs family’s Level 2 avoidance steps...” a solemn-looking middle-aged woman said softly in the audience, looking down at the arena from among the seats for external family members who were here to watch. “To think that young Gehrs from the Gehrs family has such an ability.”

“As expected of a First Seat, every First Seat has Upper Level 1 power, even the weakest ones would have one or two aspects that have reached Level 2,” a white-haired old man beside her said while nodding. “We did right in coming to Blackboard this time, to think we could even witness these Dance Steps in such a low-level competition.” His expression was nostalgic. “I remember back then, Gehrs Zeno had used these steps to defeat the twelve elites from the East. These Level 2 steps are merely the rudimentary basics.”

“That is true, it’s already very impressive for young Gehrs to have such power at this age.” The woman nodded. “But his opponent is a pretty good choice as well, I saw the replays of the match just now, he’s very good at controlling the Laser Cannon fire, and his grasp of timing is not something just anyone could do.”

Chapter 795: Battle Situation 1

Garen stared at the Mech opposite him quietly. The Panoramic Mirror allowed him to see how the opponent kept moving in an irregular rhythm. These waves were completely arrhythmic, to the point where it seemed that his opponent could barely control this rhythm themselves. It was a very strange feeling.

“So these are this world’s medium-high Mech techniques, huh? They are indeed unique.” He observed his opponent’s movements carefully, as for the occasional laser attack, it was completely useless. He just needed to turn lightly to dodge them easily.

“One more time.”

Garen tried to raise his hand.

Brr-brr!

Two Laser Cannons shot at his opponent, one after the other, drawing out two long white lines.

He did not concentrate their power this time, and had instead fired off the two shots separately. The black Mech opposite was immediately slightly flustered, it used those strange steps to avoid the first shot, but could not completely avoid the second shot. The shot grazed its waist pretty badly, and wafts of green smoke began to rise from it.

Garen glanced at the time. Even including his observation time, it had only been eight minutes, so there was still a long time until the Moonfang's limit.

Brr-brr! He fired off two more consecutive lasers, each locking down one of the two sides that the black Mech had to move in. This time, Garen put more precision into his aim, the first shot hitting the opponent's right leg, while the second ones brushed past the black Mech's waist again.

He could vaguely hear that person's cursing from opposite him.

"So this is the power of a First Seat?" Garen provoked his opponent unhesitatingly, his voice transmitted through the Mech's external speakers. "Or are you saying you're the weakest of the First Seats?"

"Don't get cocky!" a furious voice said from inside the black Mech.

Brr!

This time the two lasers were concentrated into one, shooting straight for the enemy.

But the black Mech actually did a strange twist, and those eerie steps appeared again, allowing it to somehow dodge the Laser Cannon shot that was as thick as an arm. At the same time he also raised his arm to fire back two shots, even while performing those strange steps, his firing technique nearly hit Garen as he tried to avoid it.

Garen was slightly surprised as well.

“I can’t properly predict how the opponent is moving, so it’s harder for me to avoid him as well?” It was his first time encountering such a thing since he began training his secret techniques.

Actually, his martial arts style had always been fearless. He did not really emphasize avoiding, and was more likely to just bulldoze over his opponents with overwhelming power, completely obliterating his enemy. For something like this to happen, where he could not avoid his opponent properly, was undeniably a fresh new thing for him. This way was not very similar to how he used to fight, and he could also tell from the opponent’s Dance Steps that these techniques of his opponent’s were definitely more than just that, they seemed to be the basic version of an even higher-level fighting technique.

“Interesting. But I should still end it quickly, no matter how strong your dodging is, you still need to have the capability to use it.” Garen never wasted time, so he shot two more separate lasers at his opponent. The black Mech was grazed in the arm and the thigh again.

Every time he shot separately like this, Garen was basically standing still on the spot, but with every shot, he would merely twist slightly to avoid the opponent’s attacks.

Because the more places the black Mech got damaged, the quicker its degree of mobility decreased. His strange Dance Steps seemed to require a lot out of his mobility, and once that decreased, his avoiding skill deteriorated drastically as well.

“It’s over.”

Looking at the stage, that white-haired old man spoke softly.

“The Gehrs Dance Steps may be impressive, but young Gehrs is still not strong enough to unleash its full potential. These Dance Steps are based on irregular Willpower waves, and automatically tend to choose the best means of escape to avoid any threats. It can only unleash its full power at the Upper Levels高级.”

“But it’s already impressive that he can achieve this much at this age,” the stern-looking woman said with a nod beside him.

Suddenly there was a loud cry of surprise from the other arena, not from one or two people, but from several hundreds or even thousands of people at once. Many people abruptly got to their feet while looking at the stage, their mouths slightly open, as though they had seen something very surprising.

“That is...!” The white-haired old man moved his gaze away, and looked at the screen showing the Grade B arena on the other side. It was broadcasting the match from a special arena.

“The Spear of Victory!” The stern woman’s face had a rare expression of surprise. “Level 3 Willpower, Violent Heart’s final technique!! That Mech... could actually consecutively unleash it twice in an instant! What an unfathomable genius!”

“The Spear of Victory gathers a large amount of violent high-pressure electricity all around it, and it has a very powerful interference effect on Gaussian electromagnetic weapons as well as metallic weapons. In close combat, it could even drastically distort the opponent’s electric field and Willpower. It’s known as a super powerful killer move among close combat Mechs!” the old man said in a low voice. “For a Grade B, second-year university student to be able to reach the peak of Level 3 Willpower, and for them to be able to train the Violent Heart to the very peak, they must be a peak-level prodigy. Blackboard Academy, your reputation is not a lie.”

In the Grade B match arena, two Mechs, one black and the other white, were currently facing off by moving at extremely high speeds. The black Mech was holding two extremely sharp and terrifying spears that sparkled with a great deal of blue electricity tightly in both hands. Countless bolts of electricity twined and crackled around the spears, to the point that the spears’ original material and color had been completely covered up, as though the two spears were made completely of electricity.

“Die! Gordo.” An icy cold male voice came from inside the black Mech.

“The Spear of Victory... only proves that your Willpower is strong enough! If you want me to die, you’ll have to make me!” A similarly icy woman’s voice came from the white Mech opposite him.

Clang!!

The two Mechs collided at high speeds, one holding spears while the other wielded a sword. The huge white sword slashed the electric spears mercilessly, and the friction between them emitted a piercing metallic screech. Instantly, the electricity began to shoot down the sword's blade fiercely.

Garen fired off two more shots, breaking off the black Mech's two arms, while he heard the cries of surprising coming from outside at the same time. Instantly, he knew that something had happened outside, and distracted all of the audience's attention.

But the black Mech was still being stubborn, he had no intention of giving in at all. His arms had been broken off, but he was still dashing at him at high speeds.

"How stubborn." The two cannon barrels beside Garen lit up with white light again.

Clack...

Suddenly the white lights went out. Garen seemed to hear some tiny noises beside him.

"Hmm?"

He looked at the Moonfang on the counter abruptly, and saw that the Moonfang was twinkling continuously with a white light. It looked extremely unsteady.

He tried to move his Mech a little.

"Shit! I can't move! What happened? It's only been ten minutes!" Garen's heart gave a jolt, and he knew he was in trouble. The whole Mech had somehow frozen completely.

Opposite the Panoramic Mirror, the black Mech was running at him madly. The Mech used the remaining half of its right arm to hold an alloy dagger to its body, the sharp tip of the dagger piercing straight for the middle of Garen's cockpit.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

As the black Mech drew closer, its steps became heavier and heavier.

Garen was still trying to move the Mech with his Willpower. But not only was the Moonfang unable to help him control the Mech right now, it was even obstructing him, so much so that he could not even move the Mech however he tried.

"Damn it!" A sheen of sweat broke out on his brow, the black Mech in front of him was drawing closer.

Twenty meters! Ten meters! Five meters!! Three meters!! Two meters!!

"Move, damn it—!!!" Garen pushed his Willpower hard.

Whoom!!!

There was a loud, dull sound.

Everyone stared, wide-eyed and slack-mouthed. Instructor Hamm and Pillbo opposite him stared, wide-eyed and slack-mouthed. Even Fervale looked slightly surprised.

On the arena, the black Mech had collapsed into a pile in front of the white Mech. He had been tripped by a small crater in the ground that had been created by one of his own shots. The whole Mech fell to the ground, and there were many small bolts of lightning crawling all over the surface of the Mech. The black dagger also gave up, falling to one side. The whole Mech could no longer stand up, sprawled in front of the white Mech.

"Winner: Nonosiva." The sweet mechanical voice spoke again.

Garen sat inside the cockpit, watching the white Moonfang's white light blink continuously. He still could not control the Mech, evidently something had gone wrong with the Moonfang's usage time again.

After the black Mech collapsed on its own and victory was decided, Garen still waited for more than a minute before he felt the white Moonfang recover again.

Sitting in his seat, he could not help but wonder at how close that was.

Under those circumstances just now, if his opponent really had pierced the cockpit, it was very likely that he would be seriously injured again, and he would have lost the match. With his body the level it was right now, it was not likely that he would be able to avoid that hit quickly, and the final result would likely be a loss for him, plus critical injuries so he would not be able to continue battling. If it came to that, forget the top three, he would not even make top ten.

When the two of them left the arena and came out, the instructor from the other side, Pillbo, left in a rage, whereas the pilot of the black Mech stared at Garen with a complicated gaze.

"Why didn't you finish me off?" he asked coldly.

Garen looked at him and did not reply, leaving straight away to go to his class's personal area.

That pilot was just a black-haired young man with an ambitious expression, but in the end, he merely stared at Garen's back without saying a word.

Once he came back to the resting area, Instructor Hamm came right up and slapped Garen's shoulder hard, his expression absolutely delighted.

"Great job! Who knew you'd improve this much!"

"It was all thanks to your teaching," Garen replied with a laugh. But he was still sweating inwardly from that scare from just now.

He glanced at Fervale who was sitting at the side, expressionlessly. Fervale just sat there quietly, without uttering a word. He must still find it discomforting that his position as First Seat was taken away.

It was break time after that, so Garen made an excuse to go to the toilet, so that he could check the Moonfang in his hand.

The crack in the middle of the Moonfang was getting larger and larger, it looked like it was had grown by another half of its original size. Maybe that was the main reason why the Moonfang failed just now.

“Looks like I have no choice but to shorten my battle time further...” Garen decided in his heart. The Moonfang’s time limit as he tested it before was fifteen minutes, but evidently unexpected accidents might happen. In order to minimize such accidents, the best way would be to reduce his battle time as much as possible.

Chapter 796: Battle Situation 2

In the following battles, Garen and Fervale continued to defeat their opponents instantly, and the matches slowly reached the middle stages. Most of the classes had been defeated, and soon there were only ten classes left, they advanced to the Winners Bracket.

And five stronger teams were decided in the Losers Bracket playoffs as well, so they had the right to challenge opponents in the Winners Bracket.

Class C5, Garen’s class, had just about managed to squeeze into the end of the Winners Bracket. After Sara lost four matches consecutively, they were in ninth place. Their ranking was basically held up by Fervale and Garen.

“I have disappointed you.” Sara was in a very bad mood.

Instructor Hamm did not say anything, he merely patted her shoulder.

“It’s alright, sort yourself out, and just do your best in the finals tomorrow. You’ve already reached this point, it’s already better than our class ranking before this,” Garen comforted her.

“You don’t need to say it, I understand.” Sara’s head was lowered, her expression pale.

Fervale stood at the side quietly, the successful consecutive wins had helped him recover some of his confidence.

The sky was growing dim, and after a whole day of matches, the participants and the audience alike were exhausted. They announced that the matches would continue on the second day, and the whole arena retired for the night.

Garen politely refused to go celebrating with Instructor Hamm and the others, walking out of the arena on his own. He walked towards Aier and Mina, who were wandering around the sidelines.

“Congratulations!”

“Congrats to us all.” Garen exchanged a glance with Mina, smiling.

“Nono... What I said before was... a little impulsive...” Aier apologized in a tiny voice, his face red as he fidgeted.

“It’s okay,” Garen waved his hand. “Come, let’s go eat first.”

Mina said with a smile,

“Why don’t you come to my workplace to eat? You’ll be giving us business, and the food there tastes pretty good too.”

“Sure.”

Garen did not really mind where they would eat.

He walked with the two of them, and also got to understand the many different interesting things that happened in the arena today. He had been focused on preparing for the matches, so he missed many of the other match-ups, but Aier and Mina did not. They had always been choosing and watching the other matches through the display screens.

According to the two of them, in this year's qualifiers, the ones who were most favored in Grade C were Bally and Merseus, who plowed on through their matches. And that Caus also only lost one match, due to an accident. These three were commonly recognized as the strongest in Grade C.

The first two were especially considered prodigies among prodigies, they had at least Level 2 overall power at such a young age. They were only seventeen or eighteen, but they were already equivalent to those experienced pilots who had been training most their lives, this was the terrifying difference in talent.

Compared to them, the other Grade C students at average levels, students like Aier, were still struggling to get a few subjects to Level 1. They had not even come into contact with most of the subjects, much less participate in actual battles. Only those who had reached Level 1 in all the compulsory subjects would have reached the minimum requirement to join actual matches, because these subjects were the most basic aspects of controlling Mechs.

Now, Grade C was divided into stages here in the arena. Bally, Merseus and the others were in the first stage, having reached Level 2 standards overall. Caus, and the dark horse that defeated him were at the second stage, they had basically reached overall Level 2 power, which meant they had at least one or several subjects at Level 2. The difference between them and Bally's group was that they had not yet achieved Level 2 in all subjects. Garen believed that he was at this stage as well, as were Fervale and that black Mech pilot he had defeated a while ago. After that, Sara and the others were at the third stage, people at this stage could use the Mech to battle smoothly, but they only had very basic moves and techniques, there was nothing particularly outstanding about them. It depended on who was familiar with the movements, or who was thinking brightly, there was very little difference between them.

Take Garen's Concentrated Fire Laser Cannon technique for example, that was a Level 2 technique. To Level 1 fighters, that sort of technique meant that they would be one-shotted, it was the same for those opponents who weren't good enough at dodging.

But when it came to guys with Level 2 overall power, there was no way they could be defeated in one hit.

“So your next opponent might not be someone you could defeat so simply, using your Concentrated Fire technique.”

Mina told Garen solemnly as the three of them sat in a coffee shop’s sweets corner.

Garen nodded, of course he knew that, but that was not his problem. His main problem was his Willpower, if he had enough Willpower, he could use his own fighting skills when it came to Mech combat. But now his Willpower was too underleveled, his actual Willpower was not even at Level 1. He could not even control the Mech fluidly, in other words, this body of his was in the same grade as Aier, Mina and the other regular students, or perhaps even worse. He had to rely on the Moonfang just to get into this qualifier match, which was full of prodigies.

It must be said that Blackboard Academy was a huge force that controlled several provinces, several thousands or even tens of thousands of students joined the school every year. This ranking competition chose the elites from among these students and had them battle each other.

“But having reached this placing, our class has definitely improved. Now we just need to keep steady and we’ll have succeeded.” Mina was very optimistic, even if they were in ninth place, they could still get a ten percent exemption off their tuition fees, and they could even use some special facilities or locations that were restricted to the top ten. These benefits were shared by the whole class. With these benefits, they could also earn a little extra outside. All of this evidently cheered her up greatly.

“It’s hard to keep steady as well, the ones who lost towards the end were all very strong elites,” Aier sighed beside them. He was a frank person, because he had said some mean things to Garen before, he had been apologizing all the way, and now he was back to normal.

“I heard that there was once all the classes in the Losers Bracket chose to challenge one ranked class, and then they wore that class down so they could kick them out and take their place. You need to be careful of that,” Mina nodded.

Garen had naturally also investigated information like that before, so he just nodded nonchalantly when he heard that.

With his combat experience and battle awareness, plus he had more than just the Laser Cannon in his arsenal, he just needed to be careful of the Moonfang's time limit. Everything else was negotiable, as long as he did not get caught with his pants down like just now.

"Relax, I'll do my best."

Just then, a group of students sauntered in from outside the coffee shop. They all wore Grade C uniforms, and had fierce expressions. As soon as they came in, they started looking around, as though they were looking for someone.

"Where's An Yixuan?" the boy in the lead, about eighteen or nineteen years old, asked loudly.

The coffee shop fell silent for a while, a few of the waiters in charge of sending food and drinks stopping in panic.

"I'm An Yixuan." A young boy with a cold expression stood up in the corner, staring at these newcomers calmly.

The boy in the lead immediately walked over, surrounding the table with his group of people.

"Come, let's go out for a chat." Their voices instantly became smaller.

The others could not really hear it, but seemingly because Garen's body had achieved the second grade of the Hellfrost Peacock Technique and improved his senses somewhat, he could vaguely hear a few words here and there.

"Next... match... surrender... or else..."

He could still understand the gist of what they were saying.

“An Yixuan is one of those few students in the Winners Bracket that has no influential family background at all,” Aier leaned forward and explained in a small voice. “I bet those people want him to concede the next match. Nono, you have to be wary of this move as well.”

Garen frowned.

Watching the group surround An Yixuan as they walked away, he could vaguely hear that they seemed to be tempting and threatening him using the way his family would be treated at work.

Most of the students in the Blackboard Academy were either rich or powerful, they all had special family backgrounds, and a web of influence that spanned the whole Blackboard Region. In other words, they just had to go back and tattle a little to their families, then they could already threaten the lifestyles of regular families. This was the result of great social inequality.

The other side was evidently using the influence of this inequality to tempt An Yixuan into purposely losing the next match. This was a deal, but it was also a threat.

He raised his head and saw that both Mina and Aier were looking at him somewhat worriedly. Instantly, he smiled slightly, showing a hint of calmness.

“It’ll be fine, don’t worry. I’ll deal with it properly.”

All three of them came from families at the bottom of the rung in the academy, even before, Mina was not from a particularly rich or famous family. This was the main reason the three of them ended up together. Watching An Yixuan get pushed out by a bunch of rich and powerful heirs now, they felt a sense of pity and sympathy.

But there was nothing they could do.

According to their normal paths, a student like An Yixuan would have been enrolled in the school due to his excellent results. His tuition fees must be a heavy burden on his family, and even if he was sure to find a high-income job after graduating, it would still be unlikely that he could join the Blackboard Academy as an elite. As a graduate, however, it was very likely that he could join the government or

military pilot teams. If he were to offend these powerful people now, it would be really hard for him to progress later.

“Won’t the Academy do anything?” someone asked softly.

“It’s not that they don’t do anything, they’re allowing this on purpose. The Academy’s higher-ups believe that family background is also part of someone’s power, if someone could overcome that with their own talent and IQ, that would mean they are truly a prodigy, and then the Academy would truly prioritize them as a talent.”

“But what if they went overboard, and the students they had been raising for so long were accidentally destroyed by assassins?”

“The higher-ups have eyes on us, they have limits. I don’t know what the limits are, though, I just heard that from my cousin who’s in the Elites.”

Garen and the others listened to their discussion from the side, Aier and Mina feeling pretty bad about it.

Some cakes and bread arrived at their table, as well as some specially-made fruit plates, but the three of them only ate a bit before they realized they had no appetite. These were all man-made foods, after all, not natural, and upon hearing those words, they grew even unhappier.

Some calls came from Garen’s Terminal, they were all from the class. Instructor Hamm asked where he was eating, and whether he wanted to go out to karaoke to relax. Garen rejected him. His younger brother called to say he had seen him on TV, even if it was just a flash of his name through the match broadcasts, that was still enough to make him extremely excited.

And then that younger sister who had rarely ever seen actually called him, asking him about how the matches were, as though raring to show off to her friends.

Throughout that meal, Garen never stopped receiving calls, and was actually busy for once. It took a long while before the calls finally slowed down.

Chapter 797: Blue Narcissus 1

In the south end of Blackboard City

Inside a small bakery somewhere.

“Lon, your older brother is actually from Blackboard Academy, you never told us!” In the adorable, pink-themed shop, a girl with pink hair wearing a white apron whined loudly as she pulled Lon’s hair.

“Owner, I told Shirley and the others a long time ago, don’t blame me!” Lon was also wearing a white apron, his long hair tied up. He had silky smooth white skin, and even his figure was like a girl’s. Overall, he gave off a strange sense of androgyny. He was also wearing black-rimmed glasses, so seen from afar, he did not look out of place among the group of young girls at all, he looked as simple and sweet as the rest of them.

“Is that right?” The pink-haired girl immediately turned around to look at the other girls in the shop, and some of the other young boys and girl instantly turned away guiltily. They were all younger than the shop owner, so the girl owner treated them as her younger brothers and sisters. The relationships between the workers here at the shop were all very pure, because they were all pure-minded people. In fact, the shop owner made sure of that when she picked them.

“It’s like this, Owner. Lon told us the last time when he was making a call, we all heard it,” a bespectacled pretty boy said in a small voice. “But Lon’s brother rarely contacts him, so he slowly forgot about it...”

Of course they had not forgotten about it, the truth was other than the pure Lon, all of them had noticed from the way Lon described him that Lon’s older brother, Nonosiva, actually looked down on his younger brother a lot. Although Lon clumsily tried to say good things about his brother, but Nonosiva’s arrogant, unfriendly, and domineering image slowly appeared in their hearts. So they would naturally avoid mentioning this topic to Lon.

“At first we thought that since there were so many people in Blackboard Academy, Lon’s brother would only be a normal student there at most, but to think... That guy does have the right to be haughty,” a girl with curly blonde pigtails said softly beside them.

“But Lon works so hard every day, and wears himself out just to earn money for his brother, then he still has to go to class at night as well. Despite all that, his brother doesn’t even care enough to ask, doesn’t that just make you sad?” another girl said quietly.

“Forget it, don’t say any more. If Lon hears you, he’ll make a fuss again.” The two girls looked at innocent Lon, and could not help but sigh inwardly.

“Fine, fine, Blackboard Academy and whatnot are too far removed from us, we had better stay realistic.” The pink-haired girl clapped her hands loudly, “Alright everyone, pay attention. My younger brother and his friend are coming over to help in a bit, they’ll be interning for the holidays. They’re both middle schoolers, about the same age as you, so I hope you all get along nicely.”

Whoa...

The workers all gathered around her in an instant.

“The owner’s younger brother? Is he as good-looking as me?”

“He might be a very cute little boy. I mean, look how pretty Owner is.”

“I wonder, what kind of a guy is he? It’d be troublesome if he had a bad temper.”

“Daisy, we’re counting on you! Conquer him with your charms!”

Seeing that all the workers were gathering curiously, the pink-haired girl put her hands on her waist happily.

“Relax, relax, my younger brother and his friend are all nice people, especially that brother of mine, he’s a ridiculously gentle guy, so don’t you guys bully him instead.”

“Really...”

“Do you have pictures?”

“Here?” The pink-haired girl took out a color photo, but it was instantly snatched away. “You’re asking for a beating, Jasmine!”

A girl with a silver ponytail ran off with the picture, giggling, but she was immediately surrounded.

“Let me see...”

She took the photo and shook it a little, looking at it.

The picture showed a short young boy with a shy smile. He was not particularly handsome but he did have some good-looking features, and his messy black hair was being mussed up even more by the shop owner behind him.

There were some words written in black pen on the bottom right corner: loos cover.

“This is Chironese, it means my beloved family. Oh my, Owner, how touching~~~”

Another boy grabbed the photo and read it out loud.

“Ah, do you wanna die!?” the pink-haired girl was instantly embarrassed.

Lon stood beside them, smiling. There was not a single customer in the shop, but everyone was having fun together. This was a very warm and comfy feeling.

He had also seen the boy in the picture, he looked very gentle, so he must be someone who's easy to deal with.

Blackboard Academy

In the Grade C dormitory area.

Garen had just inserted his Identity Card into the door lock and opened the dorm door with a ka-chak when suddenly something twinged in his heart. It felt as though something had activated slightly, that indescribable feeling surging from his heart, and yet he could not identify the source.

He stood at the door quietly, his hand gripped the doorknob as he stayed completely still.

“This feeling... it's so familiar...” he murmured softly.

Ka-chak.

There was the sound of the opposite student's door opening behind him.

Garen was instantly shocked out of his reverie, and he tilted his head slightly to look behind him. The boy staying opposite him was making a call through his Watch Terminal, talking as he walked into his room.

He also pushed his door and walked inside, closing the door behind him. The footsteps of the students passing by, their chatter and laughter, the sound of the levitating car's engine outside, he blocked all of it outside.

“Could it be... has that started?” He turned on the air-conditioner, took off his coat, and tossed it onto the chair. Then he lay down on his bed, facing upwards, as he slowly began to reminisce.

When he chose this body back then, it was mostly also because there seemed to be some strange energy around this body. Now, it seemed that his initial decision was starting to take effect.

He thought about it carefully. This feeling was very familiar, but not very clear, even Garen could not quite tell what it was. He thought about it carefully in bed for more than ten minutes, but he still could not figure it out.

Sighing, he sat up again directly, and began by starting his daily training method practice.

Glancing at the attribute pane, it seemed that his attribute was already beginning to change today.

‘Nonosiva Lin — Strength 0.7, Agility 1.2, Vitality 0.5, Intelligence 1.4. Potential power 0%. Soul Limit 40.’

“All the stats have increased by 0.1 in average, not bad.” Garen nodded, satisfied. “I just wonder how much the second grade of the Peacock Technique will help enhance this body. If all my average stats could increase past 1 point, that would be the best. Then, with my combat experience and techniques, even if I’m facing someone like an armed special forces officer, I would still be able to protect myself.”

When powerful secret techniques reach their respective levels, they would bring the practitioner different degrees of changes. Some would be positive, others would be negative, and yet others would be completely harmless and meaningless.

And the Peacock Technique was the second grade of the elementary level, as the second grade of a Living Secret Technique, he did not how much it might change this body.

Garen looked at the secret technique and other skill attributes closely as well, and something had changed there as well. There were now skills related to Willpower there.

‘Willpower — Middle Basic Level,

(Training Method: Blackboard Control, the free training method from Blackboard Academy, weak training effects, advancement speed would be twelve years/level)'

"Now the training method has finally also become a Skill, looks like it's because I have a better understanding of the training method in this world now, that's why my natural ability could form an understanding of it as well." Garen was thoughtful.

"If I can make it into a Skill, that means I can power it up using potential points. But the problem is this world does not seem to have anything like potential points at all..." Garen frowned slightly again.

Ding-dong...

Suddenly, the doorbell rang.

Garen glanced at the time, it was already past ten at night, who could that be?

He had just left Aier and Mina, if it was anyone else, they would surely call him on the Watch Terminal first.

The bell only rang once, and then it was quiet.

Garen stood up and walked to the door to open it.

The door cracked open, but there was no one outside at all, just a letter on the floor. On the white envelope, there was one line of words: To Nonosiva Lin.

Garen picked up the letter and looked around again. Two chattering students walked into the dorm, but there was not anything suspicious other than that.

He closed the door again, and brought that letter back to his bed, where he sat down.

“Could Nonosiva have some special personal connections in this world? Or could it be...” Garen tore open the envelope, and pulled an unsigned letter out of it, opening it gently.

‘Dear Nono, for the second match tomorrow, we hope you will admit defeat of your own accord.’ And then there was a picture of a blue narcissus.

Garen saw the more words through the back of the paper, and flipped it over to see.

‘Rondo Lin, Vice Section Manager, Negotiations Section, Commerce Department, Jusang Interregional Investment Company.’

‘Amy Lamda, Vice Section Manager, Warehouse Section, Operations Department, Jusang Interregional Investment Company.’

“So that’s what this means?” Garen touched the paper, and instantly understood.

“Nonosiva’s parents are both just very normal, average workers, these Sections and Departments and whatnot, they’re telling me this is the price of my throwing the match this time... Not bad, the carrot and the stick... How effective.”

He knew that such a change in positions would make a huge difference to the whole family. The position of Vice Section Manager would at least double their annual income, and if both of them had their salaries doubled at the same time, the whole family’s economic situation would be drastically improved. This was the unrefutable carrot the other side was dangling in front of him.

In this kind of Academy, faced with peers who could change his entire family’s fate with just a few words, no wonder the previous Nonosiva ended up so withdrawn, sullen, and had such low confidence. This was not the kind of pressure a teenager should have to withstand.

“Well, how should I settle this matter?” Garen held the letter, and began to think.

He was really taking it seriously, according to the way competition was supposed to go, the second match of the finals tomorrow should be the second match of the Losers Bracket challengers. In other words, the other person was an elite from the Losers Bracket who wanted to exchange these conditions for Class C5's position in the Winners Bracket.

This did not quite match Garen's previous plans.

"And to ask for an exchange with something like this, it's still lacking..." Garen did not really mind throwing away matches, as long as he achieved his goal, such means did not matter. It was just that the other person was offering too little in exchange, so it was not worth it.

Beep-beep... Beep-beep...

Suddenly his Watch Terminal began to ring, someone was calling him at this time.

Garen raised his wrist and glanced at it. There was no incoming number, just the picture of a bunch of deep blue narcissuses. He waited for a brief moment, and then he quickly turned on his laptop. After a pattering of keys, he picked up a data cable and connected it to his Watch Terminal, and only then did he accept the call.

"Hello, we are the Blue Narcissus. May we know if you've received the letter?" As soon as the call went through, a raspy woman's voice spoke through it.

Garen glanced at a software he had invented on his laptop, the wavy line on it rose and fell slightly. He turned back.

"I received it, but with my capabilities, your offer is too low."

"??" The other person was taken aback, she had not expected Garen to say that so directly. Anyone who could make it past the Qualifiers was undeniably all talented and arrogant individuals, if you wanted them to lose on purpose, they would surely not take it well. But this time, Garen was actually bargaining with her calmly.

Chapter 798: Blue Narcissus 2

“What?” when Garen did not hear the other person’s reply, he prompted her to continue.

“It’s just slightly unexpected. I did not anticipate that you would be able to speak to us in such a rational and calm manner,” replied the woman once she had returned to normal. “If you think that the price is too low, then what is your desired amount? Could you let me know?”

“My strength levels are enough to impact the top three competitors. Don’t you think this price is a little low?” Garen asked instead.

“What you say is true, and your current levels prove that you undoubtedly possess extremely good character. You say that you can attack the top three, Bally, Merseus, and Caus, but the three of them are not average people that can be shaken easily,” said the woman lightly.

“I can prove it to you in the next competition,” answered Garen in a straightforward manner.

“Oh? How are you going to prove that?” the voice on the other line changed suddenly. It was now a crisp female voice that sounded somewhat cold but also strong at the same time. It was obvious that the speaker on the other side had switched temporarily.

“How about the three Level 2 combat techniques?” replied Garen in a brisk and casual tone.

“...!!!” there was no sound on the other side suddenly as they were clearly subdued.

Indeed, even Bally and Merseus were only confirmed to have Level 2 strength through the results of the comprehensive assessment. Out of all the topics of the actual combat assessment topics, there were only ten that could truly provide a comprehensive assessment of an individual’s strength levels. Among these topics, Garen was able to achieve the Level 2 standard for three of them at once. Coupled with the Laser Cannon integrated techniques that he had displayed earlier, he was able to grasp four Level 2 techniques in total. This meant that he was almost halfway there. Everything was just as Garen had said.

He had the strength to surpass the top three and was highly hopeful that he could overtake Caus' position at least.

“Are you certain that you're not mistaken?” after keeping quiet for a while, the other person finally spoke again.

“Of course,” answered Garen calmly. He was undeniably and incomparably powerful in terms of combat. Although his Willpower was slightly weaker which forced him to use his basic combat techniques to display his strength, his Master-level combat experience could not be compared to the current strengths of the weaker fellows. If it was not for the Moonfang's time limit, he could definitely snatch the third place position and get rid of Caus. However, the same could not be said for the first and second places as the Level 2 combat techniques of this world seemed to be linked to Willpower. This produced strange qualitative changes that Garen had never seen before. He could not be sure of the integrated powers that the other two would use.

After all, his extremely weak Willpower was also a terrible shortcoming. If he was hindered for a certain duration or if changes that exceeded his expectations appeared suddenly, it would be impossible to easily ensure his victory.

“...We will need to consider and discuss this. Please wait a moment.”

The female voice on the other line became more polite suddenly. It was obvious that Garen's strength had exceeded their expectations greatly. Furthermore, it was just as Garen had stated. Their attempt to exchange something for the victory of a professional would be easily detected by the academy. Moreover, a normal member of the crowd would be able to see through a trick like that as well, and they would end up shooting themselves in the foot if they were not careful.

Garen was not anxious at all. Instead, he merely pulled out his tablet computer quietly and begin to click his fingers against it gently. He had learned programming skills in the Vampire world on his own and was able to adapt to the computing input programs here quickly once he had arrived in this advanced and computerized world. The computers here were unlike the backward machines that he had used before. Meanwhile, the likes of quantum computers existed here. The concept of quantum computers stated that most computers that utilized binary systems used 0 and 1 as their basic units. When computing, countless 0's and 1's would circulate through the computer as its data.

Meanwhile, quantum computers could be visualized as numerous computers that were operating inside binary system computers. When they encountered certain combinations of nested problems that were difficult to untangle, these computers would be able to solve them at the quickest speed.

Quantum computers were computing models that used sets as units while the older computers used elements as units. Therefore, their computing abilities had been improved greatly. They could gather various methods to solve problems. This was also the main reason for the great developments throughout the Mech Battleships. Professional divisions of various types of quantum computers were able to utilize certain complicated, optimized organizational structures of Mechs several times as sets to perform unit calculation analysis. The Mechs that were assembled through this process could perform beyond people's expectations and achieve extremely good progress.

There were similarities between quantum computers and traditional computers because of their origins. Therefore, Garen was able to adapt to the programming models here quickly once he had come into contact with the computers in this world.

The tablet computer that he was using now was a typical miniature quantum computer. Although it was not highly advanced and could not operate larger units, it could still react quickly towards web environments regardless of their complexity and analyze them.

Seconds and minutes ticked by. Garen tapped against the virtual keyboard that was projected by the tablet computer continuously while the rotating image of a soundwave on the screen gradually became clearer. He had already achieved the first step of determining the current position of the other person's phone call.

"Your requests are very reasonable if you can truly display this strength tomorrow," the person on the other line finally spoke again.

Within this short duration of fewer than ten minutes, Garen had managed to discover a series of information regarding Blue Narcissus in the academy.

The Blue Narcissus organization was an internal organization of a larger scale within Blackboard Academy. As one of the three main student organizations in Blackboard, Blue Narcissus was comprised of influential officials that represented the strength of their disciples. Although their individual members did not necessarily possess great strength, their network of background relations was still the strongest out of the three main organizations. In simpler terms, they were a group that specialized in recruiting strong forces that comprised of the supposed princes and princesses in the academy.

Unlike Black Rose that revered actual combat and strength, or the moderate Thousand Year Tree, the main idea of Blue Narcissus revolved around the notion that relations, background, and individual power were all a form of strength. However, they were more welcoming towards influential disciples as many generations of their leaders were all first-rate powerful proteges.

“Among the three main organizations, many people actually have misunderstandings towards Blue Narcissus,” explained the woman on the other line quietly. “We are not inclined towards influential individuals. On the contrary, we merely recruit geniuses who can break free of the whirlpool of power around them on their own. This matter is strictly in accordance with the academy’s purpose.”

“I understand. What do you plan to do then? Regarding my problem I mean.”

“Your conditions are something that we agree with fully,” the woman answered certainly. “I am representing Blue Narcissus to agree with your requests as elites should only be given elite treatment.”

She pondered for a moment. It was possible that she was exchanging opinions with the others.

“Regarding our cooperation with you, we now have a new method to do that. However, we don’t know if you will be willing to accept it.”

Garen pressed the enter key on the keyboard of the computer single-handedly before looking at the bunch of blue narcissus flowers once again.

“What methods? Tell me.”

“Regarding the new methods, if you really possess the power to impact the top three, you only need to join Blue Narcissus so that we can support your claim to overtake the top three to snatch a spot for an elite personal fight. As long as you can become an elite member, I will be able to give you the best treatment for your family and your personal development. I’ve heard that... Your previous surgery fees were paid for in advance by your instructor. I’m sure that you want to repay Instructor Hamm for the expenses as soon as possible, right?” it seemed as though the woman on the other line was very knowledgeable about Nonosiva’s information.

“What kind of treatment?” Garen had always been concerned about the practical benefits only. The changes in the other person’s attitude were things that he’d anticipated as well. It was one of the main situational variables and did not greatly faze him at all.

“Your parents’ occupations will not change but their gloomy salaries will be increased to five hundred thousand Units a year. In the academy, you will receive a certain amount of background strength and support that is given to all Blue Narcissus members. Of course, your opponent in Grade C, Arello, is included as well, and you will not have to worry about him using his family circumstances and background to suppress you. Meanwhile, I believe that you will be able to deal with the direct confrontations as you managed to teach Caus and his friends a painful lesson previously, right?” it seemed as though the woman was clearly more relaxed now.

“Is the background strength guaranteed?” the information that Garen had investigated stated that this was the main method that Blue Narcissus used to entice students with good potential. Students with good potential that came from financially unstable families were easily oppressed by others who were influential disciples. Under these circumstances, those of them who had yet to mature were unusually weak and would squander away their talents if they were not careful. Therefore, Blue Narcissus’ actions provided a beneficial platform for them to exhibit their strong backgrounds fully while mediating and assuring the development of these students with good potentials. Finally, once these potential students had matured and become the new generation of influential individuals, most of them would not forget the ones that provided help during a key point of their lives.

Blackboard Academy had been established for hundreds of years and these three main student organizations had stood firm through time. They naturally had their own commendable points and could not simply be known as arrogant organizations.

However, the ones that could truly receive the exceptional treatment from Blue Narcissus were naturally only the authentic first-rate geniuses that had good futures ahead of them. They were lucky if they could even find five of these individuals within a grade. Instead, they only recruited more influential disciples in each year, naturally piling themselves in comparison to the other organizations.

Garen pondered carefully for a moment. The main shortcoming that was faced by his current self, or rather Nonosiva, was that his family background and circumstances would cause him to be easily oppressed by powerful and influential disciples. This would also hinder his personal development. The support that Blue Narcissus was willing to provide was something that he truly needed.

“Increasing the strength of Blue Narcissus’ elite scholars is a point that we pay close attention to. An individual who can enter the elites despite being a new student will always receive additional resources and favor as such a new student usually possesses great potential,” explained the woman sincerely. “Have are your considerations going? Joining Blue Narcissus will be your best decision.”

Garen became quiet for a while. “From what I know, aren’t there two other main organizations? Black Rose and Thousand Year Tree...”

“Unfortunately, your opponent Caus is a member of Thousand Year Tree while his older brother, the assessed student named Cor, is an elite Grade B member of Black Rose. They have a network of special relations within the Mech actual combat department and since you did not display any shocking aptitude or talents, it was only natural that they did not invite you,” the woman did not hold back and chose to speak the truth directly instead.

“...Okay. I agree to join Blue Narcissus,” replied Garen right away after considering for a while. In his opinion, joining an organization was merely a temporary decision to borrow power. As long as this organization gave him a favorable impression, he did not mind repaying them once he had matured. Moreover, the key factor was the other party’s sincerity. The things that they had mentioned were the same as what he had discovered through his hacking skills. Therefore, this meant the other side truly wanted to recruit and invest in him.

“The aim of Blue Narcissus is to turn each of our members into our pride and joy while becoming the dignity of our members as well,” replied the woman earnestly. “You will not regret joining us.”

Garen smiled before hanging up the phone.

Chapter 799

Within the arena that was projected by a gigantic Battleship

Bouts of cheers and screams rang out and echoed throughout the competition arena continuously as the crowd yelled excitedly. Large blimps floated across the sky above the arena while rows of new data constantly appeared on the display screen on the side of the blimp.

‘Grade A, first place Nicotine Kate, second place Carlos, third place Minda.’

‘Grade B, first place Kanda, second place Ruth Tribune, third place Marie.’

‘Grade C, first place Merseus, second place Bally, third place Caus.’

The data on the blimp’s display screen clearly showed the results of the three strongest individuals in the arena according to their grade. These rankings were not based on just their current individual results. If they had similar achievements, the results would also depend on their rankings in their respective grades to determine their positions.

More than a hundred classes were assigned to their respective boxes in the arena. The boxes resembled little honeycomb boxes and were filled with contestants and instructors from various classes who were constantly discussing the finals that were about to start today.

Unlike the roaring crowds at the side of the arena, most of the elite contestants inside these boxes had calm looks on their faces. Their expressions were composed as if they were not affected by the enthusiastic atmosphere at all.

Contestants who displayed abnormal behaviors after being affected by these matters would have been eliminated by this stage already. Only those whose abilities and qualities improved throughout all aspects had remained.

Inside a black box on the left side of the arena.

Garen, Fervale, and Sara were listening to Instructor Hamm’s warnings quietly.

“Today’s arena is unlike yesterday’s. When you proceed, you must remember to stay calm and collected while displaying all of your strength. Don’t leave any regrets even if you lose.”

“Understood,” it seemed as though Fervale had readjusted himself and regained his previous composure. His gaze occasionally drifted in a different direction towards another box.

Sara spoke beside Garen’s ear softly.

“Fervale met the competitor from his family’s opposing clan yesterday. It seemed as though his opponent had said something to provoke him.”

Garen glanced over in the direction of Fervale’s gaze and coincidentally noticed a girl with light green hair who was grimacing at Fervale and running her finger across her throat. The girl with short hair looked extremely fierce and had a robust figure. There was a scar at the corner of her brow and her pure white school uniform gave off a clean and nimble disposition.

He noticed that Fervale had begun to tighten his fist slightly.

“Really...” Garen heard Sara sigh and shake her head beside him as if she was already aware of certain ulterior motives.

However, he was too lazy to ask because it was almost his turn to step forward.

‘Nonosiva of Class C5 vs Enzo of C14.’

While the mechanical announcer’s voice rang out, Garen entered the Mech in the passageway quickly.

A bakery in the southern part of the city

“It’s Lon’s big brother! Come and look quickly!”

the shop assistant Shirley was yelling loudly.

Suddenly, everyone else inside the shop glanced over, including a couple of customers who were busy choosing cakes.

“Stop yelling,” Lon rushed over with an embarrassed look on his face and pulled Shirley away while his cheeks continued to blush.

On the television screen, two Mech Pilots were displayed on separate screens while they were getting into their respective machines. In front of half of a white Mech that was shown, a black-haired young man who had just sat inside his Mech had attracted the attention of everyone inside the shop immediately. When Shirley pointed at him, everyone discovered that he was Lon’s older brother Nonosiva.

The black-haired young man on the screen had a calm expression on his face. Both of his eyes were deep blue valleys that gave off cool dispositions. His blue and white Blackboard Academy uniform hugged his well-built figure tightly.

When he sat upright inside the Mech, a black helmet above him lowered itself automatically and covered the youth’s average-looking face. Next, numerous electronic display screens around him began to light up progressively in succession before the blue and white fluorescent lights illuminated the interior of the Mech.

‘Currently broadcasting live is the first match of the Winners Bracket of Grade C. Enzo from class C14 is here to challenge Nonosiva of class C5. Both of these participants are new elite students who have only entered Blackboard Academy for a year. Within the short span of a year, both of them achieved considerable progress. Compared to Nonosiva’s impressive record of consecutive victories, student Enzo encountered the current first ranked competitor Merseus halfway and unfortunately lost...’

The scene on the television screen moved to the two seated announcers suddenly. A beautiful female announcer and a white-haired old man sat side by side while facing the audience. They were currently introducing the achievements and identities of the two individuals on screen who were about to face off.

“So cool!”

A young male shop assistant who stood beside Lon could not help but exclaim softly.

These were the sentiments that most of the other people inside the shop shared as well. On the left, Enzo was a young woman with long white hair. A composed expression was plastered on her beautiful face. Meanwhile, Nonosiva on the right gave off a cold and emotionless air.

“Are these Mech Pilots?” beside the shop owner with long pink hair, a black-haired boy stared at the two people on screen with a look of faint admiration in his glimmering eyes. “How cool!” he murmured.

“You must study hard so that you’ll have a chance to be like them in the future!” the shop owner laughed happily and slapped her palm against the boy’s head.

“Ouch! Sis, why did you hit me again?!”

“I’m just encouraging you!” “What kind of encouragement is this?!”

Lon stood on the side silently and watched in awe at the black-haired boy who was now covering his head and running around. Although he was currently balancing his life between working and studying with much difficulty, it was inevitable that this situation would affect his studies. Therefore, his results had started to deteriorate gradually.

“Perhaps I could properly learn some pastry making skills in the future to become a normal but dependable person...” he raised his head and looked at his older brother on screen who was currently waiting to begin his battle while a strange glimmer flashed in his eyes.

“Lon!” someone clapped his shoulder gently at once.

Lon returned to his senses immediately before noticing that the black-haired boy was already standing in front of him now.

“Don’t worry, you’ll have a chance next time as well!” the boy smiled at him shyly.

“You are not your older brother; you are you. It doesn’t matter if you don’t want a cold older brother like him because we’ll be your siblings in the future!” beside him, Shirley bounced over with the shop assistant Daisy.

In the shop, Lon was sincere, honest and hardworking. He displayed natural talents when learning pastry making techniques and was also a kind person who constantly helped others whenever he could and would never refuse them. This had won him the friendship of his co-workers.

When he saw the crowd that gathered around him, Lon's heart was unusually touched.

"I..."

"The competition has begun!" suddenly, noises that indicated that the match had started echoing from the television.

The moment the words begin to drift off, two white laser beams shot out suddenly from the white Mech that Garen was controlling. The strong force from the laser cannons resembled two sharp swords that were piercing towards the chest of the black Mech. However, they were speedily evaded by their agile opponent.

At this moment, Garen had apparently discarded the Laser Cannons that he held in his hands earlier. Instead, he placed his hand behind his back and removed a hidden Gaussian Electromagnetic Gun. When his opponent was dodging the laser cannons, he was able to level the barrel of the Electromagnetic Gun properly.

The thick black barrel was aimed precisely at the black Mech.

Bang!

The black bomb passed through a distance of more than ten meters instantly and hit the transparent screen behind the black Mech directly before rebounding and hitting the jet engine behind it.

Boom!!

The black Mech lost all movement and stumbled a few steps forward before collapsing on the ground.

It was hit with another bomb before the top of the Mech exploded, causing the fight to end.

“This is... Rebound Interference!!”

Outside the arena, Instructor Hamm stood up in disbelief while a look of incredible surprise appeared on his face, “Another Level 2 technique!!”

Loud cheers exploded throughout the crowd outside the arena. Rebound Interference, a Level 2 technique was a Level 2 technique used by Mech Pilots. It was one of the three fighting techniques that did not require Willpower. It used various judgments and calculations from the outside world and used long-range weapons to form rebounds or refraction effects from shooting.

By using Rebound Interference and his integrated Laser Cannons from earlier, Nonosiva had already displayed two powerful techniques that did not need to be combined with Willpower.

Garen kept his Gaussian Guns and turned to walk out of the passageway without even glancing back at the black Mech on the ground.

On the other side, Fervale was using a different black Mech to fight frantically. The intensity of this fight was far fiercer than the one over here. Meanwhile, Sara had yet to step into the field but had already entered the waiting passage.

The three lowest ranked competitors of the Winners Bracket from each class had already been matched with their opponents.

Happy and prideful expressions appeared on both Aier and Mina’s faces when they watched the competition that had ended within moments. The ability to exhibit displays of strength and achievements like these so easily despite reaching such advanced stages undoubtedly showed Garen’s incomparably powerful innate strength.

Meanwhile, on the seats behind them, a few composed-looking students nodded faintly when they witnessed Garen's performance while hints of astonishment flashed in their eyes.

The bakery

"He actually used the Rebound Interference technique! I really cannot believe that this technique would be displayed by a first-year student who just entered the school!" the announcer exclaimed quietly and covered her little mouth while looking at the fight on the display screen.

"Although we've previously already seen the first-rate techniques such as short-range bursts and victories that were won by spears of electric currents, I'm still amazed to see skills of such difficulty being displayed by youths despite their young ages," the old man that was speaking shook his head in admiration. "When we compare our elderly selves to these young people, it seems as if we have simply wasted our years. They are truly the geniuses of Blackboard Academy."

"That's right. Young geniuses will always emerge during Blackboard Academy's Elite Qualifier Matches every year. Moreover, they will always exhibit amazing performances," nodded the other announcer.

"Indeed, since he is already able to use Level 2 techniques with ease, as long as he continues to train in actual combat, this young man will be able to reach the standard of a captain who can lead the Mech Pilots to fight on the battlefield. Furthermore, he's not even eighteen years old yet," praised the old man.

"He is truly amazing... The students of Blackboard Academy are really first-class geniuses..." the black-haired youth began to exclaim unconsciously again. When he noticed Lon staring blankly in a daze from the corner of his eye, the youth involuntarily stroked the little item that he had picked up not long ago.

"But I won't fall behind either. With this, I will be able to become an excellent Mech Pilot as well!"

"Don't touch my pure body as you please!" a voice that was both feminine and masculine entered his mind suddenly.

“Oh... I’m sorry. That was unintentional,” the black-haired youth immediately apologized in his head.

“Don’t worry, the future you long for will not be bleak. Although you are merely a piece of garbage without the slightest hint of aptitude, there are still certain types of garbage that can be useful,” the voice spoke in a lofty tone without concealing its disdain at all.

“Is my aptitude really that terrible...? Don’t tell me I’m actually less than average?” said the youth helplessly.

Chapter 800: Urgent 2

“Compared to that normal fellow beside you, the difference between both of your aptitudes is equivalent to the difference between a firefly and the moon. I’d be praising you excessively if I said that you were average,” answered the voice scornfully. “If you had not recognized my noble self by a lucky coincidence, I’d assume that you would be forced to spend your entire life gathering scrap metals.”

The expression on the youth’s face collapsed in defeat immediately as the other person’s words had instantly made him feel uncertain and hopeless about his future.

“Don’t worry, as long as your humble self listens to your Master’s instructions and does as your great Master commands, you will definitely surpass your wildest dreams in the future. That’s right, what is your name?”

“Clint... Clint Beza...” answered the youth feebly.

“Alright, Clint whatever, I need you to do something now.”

“Do what?”

“Stick me on the body of the youth beside you temporarily. I need to probe him for a while. If this is successful, this guy can probably become one of your underlings,” said the voice in a straightforward manner. “At the present stage, your ignorant and useless self has made it impossible for me to use too much strength. Therefore, finding some trustworthy people to control as your subordinates is the first task that you must prepare.”

“Baylon is my friend, not my subordinate,” young Clint corrected the voice weakly. His life had begun to change slowly ever since he’d picked up the thing after he came over to his older sister’s place to experience the working life. He said meaningless things to restore his past glory and accepted the approval of others reluctantly. In the end, his life was immediately turned upside down.

“Garbage is basically garbage. You don’t even have the guts to assume the responsibility for someone else’s fate?”

Clint glanced at Lon beside him and saw the exact same desire and admiration in his eyes towards the Mechs.

“Moreover, even if I dared to undertake the responsibility, you would still require resources to modify yourself, right? Wouldn’t you need time as well?”

“Alright, the decision is yours. Stick me on the surface of that guy’s skin once you’ve finished thinking.” the voice fell to a lower tone immediately.

Although he did not know why the once tyrannical other party had suddenly become so good-natured, Clint could still sigh in momentary relief.

He shifted his gaze towards the television screen again where a Mech fight scene between students of higher grades was being shown on the screen currently.

“Master Red Moon...”

“What’s the matter? Speak now if you have something to say. I’m very busy!” said the voice impatiently.

“I... Could I achieve Lon’s older brother’s... Could I achieve the level of Lon’s older brother?” Clint lowered his head in uncertainty.

“His level? Your goals are too low, don’t you think?” the voice that was referred to as ‘Red Moon’ said scornfully. “Moreover, you really think that the guy called Nonosiva is amazing?”

“Umm... Isn’t he amazing? He could use Level 2 techniques despite his young age...”

“Hehe... Is it really like that?” Red Moon sneered. “Patterning actions like that meant that his Willpower... Enough, you wouldn’t understand even if I told you. You will know next time!”

“Oh...”

The third match

Garen sat inside the Mech and inhaled deeply. Using his Willpower for long periods of time formed a faint ache around his temples. This was caused by his extreme lack of Willpower. Despite possessing the Moonfang’s additional abilities, extended durations of fighting would still increase the burden on his Willpower.

However, this was also a part of the competition. Fighting for extended periods of time would test the endurance of his Willpower.

On the opposite arena, a Black Mech stood facing him on the black alloy ground like a giant approaching enemy. It held a silver towering shield that covered half of its body in one hand. This whole towering shield resembled a mirror that could speedily reflect light beam type weapons or attacks. Moreover, it was made of a durable alloy that possessed even better defensive effects against Gaussian type live ammunition weapons.

“The competition has reached a standstill. London, the Elite from the Losers Bracket is currently up against the instant killer Nonosiva who has a record of consecutive victories. How will the results turn out?” the commentator’s voice could be heard faintly from the outside.

Garen’s face was expressionless. He had already come so far and would truly become the ultimate victor in the Winners Bracket after winning a few more rounds.

His opponent on the other side, London, had defeated Sara. Their leader was currently in the finals with Fervale, but no one knew how the results would turn out.

If Fervale was defeated... The position of Class C would not go any further. They would not be allowed to participate in the internal matches within the Winners Bracket and their previously significant ninth place position would be displaced, causing them to fall to eleventh place instantly.

“But...” Garen stared at the Black Mech opposite him while his head continued to hurt slightly. That guy basically resembled a tortoiseshell. Regardless whether he hit him with a shot from his Concentrated Laser Cannon or used his Rebound Interference technique, his attacks would constantly be resisted and unloaded by his opponent’s Impregnable Wall technique. Moreover, his opponent was an extremely patient person as it was obvious that they were delaying their defense and counter attacking tactics.

Bang!!

A loud explosion could be heard from the Gaussian Cannon suddenly before a black cannonball hit the upper right corner of the Black Mech’s towering shield instantly. It attempted to hit the shield until it was sent flying sideways.

However, it seemed as if the Black Mech had anticipated this much earlier. It turned its body to the side while the shield suddenly moved slightly simultaneously as well.

Clang!

The black Mech stumbled a few steps backward. It was facing Garen sideways now while directly using the center of its shield to counter the cannon balls by deflecting and sending them flying at once.

“Blocked again! Student London’s Level 2 technique Impregnable Wall has been using the core position of its shield to ward off its enemies attacks. Nonosiva’s Gaussian Cannons were sent flying directly as well,” the commentator who was only prepared for the final match spoke hurriedly.

“This is a tortoiseshell!” Garen glanced at the time quickly: 8 minutes.

“I need to finish this immediately!”

Bang!

The black Gaussian Cannon exploded again before the cannon shot out again after a cooling down period of ten seconds.

Before waiting for the next cooling down period, Garen did not look at the outcome but chose to switch to his Laser Cannon before shooting again.

White laser beams hit against one side of London’s shield for a period of time while the entire arena was only filled with the attack shots from Garen’s side. Meanwhile, London could merely defend himself.

As the competition continued to progress, Garen encountered stronger opponents as well. Meanwhile, the consumption of his Willpower became greater. Initially, his Willpower was only at the middle section of the foundation level as he could not even reach one proper level. However, after continuously fighting numerous matches, his Willpower restoration could not fully keep up with his depletion anymore.

Clang!

Black Light flashed from the Gaussian Cannon, finally hitting London’s shield sideways slightly. When it exposed the body of the Mech behind it, only then did the audience realize that all of the continuous Gaussian Cannons from earlier had hit against the same spot without much deviation.

“That’s it...” Garen adjusted his Laser Cannon slightly while white light gathered at the barrel.

It was over...

Tch!

Suddenly, the white Moonfang light in the control console flashed before dimming suddenly.

“This again!!” Garen immediately sensed that something was amiss. He lost control of the Mech’s body instantly while the Mech became abnormally delayed and seemingly unable to react again! “Not this time again!!” a gloomy expression flashed across his face.

Seconds and minutes ticked by while the white light of the Laser Cannon disappeared as everything returned to a calm state again. Garen’s White Mech stood in its spot quietly while facing the Black Mech on the other side. The arena turned completely silent for a while.

The Black Mech glanced at the shield in its hand and became silent for a moment.

Almost ten seconds later.

“I surrender.”

The voice of the Black Mech Pilot London echoed over.

The Black Mech discarded its towering shield and only then did the crowd realize that its shield was currently full of holes. It was almost pierced through. It was obvious that if this went on for a little while longer, this towering shield would become completely useless. Therefore, admitting defeat right now allowed him to lose without being embarrassed completely.

‘Winner, Nonosiva of Class C5!’

The cold mechanical voice was replaced with the announcer's enthusiastic voice.

Most of the students cheered happily, especially the students of Class C5 who were extremely excited.

On the other side, Fervale cut off the right arm of his opponent's Mech in one swift movement. Sparks were flying all over his Mech and it was obvious that he was reaching his limit soon. Moreover, both of the Mechs were undeniably worn-out. It seemed as if he had only won this victory through endurance and perseverance.

‘Winner, Fervale of Class C5!’

Similar noises rang out while Fervale sat inside his Mech and closed his eyes slightly while his exhausted face turned pale.

There was a screen on the side of the blimp that floated across the sky. The ranking of class C5 remained steadily at the ninth place as they had finally defeated the three challenging classes from the Losers Bracket.

Garen raised his head and glanced at the rankings while pressure began to form in his mind. If his opponent had continued to attack without giving up during the risky situation earlier, he might have become the loser instead.

His extremely weak Willpower made it more difficult for him when he encountered subsequent opponents. Without an abundance of Willpower to sustain himself, he could only depend on the Moonfang's control and coordination. He could truly be dragged to death if he encountered long-lasting tortoiseshell-like opponents again.

“Willpower... I need to solve this problem quickly.” when he recalled the continuous times he had screwed up during important moments, Garen knew that the source of his problems was still his weak Willpower.

The unstable circumstances that appeared because of the Moonfang made it difficult for him to grasp the situation when he encountered defensive opponents. If he did not solve this problem, the following internal matches in the Winners Bracket would be very troublesome.

Once he had gotten out of the Mech, he congratulated and celebrated with the others. Next, he underwent restoring massage treatments and replenished his nutrition fluids. When the arena closed in the evening, Garen declined the offer to celebrate the results of keeping their ninth place position again. Instead, he left the arena alone and walked towards his dorm.

The finals would be held on the third day. There would be an internal match in the Winners Bracket where the top three competitors would be selected as the Elite participants who entered the school this year. Most of the competitors in the Winners Bracket had grasped one Level 2 technique and none of them would be easily defeated.

Garen was currently somewhat clearer about his level now. In situations where Willpower was strictly limited, he could only use his combat experience for fighting techniques that did not require Willpower. However, this was merely one factor as his limited Willpower made it impossible for him to fight for extended periods of time. Furthermore, the inability to use fighting techniques that were combined with Willpower made it difficult for him to counter his opponent's Willpower techniques.

In the following final match, he would also need to watch out for accidental situations where the Moonfang would screw up suddenly.

"This is so troublesome..." Garen walked on the road back while constantly focusing on the changing time on his Attribute Pane that represented the time taken for his heart to be modified. The schedule that was counting down kept shrinking continuously.

"I can only find a way to solve this by using Secret Techniques. I can probably use White Peacock Stones to speed up the modification of the Peacock Technique."

Garen returned to his dorm and clicked his terminal communication's address book immediately once he had closed the door. He looked for the contact number of the bearded merchant and called him at once.

After a continuous beeping waiting tone, the other side was connected quickly.

"Why are you calling so early? The goods aren't here yet," said the bearded merchant suspiciously.

“When will the second batch of goods arrive?” Garen asked directly without making any small talk.

“If all goes well, it will be here by noon tomorrow. After all, they’re being delivered from other areas and the quantities this time are slightly larger as well.”