

# Mystical 931

Chapter 931 -

A distance away from Leo City, an abandoned highway among the remote hills.

At this moment, a team of men in short braids, riding on red motorcycles was hollering. They were making weird sounds as they whipped the metal chains in the air, constantly forming shadows hovering above their heads.

“Woo!”

“We discovered a new town, hahaha!!”

“Seems like we now have new food!”

“Eat! Eat! Eat!” Someone yelled.

On the leading motorcycle, there was a man with the longest whip in his hands. His eyes were slightly swollen, his skin a pasty white. The weird thing was that the braid behind him was different from the others. His black whip seemed to be moving faintly like a living creature, slowly crawling about his neck.

“It’s been five days since we have eaten, I’m so hungry...” The leading man muttered.

A passerby on a motorcycle slowly moved in the direction of the small town in front, and the town nearby just happened to be the rival of Leo City — Vulture City.

The leader of the town was a strong, conceited man with a good hand in heavy artillery skills.

“The hog we captured just yesterday had said, there are still five towns ahead in front of this region. Most of them survive by relying on garbage rummaging. The town was pretty big, about two-three hundred population. Seems like we will be able to eat some good food!” A motorcycle at the edge picked up its speed, laughing and exchanged smiles with the leader of the group.

“Take care of the town first!” The Chief raised his right arm up. His fingers were as red as blood, sharp and slender, just like five razor-sharp miniature daggers.

“Forward!” He suddenly shouted. It was followed by a strong enormous sound wave that erupted from his throat. The entire surface of the road shook ferociously.

A small town in the distance, under the morning sun at the observatory, a sentinel quickly rang the electronic alarm.

The continuous beeping sound of the alarm spread in all directions.

The collection team and the hunting team who were still out working around the area speedily returned.

The town was a mess. The leader was a brawny man with short hair, who was swiftly making his way up to the observatory. He took the electronic binoculars and looked towards the side.

“It’s the hunters...” The brawny man muttered.

“Hunters?!! Don’t they just roam around the northeast area? Why would they suddenly come here!” The deputy, who was by the edge, jumped in shock and hurriedly asked.

“Maybe something happened there, perhaps some other reasons. These monsters were prowling around the area. It’s no surprise that they made it here,” the brawny man flung the binoculars to the deputy. “See for yourself.”

He turned to glance at the dozen of young adults who had begun with manpower preparations for the upcoming battle.

“Prepare for battle!”

“Huo!”

The people below raised their firearms, and weapons one by one in response.

“Boss, we’ve never battled the hunters. Should we go seek backup from the other towns?” The deputy started to feel anxious.

“What are you afraid of? I’m here!” The brawn man cast a glance of annoyance towards him.

Hunters, a unique race of the radiation belt, are classified as the humans who were infected by the radiation disease. They practice cannibalism; they are brutal, temperamental, and powerful. However, most of their character had been affected by their instinctive desire to eat. Therefore, their characteristics are a mess – they only know how to attack with instinct. As for slightly complicated logical operations, they have trouble understanding and carrying out simple actions.

The radiation belt had the highest number of hunters. People who were driven out of the region after being infected by the radiation disease were everywhere. Eventually, they became hunters. This ratio would constitute up to 60%, and as for the rest, they were either dead or objects of exploitations. It would be relatively rare, especially for a normal human, to have the ability to survive.

The most barbarous thing was that hunters do not have a long lifeline. They only have just about five to six years. In spite of that, their fecundity was extremely frightening. Comparable to spiders, hunters are able to give birth to five or six, seven or eight, even at least ten children at once. Not only that, once someone became a hunter, their body would carry a forceful virus which would be sufficient to infect a normal radioactive person to become the same kind of low-class hunter. This was the most horrible part.

Fecundity, coupled with the pollution, was a major key to hunters being able to survive in this era of science and technology.

In fact, they were the highest population in the radiation belt. Normally, radioactive people would build up many defense systems to not only resist the threat of ubiquitous mutated insects but also to guard against them.

Boom!

A deafening sound of explosion blasted, severely hitting the army of hunters not far away.

The huge impact force of the explosion overturned the abandoned road, ripping off the cement road mercilessly. Blocks of cement hit the hunters on their head but only left minor wounds before it bounced away weakly.

Few of the hunters taking the lead were sporting a bloody face. Wiping their face grimly, they let out a higher-pitched howl. Even their glares toward the town in the distance became more murderous.

“Kill!”

“Eat!”

The group of people growled. Some of them only knew a few simple word pronunciations.

The entire team was about twenty people. With that, the army formed into the shape of two serpents, and they dashed towards the small town at full speed.

With a ‘bang’, another long-ranged explosion landed, breaking the ground. A hunter was hit by the pieces of rocks and his body burst open on the spot. A mixture of flesh and blood splashed in all directions; the battle had officially begun.

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Leo Town.

East Perrin looked down at the sand model before her.

The two deputies were crouching by her side, sharing the same frown while staring at the sand model.

The three of them were the strongest in the entire Leo Town. Both deputies were Level Two Willpower Masters whereas East Perrin was a Level Three Master. That was also one of the vital reason to why she became the leader of Leo Town.

“Adger who was on patrol duty earlier came over to report that he had spotted sight of hunters roaming about in the Northeast side. I didn’t believe it until Xiao Dong, who just came by, reporting that they have gotten complete pictures of hunters rushing in the direction of Vulture Town. They were almost caught by the hunters too. Imagine if they had been discovered by these monsters, these kids would definitely not be able to make it back!” The deputy, Caster said solemnly.

“How many were there roughly?” East Perrin placed her index finger in her mouth and began biting them slowly.

“Looking at the picture, there should be at least twenty of them,” Caster replied.

The other deputy, Mellon was a much older man with a beard that had faint white glows from within.

“I had once encountered a hunter in a small town somewhere in the East. They may be mad, but they have a strong physique. Some of the stronger ones are even good enough to fight against the mutated beasts, though their lifeline is pretty short. The worst thing is, hunters are cannibals so there will simply be no negotiations. They only kill!”

“What about their fighting power?” Caster asked.

“It’s tough, but as long as two Level Two hunters don’t show up at the same time, the others should not be a major difficulty. They’re afraid of firearms, so just take note of the number. It is mainly those Level Two or above hunters who would have the Hardened Skin Ability. Other than explosions, there’s no other way that you can defeat them!” Mellon shrugged reluctantly, “Thinking back to that year when the hunters attacked the town, I still shudder with fear.”

“What do you guys think? Will the Vulture Town be able to hold them down?” East Perrin whispered.

"I don't know..." Mellon shook his head, "If there are no Level Two hunters, they should be alright. However, if there is... I'm afraid we must be prepared to face a vast amount of hunters. Their rate of pollution is pretty quick..."

What Mellon said sent chills down East Perrin's, and Caster's spines.

"Hopefully the Vulture Town is able to hold them down!" East Perrin stood up, "Immediately release the surveillance drones over Vulture Town. Energy consumption doesn't matter. This is not the time to save money!"

"Alright, I shall start arranging everything," Mellon nodded.

"Don't forget to check the weapons storage — how many energy batteries do we still have, how much stock for bullets do we still have. Send a few people from the processing workshop."

"The processing workshop has only one automatic bullet production line. Sending people over won't increase production, because only two thousand bullets can be produced within a day. On the other hand, energy batteries are better stocked in comparison. I'm just worried that the ray gun isn't strong enough..." Mellon let out a wry smile.

"We can't possibly expect everyone to step up with a blade and fight, right?" East Perrin was getting slightly irritated.

"What about the other towns?" Caster asked quietly, "If we really can't do it, why not retreat?"

"Retreat?" East Perrin was also considering this dilemma. With Mellon, the old encyclopedia by her side, they had a clear understanding of the hunters' strength and what the hunters were capable of. However, if there were even just two Level Two hunters among the twenty other hunters, they were all in deep trouble. In reality, Level Two hunters were the equivalent of two heavily-armed standard Mechs. Even though this was just a theoretical comparison, a Level Two Pilot would definitely be stronger than a Level Two hunter.

While the three of them were hesitating, a pager rang from Caster's waist.

“Uncle Caster! A hunter just turned up!!” Noises could be heard from the other side.

“A lot of... A lot!!” “Run! Back to town!”

“Oh my God! There must be at least fifty or sixty of them!!”

Voices were mixed together, and the three of them were seemingly frowning more and more.

“What is going on there? Talk!” Caster yelled.

“They’re everywhere in this town! The town has been surrounded! The whole town has been surrounded! Oh my God!” The one holding onto the pager replied loudly.

The trio swiftly ran out of the room and approached the observatory to look towards the distance.

Just one glance and the trio was completely shocked.

The town was packed with hunters everywhere. Their eyes were swollen, skin a shade of ghastly pale white, black hair with short braids at the back. Each of them was agile and seemed healthy. Some of them even had their disgusting saliva drooling from their mouths.

From all corners of Leo Town, the collection team and the hunting team had returned. About thirty of them poured into the town and instantly, the construction of Leo Town’s war fortress was resumed.

Steel gates were fiercely dropped down against the ground.

Soon, the entire town formed a cylindrical dark gray fortress. The fences and gates were made from a thick layer of alloy that was as thick as a palm. Above the fence stood thirty young men who were holding their weapons, looking downwards.

A lot of them shared a look of nervous, but most of them had a natural expression. Although they had never come into contact with the hunters, they had experienced a lot of battles, and they were confident in each other.

The three leaders were calm and confident too, standing on the observatory with composure. This motivated them and brought them the confidence to fight.

“Attack!” East Perrin raised her arm, shouting into the megaphone handed by the deputy.

Bang bang bang!

A series of gunshots began.

A few hunters were knocked onto the ground, blood oozing out of their heads.

These hunters did not seem to have a leader, but neither did they seem hungry. They were just wandering around dazed. At this moment, forced by the sound of gunshots, they stopped in their tracks, surveying the whole town.

Woo!

Suddenly, a dramatic high-pitched whistling sound could be heard from the distance. It seemed as if a hunter was howling.

“It’s a Level Two hunter!!” Mellon’s expression paled immediately.

East Perrin and Caster also felt that the whole situation had just gotten even more complicated.

“What do we do?!” Caster looked at East Perrin.

“What’s the speed for hunters?” East Perrin asked in a low tone.



“Really fast, we probably can’t outrun them,” Mellon shook his head.

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“Then let’s prepare ourselves fully, see if they dare to come through!” There was a look of determination on East Perrin’s face. “We have firepower and defense, our food supply can probably last us for two weeks. I don’t believe they would be able to stick around that long!”

Both deputies nodded in agreement, and left to quickly survey the surroundings of the town in case there were loopholes in their defense system.

The defense team was divided into two groups of fifteen men each; one will patrol whereas the other returned to rest.

Soon, the predators which were gathering outside head towards the direction of the sounds. Not much longer, they were moving as fast as the vehicles, vanishing upon the horizon.

The people in town let out a sigh of relief.

However, through her binoculars, East Pirren could see that there were still predators far in the surroundings and still keeping their eyes on this town.

She then understood better. “We’ve been marked,” she thought to herself. The predators may not be smart, but their sense of logic was still there and was sufficient enough to make simple plans and strategies.

She has witnessed a predator’s speed. If they were to leave this town, it would not take long for the predators to catch up. Without any defense, they would not even have much resistance power to fight back.

“Guess we will just have to stand strong then.” A sense of danger lurked in her mind.

However, she was not aware that not only this area was compromised. In fact, as long as there was a crack on the ground in the radiation belt, large pack of predators will enter non-stop through the crack.

They will kill anybody on sight, and destroy any towns they see! They are like wild dogs, generally breaking out into the open once every century but this time it happened earlier and nobody expected it.

Only the radiation belt will experience this kind of catastrophe. The other territories raised up their own isolation shields, completely cutting off all contact from the radiation belt. The territories looked as if they were islands amongst the sea with their white lights, the Blackboard region's outpost were also disengaged and commanded to return to the region.

The territories were strong but they did not expand much, allowing the radioactive people to enjoy and dig out the many minerals around the region and used it to deal business with people from the region. Because of this, they could only maintain their territory and strength this much during the predator wave. It is not that they did not want to expand, but the general folks within the territory had no idea how the predator wave will actually add on to the horror and stress if they do expand.

The entire surface of the mother planet, all the territories including Central Academy, were just like a cluster of stars distributed randomly at the center of the four cardinal points around the area, were all surrounded by the predators.

On the other hand, the stronghold of the radiation belt was that everyone was mostly holed up. Such a predator wave would last a day and only withdraw during nightfall.

Just like that every day. Even if it's just half a day would give the radioactive people hope.

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Nightfall came quietly.

Even though it was quiet for the whole day, East Perrin was exhausted from the intense pent-up feelings.

She needs to be at the forefront constantly, to provide support, to calm everyone down and to avoid chaos in town. Being the strongest radioactive person in town, if she herself were to fall, the whole town will surely collapse as well.

Back in her bedroom, she glanced at the parts of the thigh unit at the corner of the room. Its upper clasp held a bottle of nutrient solution which was already completely absorbed, leaving just a gray crust covering the surface of the component. That was the residue of the nutrient solution.

“You really did finish it?” East Perrin walked over in surprise and picked up the bottle. Looking at the bottle, it really was empty.

“Anyways, this highly radioactive nutrient solution was previously used for gardening purposes, we have plenty of it. It will be good to see how much exactly you can absorb!” East Perrin walked out of the bedroom and ordered her people to send over another dozen bottles of unwanted nutrient solution.

She poured all of the nutrients onto the part.

The surface of the part was covered with a clear, blue shade of the nutrient solution, and it was being absorbed at a speed that the naked eye could observe.

“Gee...” East Perrin’s curiosity got stronger. Amongst the many kinds of mutated creatures she had seen since she was young, she had never seen such an abnormal transformation.

And it was inside the unit where she could not see.

Garen’s curled up body had recovered to his usual size. His eyes flickered slightly and he seemed to be regaining his conscious.

The strange thing was, the two marks of Energy Machinists which were floating behind him started to glow. The Energy Machinist Key on Garen’s body which was not broken also seemed to be vibrating slowly.

'Verifying Level Two energy machinist qualification, are you able to participate in the special ability space market in the vicinity?'

A subtle sense of Willpower force asked Garen.

"Energy Machinist... market?" Garen asked in a daze.

"... Participate."

'Confirmation is complete. Commencing separation of Willpower, entering the special ability space...'

Waking up and opening his eyes, Garen glanced around the surrounding darkness. Within seconds, he felt as if he had entered a rainbow-like cylindrical tunnel, flying upwards swiftly.

Not long after, the end of the tunnel appeared in a form of glowing, white light.

Flying out from the cylindrical tunnel, Garen covered both of his eyes instinctively to let it slowly adjust to the sudden brightness.

He was at the plaza which he visited last time. But this plaza seemed to be slightly different.

Its ground was made of white jade, a water fountain with a levitating leaping dolphin was right in the middle, as if Anti-gravity Skills was used.

There were not many shops surrounding the square, just five or six. Maybe that was why the plaza seemed relatively small.

"Garen!!"

Suddenly, a woman's voice arose from a distance.

Garen lifted his head and looked over just to see a haggard Celine running over quickly. They were not surrounded by many people, at most about twenty or thirty people.

A few energy machinists were squatting by the stalls communicating with the stall owners in silence. Some were standing and asking questions as if investigating something.

There were also a few who were standing together and exchanging whispers. Celine walked over swiftly without attracting attention, and pulled Garen aside towards a corner.

"Relax, only you can hear my voice!" Celine said loudly. Her face was filled with joy. "I knew you were alive!"

"I also thought I will die." Garen shook his head. "Such bad luck, both factions somehow dragged me into their battle. I guess destruction pursues the great."

"Destruction pursues the great? Nice saying," Celine nodded in agreement, her eyes were slightly red.

"I've been here waiting for you for almost ten days. There is a predator wave, the special ability space is now the only medium to communicate and trade items. Furthermore, all territories in the area are completely out of touch, hence the influence is really small. Even if you are a wanted fugitive, nobody here would care. Heinous energy machinists here are also treated equally, so as long as you don't disobey the law set by the Federation of Energy Machinists, everything from the outside world no longer matters."

"That's great then!" Garen sighed in relief. Thinking back what happened this time around, he did not expect Professor Van Doe to give up on him. On the other hand, their opponent the Divine Wind would definitely not allow the Van Doe faction to have another prodigy, hence seized the opportunity. In the end, the slightly weaker Van Doe side had to retreat.

A prodigy who was dead or crippled would just be a dead waste, that was perhaps the main reason why Van Doe gave up at the end.

“Where are you now? If you need help you had better be quick, I’m at the Polar Region already. The protection shield is not closed completely. Have you escaped the territory?” Celine asked quickly.

“How do you know!?” Garen asked in shock.

“The energy machinist’s key in your body has a weak signal over here. Besides me, nobody knows you entered this area or crossed over to the special ability space, so I can roughly sense your presence,” Celine responded instantly. She looked left and right nervously.

“Listen, I can’t do much about most of your things. I tried my best with your Exclusive Mech but still wasn’t able to get it back from Fila. I have already hid some of the leftover Mastery Energy Ores earlier. As for the materials for your biochemical pool, I only managed to hide the Mila Cells. The other rare materials that you’ve been collecting this past two years had been taken by Professor Van Doe’s men. If you still want your Mila Cells, I can immediately send it over before the predators break into air territory.”

“Van Doe took them?” Garen was stunned.

“You don’t believe me?” A look of sarcasm flashed in Celine’s face.

“When you were at your worst, your professor sent men to your place right away and rummaged the whole place just to find information on how you process the Rainbow Stone. Unfortunately, they came up with nothing. He thought he was secretive enough to hide his tracks well but what he didn’t know was that I had people at your place at all times to keep a lookout.”

Garen remained silent.

“Now that we’re under their watch, I don’t have time. Other than your family, the men sent by your professor wanted me to surrender your skills information too. Hehe.” Celine snickered.

“There has been zero news from Fila’s side but as for your professor, he’s been sending men every day to keep a lookout on me. What happened to your family was also his doing, Fila doesn’t even bother meddling with your family.”

Garen pondered for a while and asked.

“What happened to my family?”

“They were detained. Your sister was captured and sent to Van Doe, God knows what he did to her. I rushed over immediately to bring her out but I think she was drugged as she was heavily disoriented, answering every question I asked. As for your parents...their company was shut down and they have disappeared, but don’t worry, I won’t let anything happen to them!!” Celine said firmly in a low voice.

Garen took a deep breath. Even though he had no feelings attachment towards this dimension’s Nonosiva family, but he was still the reason they were facing such disasters.

“Thank you.” He patted Celine’s shoulder firmly.

“What are you planning to do?” Celine asked warily, “Please don’t do anything impulsive! You can’t win them!”

“Don’t worry, I might not be able to make it as a Pilot but I still am an energy machinist.” He had a cold glare in his eyes.

The Seventh Divine Wind General, Van Doe, Fila. Truth be said, he did not blame the Divine Wind General or Fila. As the enemy, using tactics to fight back was normal.

But what was saddening was that as his own professor, Van Doe did not give him the education and knowledge he needed. Everything he knew about the Black Wind was already something given that people of the Black Flood Party knew already. In the end, he became the sacrifice of a battle between two factions, he became the interest of a trade. The one who gained the most in the end, was still Professor Van Doe himself.

In reality, all Van doe did was utilized a little energy to activate the Inherited Level to protect him. Even if his prodigy disciple was killed by hostile enemies, the Black Flood Party would compensate and maintained the balance needed but he was certain that this was not what he will only be getting. Compared to parts of the harvest, Van Doe had already gotten more than enough but he was still greedy and continued to do evil.

"I will return sooner or later...don't worry," Garen muttered. As the top Martial Arts Master, there was no way he would give up this easily because of one obstacle.

"When do you want the Mila Cells? Just set a venue and I will arrange aircrafts to send it over," Celine said softly.

Garen understood how sticky the situation was. The other materials needed for the Biochemical Pool could be found easily in the radiation belt, except for Mila Cells which were considered a scarce mineral and not easy to be found.

"I'm outside the radiation belt, but am not sure exactly where. I actually just woke up from my coma."

"I can send the cells to your area using aerial drones. I will give you a cipher to receive the signals. Once the drones reach your area, you can use it to open it and retrieve the stuffs. If you don't use the cipher, it will self-destruct." Celine took out a small, black metal that resembled a matchbox.

"This is an automatic signal transmitter that will help the drone to locate your Energy Machinist Key's signal. Once you've retrieve the cells, destroy the transmitter immediately. You must remember this! Be careful!"

"Yes, I understand!"

Garen know that Celine is most probably the only support he still had within the Blackboard territory. They share a relationship which seemed like master and apprentice, but also good friends at the same time. The pressure that they both faced now was something unimaginable to the ordinary.

He patted Celine's shoulder. "You have to be careful too!"



“Don’t worry, I’ll be fine!” Celine smiled, but it seemed somewhat strained. “Alright, I should leave now before they discover my tracks and send out Energy Machinists after me. Remember, the cipher code is...take care.”

“Okay.”

Garen’s heart emptied a little as Celine gradually faded out of view. He felt as if he was the only one left in the world.

He suddenly thought of Clint, Baylon and the mysterious Red Moon. Perhaps they have already officially embarked on a path of their own.

Looking around, the Energy Machinists around him were communicating wordlessly with the people, but something seemed different from the last time.

Moreover, the appearances of these Energy Machinists did not seem as clean and neat as the people in the territories, but more like the radioactive people in the radiation belt.

“Is it possible that radioactive people are able to become Energy Machinists?” Garen had this dubious thought in mind.

He walked into a random shop to look around.

Inside, rows of counters showed that they were no different from an ordinary store. Several customers were wandering inside leisurely, some of them were bargaining with the pretty sales lady.

Nobody noticed Garen when he walked in.

He glanced casually at the items behind the glass counter.

Navy blue roots, crimson red stones, and a writhing, black, half-grass-half-insect. There were also broken pieces of metal nameplates, and things that looked like fossils of living creatures’ fingerprints.

Even the names on it were strange.

Tears of the Sun, Wind Gauntlets, Freezing Stone, Beautiful Roots, Crab Legs.

“Excuse me, is there anything you need?” Someone came over and ask.

Garen looked up and saw a young, beautiful sales girl.

“This is my first time entering the special ability space, may I know what’s the currency used here?”

“We use Spar Stones, a type of energy stone. To be exact, it’s Energy Crystals. Spar Stone is actually a universal currency, and one of it can be exchanged for 100,000 Mother Planet Universal Units,” The friendly sales clerk replied.

“You’re an Energy Machinist too?” Garen was slightly curious. According to Celine, one can directly bring out the physical objects here, which made him even more curious about this special ability space. However if one can actually do that, the cost of it would definitely be high. Otherwise, Celine would not have risked the danger and sent the drones over, but came over herself to trade directly.

“Sorry, our sales clerks are not Energy Machinists. We are just ordinary people hired by the Federation of Energy Machinists,” The sales clerk answered patiently, and shook her head with a smile.

“How do I earn Spar Stones then?” Garen asked.

“Spar Stones can be earned through the sales of patented techniques, completion of delegated tasks, jobs at stores and much more other ways. If you possess of good materials, those can also be sold to gain interest, but it’d better be the top materials because it is slightly difficult to bring physical objects into the special ability space. It comes with a high price, one kilogram of physical object will cost at least 200, 000 Crystals.” The sales clerk explained in a hushed tone.

“200,000 Crystals for just one kilogram...” Garen finally understood why Celine would choose such a risky method to transport the Milar Cells. “Can I trade in my Universal Units for Spar Stones?”

“Sorry, Spar Stones can be exchanged for Universal Units but it is impossible for the other way around.”  
The sales clerk smiled, “Do you need anything else?”

She could already tell that the young man in front of her was a rookie without an instructor.

Every year, the ability market would encounter many such rookies. Unlike the other sales clerk, she did not discriminate against the rookies. After all, they were not even comparable to Energy Machinists and had no way to achieve that level. What qualifications do they have to discriminate others? So even if the other person had no intentions of purchasing, she would still be happy to answer all sort of questions to clear their confusion.

“Sea Sand, what are you doing there? We have customers waiting for you at the reception!” A girl’s cry came from the inside of the shop.

The sales lady in front of Garen immediately responded.

“Coming.”

“If you still need anything, please wait for a bit and I will be right back to answer your questions.

Please excuse me,” Sea Sand smiled at Garen apologetically.

“It’s alright, you go get busy.” Garen knew he was now penniless, to be actually served by someone even just for a bit was not bad already.

“Sea Sand!” The voice urged again.

Sea Sand gave a small bow towards Garen before quickly dashing back into the store.

Her friendly service left a good impression with Garen.

He turned around in the store, once again approaching the counter by the door and discovered Mila Cells there.

‘Mila Cells: The fundamental cell needed in building an Energy Machinist’s Biochemical Pool. Highly corrosive, radiation resistant, Level Five hardness, with automatic repairing function. Priced at 4,999 Crystals.’

The small pellets of Mila Cells seemed like a blob of grey brain mass, still slightly squirming. It looked disgusting.

However, Garen knew that if it is provided with sufficient nutrients and organic matter, a pool-sized mold of a Biochemical Pool would be able to form within just a matter of one hour’s time.

“5,000 Crystals...in order to bring out the special ability space, I’d need another 200,000 Crystals...this is definitely something not an ordinary person can afford,” Garen shook his head while he exited the shop.

He turned around to look at the shop’s name: Come Again.

“This name is actually easy to remember.”

He strolled around the square when he realized that an Energy Machinist stood in front of the dolphin water fountain in the middle of the plaza, and pressed his palm on it. He could not tell what the person was doing.

He waited for the Energy Machinist to release his hand, opened his eyes and left before he followed suit. He held his hand out similarly and place his palm on the dolphin.

An icy smooth rush spread within him, and a melodious, electronic female sound rang in his head.

“Welcome to the teleport system, please select your destination.”

A sheet of translucent panel instantly bounced in front of Garen, on the surface of the panel were each delivery points.

Above the surface was simply just a model of the Mother Planet, points of lights shone like the stars indicating the choices of destination.

Garen's sight fell on one of the points and the edge of the corresponding light immediately emerged into sight with price, the name of location and specialty.

The planet was turning slowly, there were three large spots which were most attractive, looking as if the moon was surrounded by various shining, bright stars.

The first one was Polar City, located in the vast ocean.

The second one was Blue Sky, it seemed that the town itself was always moving.

The third one was Nagadako Town, which was the brightest spot among the three. At the side of the display, it was introduced as the Alliance City Center of the Mother Planet.

Garen casually looked around, the cheapest teleport point cost at least five to 600 Crystals, if he were to teleport to any of the three huge towns far away, it would cost up to 10,000!

"Everything needs money..." Garen left the dolphin and recited exit thrice in his head. All at once, he felt his surroundings glow in colors of the rainbow and he was back to the tunnel which he came from in the first place.

When the dizziness faded, he opened both eyes.

He was back within the missile compartment of the thigh unit.

Slightly moving his body, he slowly withdrew his natural Cold Radiation and started controlling the frost which was slowly spreading, accelerating the melting process.

A thick layer of ice had already formed within the internal part of the thigh unit, gradually melting rapidly as the time increased.

As time passed, Garen finally saw the opening of the frozen part melt away.

He reached out his hand to push and all of a sudden, he was sprung out of the unit as silent as a raccoon.

He was unsure about the situation outside so he got into an alert posture in the first place.

However, just seconds after exiting the thigh unit, Garen sensed something was wrong.

In the large bed beside him, a naked, slim girl was asleep comfortably. The bedroom seemed to belong to the girl, the door and windows were tightly locked.

When he sprung out, he coincidentally landed at the side of the girl's bed.

The girl's skin was fair, and seemed to glow like ivory under the moonlight. She slept like a starfish, and she did not even use a blanket. She seemed like she was muttering something while sound asleep, her long slender legs twitching occasionally, even her toes would move from time to time.

"Where is this?" Garen moved his sight away from the girl and glanced around. Walking towards the curtains, he gently lifted the curtain and looked out to see the unique architectural wasteland style that only belonged to no other than the radiation belt.

Grey, dilapidated, but strong and ferocious at the same time, just like a beast drifting off to slumber.

Just as he released the curtain, he sensed a breeze from his back. Lightly tapping with the back of his hand, Garen dodged to his side and avoided the blow from the back.

At the same time, his finger tapped on the abdomen of the person behind him.

Crack!

## Chapter 934: Siege 2

The attacker bended her waist slightly, held back the pain, and swung a powerful kick at Garen's head.

Bang!

Raising his arm to to grab the attacking leg, Garen realized that the attacker was the girl who was supposedly sound asleep just now.

One of her legs was now locked on Garen's neck. With only one leg standing, she could not use much energy to attack, what more to hide her private area which was now pulled open and clearly seen by Garen. She was not even trying to cover it. She suddenly produced a black dagger in hand and stabbed it at Garen's waist ferociously.

"Let go!"

Garen grabbed her wrist accurately, and with a twist, took down her dagger.

"Who are you?!" The girl glared at Garen coldly. She tried hard to wriggle her legs to close them but could not exert energy to do so.

"Were you the one who rescued me?" Garen motioned towards the thigh unit with his chin.

"You were the one inside?" The girl seemed surprised, then noticed that the both of them were in an inappropriate position and that his eyes were directed at her private parts.

“Are you having a good look?” Her face turned cold once again.

“That is none of my business,” Garen let go of her and took a step towards the side. There was a glimpse of smile in his eyes.

With a cold face, she put on her pajamas.

“Why were you hiding inside?”

“Take a guess.” Garen found a chair to sit down. “This is the radiation belt, right?”

“You’re from the territory?” The girl understood him. If he was a radioactive person, he would not have asked within or outside the domain because radioactive people were not allowed into the domain.

“I’m Garen,” Garen leaned back in the chair and introduced himself. “Your place seems troubled.”

“I’m East Perrin, and this is Leo Town, a small town in the radiation belt near Blackboard Region for radioactive people. If you are from the domain, you should’ve heard about the predators’ wave then?” East Perrin explained swiftly.

“I don’t care who you are, where you are from, and what your background is. Our biggest trouble now is that the predators will be attacking soon. If we don’t have a solution to that, we will all die here! So do you have any ideas or strategies? If you don’t, I believe you should help contribute and see how to help us defeat the predator wave.”

Garen may have showed up in an odd way, but she had no time to find out who he was – not during a dangerous period like this, anybody who popped out will surely be food to the predators and won’t be able to escape. An extra pair of hands means one more share of strength.

“Well, you sure are straightforward. Predator wave, huh?” Garen came across it from the academy Inner Courtyard’s library. If it was not for his elite rank in the Inner Courtyard, he would not even had a chance to read about the predator wave.



Predators were extreme mutated humans. They looked like normal human beings on the outside, but they in fact had already detached from the general human species and became a completely different species of their own.

The predators were extremely atrocious. Long-range attack meant nothing to them as they have hard and tough skins which greatly deflect the force of ray guns and other long-ranged firearms. Only short-ranged attacks and explosives would inflict the biggest harm on them.

These were private and confidential information stored in the library, not to be leaked to others.

"Aren't you worried that I'm a bad person?" Garen regarded the girl standing in front of him with respect. She was charmingly bold.

"I don't care if you're a bad person or one of the good guys, as long as you're human, you're going to die when the predators come attacking." East Perrin started to suit up and put on her full armor.

"If we go according to rules, I should have you locked up and keep you under surveillance for a period of time. However, we do not have sufficient manpower now. So if you don't want to die, you better come with us and help to defend."

Garen laughed.

"Do you think I'm joking?" East Perrien glared at him coldly. "Follow me."

She quickly unlocked the door and walked out.

Garen followed her out of the bedroom. It was an ordinary second-floor corridor with iron railings. Down the stairs on the left, ten or so men were squatting in the open space. They looked tired and drained. An elderly man with a white-gray beard came over and looked at Garen.

"Perrin, who is he?"

“An unlucky bastard who was seeking refuge in the Mech’s missile compartment,” East Perrin replied casually. “What’s the situation now?”

“Most of the predators have moved to Vulture Town. I tried using my wireless signal to contact the people there but there was no response, most probably...” Malone muttered.

“Damn it!”

East Perrin frowned.

“If we go on like this, we will die from being siege alive!”

Listening to their conversation, Garen observed that the men around did not look happy when they saw him walking out from East Perrin’s room..

He did not mind, though. His powers have yet to be regenerated. If East Perrin were to attack him with Willpower force, he would be dead meat; but it was pretty obvious that this girl did not know any Willpower techniques.

After all, these techniques were exceptionally rare to achieve within the domain.

Without any Willpower force techniques and based on his current physique, if he was up against these people who just throw punches and kicks, it would simply be a unilateral massacre.

“You guys do now that the predators are less active at night?” Garen could not bear the pointless discussion going on beside him and decided to butt in.

“At night?” East Perrin was stunned for a moment. “How do you know?”

“Me? I was a former top student after all.” Garen smiled. “Let’s go, we’ll have a look at the situation from above the wall first.”

East Perrin glanced at Malone, and he nodded giving his consent.

“Alright.”

East Perrin and Garen casually greeted the others who were resting before she led him to the interior wall’s ladder to climb up the ten-meter high black iron enclosure.

Garen assumed that the predator wave just started and would not be much of a problem. They could leverage nighttime to rest and defend again during the daytime.

However when they reached the top and he had a good look at the surroundings through the infrared binoculars, he was instantly speechless.

“How can there be so many of them!!?” His face fell all of a sudden.

Standing beside him, Malone and East Perrin were devastated once again. They thought that as someone from the domain, Garen would be knowledgeable and would be able to come up with some sort of strategy. They both had their hopes high, but it seemed like their only glimmer of hope has also vanished.

Garen was astonished. The predators’ shadows could be seen everywhere. Huddling close and tight together, there could be more than hundreds of them. They do not even know if there were any Level Two or even higher level predators among the crowd.

He was only left with Level One Willpower, and his Energy Machinist Willpower was not fit for battle. He had only his martial arts skills but that will not help much. The defense set up by the predators was not something he could easily defeat as well; the most he could was to kill ten of them but the others would just swarm up and he would be screwed for sure.

“This is troublesome...” Setting down the binoculars, Garen looked grim.

“You’re from the domain, do you have any ideas? If it’s troublesome, that means there’s still hope!” East Perrin’s eyes flashed as she asked quickly.

"I do have an idea, but it all depends on when will the predators attacking and how long are your people able to delay the attack," Garen replied lightly.

If only he was alone, it would be much easier. He could just simply pop a Distortion Seed in and he would stand a chance to escape already. However, one of the biggest disadvantages of consuming the Distortion Seed was that it is uncontrollable. Besides the host's body, the parasites would madly attack any other living creatures around until the host finishes all potential and the genes crash.

In other words, once he relies on the Distortion Seed, he might kill everyone around him, including East Perrin who saved his life. That was something he did not wish to happen.

Furthermore, if there were higher ranked predators with extraordinary speed and power around, using the Distortion Seed will not help much as well.

"Then tell us, what should we do!?" East Perrin asked immediately.

"Just drag the time, all I need is time!" Garen recalled some strategies from an Energy Machinist recording. If there was a Biochemical Pool, he could actually process his own cannon fodder. In addition to the Distortion Seed, he can produce longer lasting cannon fodders that would not easily crumble so fast. With that, he would be able to increase their defense system immensely. The dead bodies of the predators could also be used to process new materials for the cannon fodder too.

"How long, exactly?" East Perrin asked in a hushed tone.

"I don't know, but I'm waiting as well. At least we still have a glimmer of hope, right?" Looking at the distance, Garen replied softly.

Malone and East Perrin were silent.

He was right, this was better than no hope at all.

"I'll go calm everyone down," She turned and went down the ladder.

With the predator siege for the past few days, the people were frightened. They did not know how long would the predators stay, but their food supplies could only last for just a week. If they were still under siege after a week, nothing mattered anymore because they were going to starve to death.

Malone remained above the wall, staring at Garen.

“Young man, we are now in the same boat, none of us can escape. Even if we are able to hold our defense, what about our food?”

“What do your people eat before this?” Garen asked.

“Mutated fish from the radiation lake.”

“The predators can be eaten also...” Garen said lightly.

Malone shuddered. He felt a chill rising up behind his back. This was something said by one who have never eaten it before.

Staring at Garen’s back, his guts told him that the future of Leo Town will change because of this young man.

Malone turned around and left.

Garen continued to stay up and looked around when all of a sudden, sounds of panic could be heard from below.

“Caster! Caster has escaped!”

Somebody was yelling. It sounded like chaos below.

One of the gates opened and a motorcycle rushed out in full speed. Its engine was roaring and ejecting blue flames similar to those by a Mech.

“Damn it! He took the only power furnace we have!”

“That was the only power furnace in the processing workshop!! If we don’t have weapons we’re screwed! Damn you, Caster!!!”

“Half of the drinks are gone! Even the food!” One by one, the voices were getting louder.

Garen looked at the motorcycle charging ahead as fast as lightning towards the North where the number of predators were the least.

“An escapee? If there’s a first there’s going to be a second...” Garen murmured.

Below, East Perrin and Malone were both staring grimly at the motorcycle rushing across the distance through the embrasure.

As one of the three leaders of the town, Caster had the nerve to run away himself. Not only did he dare to bring along almost half of the town’s food supplies, he even took the only power furnace in town that was used to produce firepower.

“Without the power furnace, we won’t even have our production line anymore!” Malone said solemnly.

East Perrin bit her lips but remained silent, her nails digging into her palms hard. The small glimmer of hope they originally had moments ago just became a little smaller...

Boom!

Chapter 935

An explosion was heard in the distance.

The motorcycle elevated high into the sky. It was rushing towards the predator crowd when it wanted to elevate up and sweep through them when an unknown force smacked it hard. With a loud bang, both motorcycle and human exploded in pieces.

"I knew it," Garen muttered, staring at the flames from above the wall.

It did not take long for East Perrin and Malone to climb up. Seeing the flames, they were silent with a grim expression in their eyes.

"We are surrounded completely. The predators are taking their time, devouring and digesting people from the other towns first. We're no different from animals waiting in the slaughterhouse," Garen sneered. "That guy was delusional to escape in the first place, he was seeking death."

Malone and East Perrin were dead silent.

The noisy crowd below went silent. They now know that Carter did not make it. Any remaining glimmer of hope seemed to vanish now. Carter still failed to escape even when using a Mech's power furnace as his motorcycle engine – his death may helped to vent their spleen, but it was still somewhat tragic and sorrowful.

Turning back, Garen saw that East Perrin seemed to still be in a daze without any reaction. He scoffed.

"Go down and keep an eye on the people, be careful of them feeling resigned and abandoning themselves as despair would only increase their radiation level! With the increase in the levels, they can turn into predators. This is a way to avoid death, and this would not be the first time for anybody to do so."

East Perrin had yet to recover from her daze. Not only did the betrayal of her deputy of many years hit her hard, but the fact that she could barely see a trace of hope made her mentally exhausted. She did not know what to do.

Smack!

Garen smacked her hard on the butt.

“Go!”

East Perrin came around and glared at Garen.

“You just asked for a fight!”

“You can’t beat me anyway,” Garen said lightly.

East Perrin knew Garen was not just sitting around waiting for death, once again she held onto this glimmer of hope to live on, then quickly made her way downstairs to watch out for her people. Although the people of Leo Town were slightly more cooperative, but if someone like Caster betrayed, there might just be a second Caster...and a third Caster.

Malone looked at Garen deeply. Even he would not know how to escape in such a situation, but this young man...the look in his eyes was not despair, but tenacious and perseverance.

Turning around, he followed East Perrin down.

At a time like this, Garen’s unknown past did not matter. Under such extreme circumstances, even if there were other plans and if it did not work, they will all die anyway.

Other than believing in Garen, they did not have many choices left.

Even finding explosives to blow up and perish together was not a plan, the town did not have many explosives.

As the both of them left, another duo came up to Garen — a male and female with strong physiques, looking strong and courageous.



“Uncle Malone asked us to come assist you, just give us the orders and we’ll help!” The guy said in a loud voice.

Garen nodded.

“Just let one-third of the people to guard above now and let the others rest. They simply won’t survive with just two shifts.” Garen started giving orders immediately. These two were also the first step for him to understand the authority power in this town.

However, he would not care less if he had power over the town, what could he possibly do with a town of thirty, forty people at most?

“Alright.” The man went to pass the word to Malone.

Garen looked at the woman left behind.

“Go gather all the high radiation food in town, I’ll need it.”

“Got it!”

The woman nodded.

“Once you’re done, update your leader East Perrin. I shall go have a rest. Oh, bring me some food, please.” Garen added.

The woman seemed reluctant to do so, but headed down anyway.

Garen had one last glance at the distance before going down. According to the predators’ nature, they would not attack at nighttime. He felt at ease, the ten people above the fence should be sufficient to guard the town for now.

Not wanting to greet people, he asked East Perrin to arrange a room for him to rest.

After eating a plate of gooey mashed potatoes, he was full. Closing the door so that people would not disturb him, he held onto his Energy Machinist's key and his Willpower gradually slowed down.

He could feel the key emitting small vibrations towards his head. It was just what Celine had said about the function of the black box which would always send out transmitting signals.

"I still have no idea how long do I need to wait to get the Mila Cells..." Garen let out a long sigh. If he could choose, he seriously did not want to use the uncontrollable Distortion Seed. The best plan was using a Biochemical Pool which is controllable, and a Distortion Seed to increase its radiation rate. With that, he would be able to form the perfect controlling formation strength. He read this in an Energy Machinist training book once and after all sorts of theoretical calculations, he was sure this would work.

"I should go find an Energy Machinist Imprint first, or else I can't even produce the most basic cannon fodder. Without the imprint, designing our own cannon fodder beings would cost a great deal. I need at least a large-scale quantum computing power constantly calculating for three months straight. That would be the lowest level of computing power. An Energy Machinist's computing power in terms of biochemical models would be much stronger compared to a quantum computing power."

An Energy Machinist Imprint was considered as a completed biochemical organism model which only needed raw materials to continuously produce cannon fodder using the Biochemical Pool. For example, calculating the experiment bench process, the model made through the imprinting process would act as the model. Once the raw materials were added in, the next batch of cannon fodder could be produced already. The efficiency would be extremely high.

Not only that, some popular Energy Machinist Imprint went through rounds of improvements by Energy Machinists; as compared to the new cannon fodder he developed himself which reached decent levels regardless of saving of raw materials, power, speed, maintainability, or the stability of its form.

That was why Energy Machinists will purchase the Energy Machinist Imprints that they require personally, then make further improvements from its basic core, unless they were those from the Federation of Energy Machinists who were always running experiments in the laboratory.

It was safe to say that every capable Energy Machinist was also a chemist, biologist, and a geneticist.

The melodious sound of the robotic female voice sounded again.

‘Please select your trading point.’

Garen had entered the rainbow-like cylindrical tunnel once again and right in front of him was a piece of translucent panel which was displaying the possible trading points nearby.

Garen could see his own spot that was marked with a clear red spot while there were another three points nearby. Two of them were slightly brighter, whereas the other one was slightly dimmer as if it was going to blow out any moment.

He tried to connect his Willpower to the brightest spot.

‘Jade Workshop: This is a private space. The owner is Energy Machinist, Harbin Jasper. Entrance fee is one Crystal.’ The feminine voice explained.

Garen smiled bitterly as he looked at himself. His hand rummaged around for a bit and quickly came across the black key which clearly showed his current financial status, which was a zero.

‘Your Spar Stones are not sufficient. Please come back after reloading.’

The robotic, feminine voice said again.

Garen tried to find another spot but all the others needed a cost of one Crystal and there were no other free trading points around. He actually just wanted to go the free trading point from earlier on but unfortunately, the timings were not fixed, and are only open from time to time.

He tried the third spot last, the one that was getting dimmer by the second.

‘Coco Biochemical Shop: This is a private space, anyone may enter anonymously. Entrance fee is not needed.’

“Fortunately I still have somewhere to go.” Garen sighed in relief. He wouldn’t have known how else to produce an Energy Machinist Imprint which has the most complicated Willpower structure. In reality, it was equivalent to using an Energy Machinist’s Willpower as the main material, add on a few other items and a precise computing calculator would be built.

Some people might think that just a mere change in Willpower would not change a thing.

Yet the earliest computer was actually just a combination of various metals and other sorts of material then assembled together. If there was no structural assembling, the computer would just be a bunch of separate raw materials without any meaning to it.

After selecting the trading point, Garen instantly felt his body accelerate and soon, he was flying through the rainbow tunnel once again before reaching the entrance.

The glowing white light was not as dazzling as before.

Garen landed on the ground lightly and began eyeing the surrounding environment.

It was a brown, empty wooden hut but with a store layout. Dimmed lightings hung on its walls. As its yellow light shone down, there was an odd sense of tranquility.

There was an L-shaped counter, but not much of the things could be seen behind its glass. The store should be the size of a small basketball court but there were only three customers in it including Garen. The customer in front was talking to a little girl behind the counter, but they did not seem to have reached a common ground. The customer turned and shook his head slowly before disappearing, obviously fed up and left.

The red-haired little girl behind the counter tugged on her ponytail, but her pretty oval face seemed to look disappointed. She has on a light brown apron as a uniform. Tall and slender, her physique matured well with a slim waist and full chest.

The other customer seemed to be just browsing and had no intentions of buying. The entire store screamed of loneliness.

Garen walked a few steps to the front and looked at the awards hanging on the side of the wall that was framed by wooden frames. There was also a huge silver bull's head with two sharp horns.

## Chapter 936: Imprint 2

"That is the golden award for the Silver Horn Energy Machinist Competition which our store won!" Seeing Garen looking at it with interest, the girl squeezed a smile on her face and walked over to introduce it to him. She looked like she was only 14 or 15 years old. She was very tired at this time, but she still had to take the initiative to serve the customers.

"I'm sorry, I am not here to buy anything." Garen apologized, and pointed to a job advertisement on the side. "I'm a rookie Energy Machinist, only Level Two. I'd like to get a job to earn some crystals."

After the little girl heard of this, her originally revived spirit immediately diminished.

"Oh, looking for a job...we do need OEMs. You can see that the things on the counters aren't in order. We sell Energy Machine Imprints and auxiliary materials. Many things need to be processed by ourselves after we have purchased them, especially the subtle processing of the materials. The Energy Machine Imprint also requires someone to fine-tune and inspect it. Besides that, the store is also lacking staff. But the wages...is a little low."

"How much?" Garen nodded.

"How about two hundred crystals a week?" the little girl said cautiously.

Garen did not know about the market rate at all, but only frowned and looked at the little girl.

"Can you call the shots here?"

“Yes, this is my shop.” The little girl nodded. In fact, in the general market, there were a lot of things that could be done by a Level Two Energy Machinist. The price of two hundred crystals a week was very low as the normal price was four hundred crystals a week. However, this shop was almost unsustainable. It was even almost impossible to preserve this ancestral point and the annual maintenance fee was also unaffordable. Without more hard work, the position in this special ability space might be completely eliminated before long.

“My name is Lan. This shop is under my grandfather’s name. He is sick now, so only my senior brother, senior sister and I are taking care of the business together,” the little girl explained briefly.

Garen nodded, but what he needed most now was the Energy Machine Imprint. Everything else was not important. Furthermore, the cheapest Energy Machine Imprint was very expensive, something that he could afford at all.

“I am alright with the offer, but I am in some trouble and urgently need an Energy Machine Imprint. I wonder if you can give me an Energy Machine Imprint in advance. The lowest grade is fine too.” He had no choice now. The predators may attack the town he was in at any moment. If he did not quickly strengthen his defense ability, regardless of how strong he was, he would still die when faced with an endless sea of predators..

“In advance?” the little girl looked at him blankly. “I’ll have to go back and ask...but if you agree, you must come over to finish the minimum requirement of the OEM tasks in a week after signing the contract. Otherwise, the special ability space will regard that you broke the law and you will very likely lose your eligibility to re-enter the space. You have to understand that.”

“If that’s how it is, then it’s not a problem.” Garen nodded. He had no other choice. He could not go to any other shops as he was penniless. The conditions here might not be good, but this was his only choice.

There were also two other shops which might offer higher wages but he could not even get in.

He watched as the little girl turned back and walked into the shop.

Garen wandered around in the shop. There were indeed not many things on the counter. There were very little types of Energy Machine Imprint, only five or six types. All were either of aqua category or ground category. There was not the more popular aerial and underground imprints.

Aerial cannon fodder and underground cannon fodder were relatively decent Energy Machine Imprints. For example, the color-changing bat could execute long-distance invasion and its concealing strength and durability were strong. Because it could discolor and be in a stealth mode for a long time without consuming much energy, it was much more durable than the general imprints.

Another example was the underground earthworm, which could go deep into the earth to look for hidden underground bases. It was very popular in some special environments. Its concealing strength was very strong and it had certain toxins.

These were very decent peripheral cannon fodder.

However, there was none of it here. There were only ordinary wild wolf and saber-toothed tiger — these general power cannon fodder creatures were large-in-size with short endurance time.

Of course, a wild wolf and a saber-toothed tiger will have stronger frontal combat capabilities compared to the color-changing bats. However, in this technological era, you may possess great physical strength, but if you lack the ability to dodge could cause you to be shot down.

Therefore, ordinary, medium and large-sized biological systems were the lowest-priced Energy Machine Imprints.

Energy Machine Imprints called for faster speed, better accuracy, and more powerful.

Garen scanned over them again and only saw the wild wolf and saber-toothed tiger. Others were aqua cannon fodders. This place was a 100, 000 miles away from the sea, so it was only natural that these imprints could not be sold off.

Shaking his head, he heard the sound of footsteps. Looking up, he saw the little girl Lan walking out, followed by a tall, thin young man.

The man was dressed in a white apron, both hands wearing metal gloves that were stained with oil. His face was weary and he looked tired. He looked to be not more than 20 years of age, roughly similar to Garen.

"Hello, I'm the disciple of the boss here, Mincar. Are you the one who want to work as an OEM?" The man came over, opened the counter door and stopped in front of Garen.

"Yes, that's me." Garen nodded.

"So, what can you do? Have you had any prior experience?" The man asked with a hint of expectation. "I'm sorry to ask this although the salary is so low. This is also to make it easier for you to get into the state of working."

"Err..." The question caught Garen off guard. He had not even been inside the special ability space for a few times, let alone what work he had done. "To be honest, I am a rookie Energy Machinist and I do not even have an Energy Machine Imprint, let alone be a helper or held any job before."

He answered frankly. It was difficult to cover up in this kind of place, so he might as well be honest and straightforward.

"A rookie?" A trace of disappointment flashed across Mincar's face, but he also nodded understandingly. "I understand. If you were an Energy Machinist with work experience, I guess you wouldn't come here to work for us that easily."

He paused. "Is this arrangement alright with you then? Currently, there are only me and my other junior sister working in our shop. Lan is responsible for sales, but we are only good at aqua and ground biochemical imprint processing. We don't know other aspects at all. I am now trying to carry out the imprint processing of aerial unit. For the ground imprint processing that I was originally responsible for, I will give you a part of the workload. You just have to complete one piece a week. It shouldn't be a problem, yeah?"

"One?" Garen nodded. The lowest grade of imprint would also require thousands of crystals. It was not what he could afford. Completing a ground imprint a week did not seem to be a difficult task. "I have not tried it before. Could I give it a try first before saying more?"



“Sure.”

They took Garen into the inside of the shop and into another workshop-like room.

Inside were some sphere-like floaters. There were dozens of silver spheres hovering by themselves, each of different sizes. They were transparent and their contents could be seen clearly from the outside.

Each of the spheres was like an embryo that was gestating. Inside was a colourful swirl that was whirling non-stop and in it there seemed to be a multi-coloured milky way, which was exceptionally beautiful.

Mincar pointed to the biggest sphere and introduced.

“This is the Energy Machine Imprint that is being processed and nurtured, a lion-tiger imprint. The smaller the size of an Energy Machine Imprint, the more functions it has and the more powerful it is, the more complex the calculations will be. The Energy Machinist must always follow closely the data variation in the Cultivation Sphere to guide and weave the gene strands we need during the pivotal steps and inject our Willpower. The imprint that is finally bred will record all the processes within the Cultivation Sphere.”

He tapped the sphere and smiled wryly.

“Of course, in this cultivation process, the fewer the mistakes, the more perfect it is. This is because for every mistake, even if it is corrected later on, the Energy Machine Imprint that is bred out will commit the same mistake when creating cannon fodders in the Biochemical Pool. It will be a waste of time and material. Every time they are wasted as such, through accumulation, the quality of the whole imprint will be greatly reduced.”

“That is true.” Garen nodded in understanding.

“The general standard is that no more than five mistakes should be committed, either that or the waste rate cannot exceed ten percent,” Mincar explained simply.

“When we operate the Cultivation Sphere, all the operations will be recorded by the Energy Machine Imprint. The smoother the process, the more perfect the final imprint will naturally be and the lesser the loss. We are like inscribing sections of programs on the imprint. These programs are irreversible. The mistakes can only be remedied and cannot be altered. Therefore, every mistake will directly determine the quality of the final imprint. This is the making of an Energy Machine Imprint.”

Lan, standing on the side, also nodded and said.

“So, during the making of an Energy Machine Imprint, a person usually only specializes in one type. Cross-domain operation is only looking for death. Apart from the old monsters who have too much time to spend, the rest of the people won’t even think about it.”

“You little girl,” Mincar smiled bitterly and shook his head. “Do you think I wish to do so?”

Listening to all these helped Garen to better understand now.

They were like burning CDs. The person who bought the imprint was like playing a CD. Each time they created and bred biochemical cannon fodder, it would be akin to them playing a CD. The more mistakes there were on the CD, would affect whether the playing of the CD was smooth or not; whether there would be glitches in the middle; whether the picture was clear or not, or it was blurry, et cetera.

“It’s good that you understand.” Mincar nodded. “If you have agreed, you can sign a contract here. We can agree to give you an Energy Machine Imprint in advance. After all, even if you didn’t mention it, we will still do the same because the efficiency of an Energy Machinist without an Energy Machine Imprint is extremely low. That is not what we want. As for the type of Energy Machine Imprint, you can pick it yourself. You can have any of it that is in the shop. There is nothing very good anyway. The cost of it will be directly recorded in your pay and gradually deducted from it.”

“Alright.”

Garen nodded with satisfaction.

“When do I start work?”

“Tomorrow. You can first choose your imprint and familiarize yourself with the use of it today. I will teach you how to operate the Cultivation Sphere tomorrow.” Mincar instructed. “How long do you plan to work?”

“Let’s try one month.”

“Fine. I will prepare the agreement then.”

“Alright.” Garen agreed and took the contract that soon appeared in Mincar’s hand. After reading it once and making sure that there were no traps, he quickly signed his name on it.

Dang!

With a light sound, the contract smoked and turned into black soot in Garen’s hand.

“This represents that the contract is in effect.” Mincar nodded. “Lan, please take him to choose an imprint. The price will be calculated at the cost price.”

“Got it.” Lan was smiling. She pulled at her red, long ponytail, turned around and gave Garen a friendly smile. “How do I call you?”

“Garen.” Garen smiled. “Just call me Garen.”

“How terrific, Brother Garen. At such a young age, you are already a Level Two Energy Machinist. Your teacher must be a very profound Energy Machinist, right?” Lan brought Garen out of the workshop room and returned to the shop outside.

"I didn't have a teacher. It was all self-taught and it took me six years," Garen used the previous story again.

"Self-taught?! Is that possible?!" Lan was so shocked that her eyes widened. "I have tried many times and I couldn't do it! I haven't even passed Level One now..." She was saddened. "It's been seven years... Grandpa taught me since I was young."

"Er..." Garen didn't know what to say.

They walked slowly along the counter.

"Brother Garen, you can pick whatever you like. Our business has been getting worse and worse after Grandpa fell ill. After selling off the previous stocks, senior brother and sister had to do some not-so-good quality imprints themselves and sell them to support the shop."

She whispered. There was no one in the store anymore. The last customer who was only having a look around had also left. The soft lights that were dim reflected the silent surrounding. Only Lan's voice echoed a little.

Garen nodded silently and listened to Lan's introduction while scanning the few kinds of Energy Machine Imprint on the counter.

"All the imprints uses basic Level One imprint as the main body. The seniors are all Level Three Energy Machinists. They have insufficient computing power to process Level Two Energy Machine Imprint. The Energy Machine Imprint is divided into two parts, computation and production. The computation part is the main body, which had to be purchased from the Federation. It is the part that is responsible for the calculation and increasing the Energy Machinist's computing power. The production part is what you just saw. It is responsible for controlling and guiding the production of cannon fodder in the Biochemical Pool. The processing part that we are in charge of is the second block," Lan introduced, slowly moving forward.

"In other words, we purchase semi-finished products and then process them into finished products before selling them, right?" Garen asked.

“That is the case. However, all the main bodies of Level One imprints are similar and the computing power is increased by a factor of three. The key lies in the second block of the processing of the Production Mod. If an ordinary imprint main body met a powerhouse who could process it into a decent Production Mod, for instance, the powerful cannon fodder such as the demon worm, then there will be a leap in price,” Lan said with some envy.

“That’s how it is...” Garen nodded to express understanding. Although he did not want to decide on his first imprint this rashly, there was no other way. The situation now was critical and time did not allow him to carefully make a choice.

His sight swept across the counter and landed directly on the Wild Wolf.

“That one then. Wild Wolf Imprint.”

He pointed to the Energy Machine Imprint on the counter and said.

“Are you sure you want that?” Lan asked.

“Yup, I’ll have that.” Garen nodded.

“The Wild Wolf is fast in speed, has sharp claws and is capable of night vision, but its defense is not good. This imprint is a proud work done by senior brother. I will give you the best one. The wastage rate is only five percent. It is one of senior brother’s proudest work,” Lan deftly retrieved a gray shimmering soft object from a small cabinet under the counter.

All the Energy Machine Imprints were like different colors of cotton candy, soft and without shape.

“Are all Energy Machine Imprints like this?” Garen asked curiously.

“Of course not. This is only a Level One Energy Machine Imprint and it generally can be used by Level One Energy Machinist. There are also Energy Machine Imprints used by Level Two Energy Machinists, or Level Three, Four, Five. When you have money later on, you can equip yourself with a Level Two Energy Machine Imprint once you reach Level Three. Remember, it is very hard to change this stuff once it is

fixed. Like primitive cells, once you have already developed them into a piece of beef, if you want to change it into a bovine bone later on, it will be very difficult,” Lan exclaimed.

“I understand,” Garen nodded.

“Looks like you really don’t know anything,” Lan shook her finger and said, “well, this is for you,” she handed the imprint and put it into Garen’s raised hand.

“Eat it. When you go back and retrofit, it will be painful. Just endure it and it will be fine. It generally lasts for an hour. Remember to pay attention to safety. This is the time when an Energy Machinist is most vulnerable. Regardless of how powerful an Energy Machinist is, it’s all the same.”

“Got it.”

Garen nodded solemnly.

After an indistinct twist of color, Garen suddenly returned to his room.

He raised his hand and saw that he was holding a clump of shimmering gray cotton.

“This is the Wild Wolf Imprint?” He did not hesitate and stuffed it into his mouth.

What was strange was that when that thing touched the mouth, it immediately whooshed inside, as if it was a living thing. It slipped down the throat like liquid and it was cold, like gulping a bowl of ice water.

Garen barely swallowed and felt a tumble in his stomach.

The Willpower behind his head slowly vibrated, as if there was something cold that was radiating out a lot of silk tentacles, slowly wrapping around the two imprints at the back of his brain.

With a whirring sound, a sudden huge shock rushed into his brain and Garen felt a cramp in his stomach, like the churning of rivers and seas. He felt like vomiting. Feeling nausea, he began to burp and continuously spurt out unpleasant gas.

White spots appeared before his eyes as if someone was using their fingers to firmly press on his eyes. He saw many white spots dispersing non-stop.

He leaned forward and suppressed the pain as he walked to the room's single-seated sofa and sat down, taking a deep breath.

Although this kind of nausea and pain was unbearable, it was nothing to Garen. The pain of reworking his heart was much stronger than this. After a slight adjustment, he was able to stay calm and move about freely. However, the faint beads of sweat on his forehead showed that he was not in a good condition at this time.

After adapting to this severe pain, Garen headed to the side of the window. The sky had already lit up and it seemed to be early in the morning.

Weird sound like the howling of wolves could be faintly heard outside in a distance, but this surrounding terrain could not possibly have wolves. Even if there were, they would have been annihilated by the radiation people. The only possibility was the Predators.

"It's about to begin..." Garen murmured. Looking at the horizon where the sky was in the distance, he hoped everything would be well.

Even though he was in the room, he could feel the tremendous pressure from the people walking around on the outside.

Anxious, uneasy and forcing themselves to calm down, that kind of repression.

This was the entire mien of the thirty or forty people in the whole of Leo City.

Through the window, Garen saw someone holding a sharp metal spear and was swinging it around non-stop. There were some who were constantly rubbing their hands, sitting on the steps of the doorway and mumbling about something with their heads down.

The howling sounds came from outside, but no one lifted their heads to take a look. The whole city was increasingly quiet. No one spoke. Occasionally, one could hear the cries of babies. However, even the children who were a few years old were seriously doing what they could to help, whereas, the adults were constantly adjusting their physical status so that they could remain at their peak at all times.

Letting down the curtains, Garen knew he could do nothing now. The Wild Wolf Imprint seemed to be transforming the two Willpower imprints at the back of his head. This transformation was very rapid and precise. Many times, it would also extract some subtle substances from his own body to include in the transformation. This was also the key reason as to why the human body felt severe pain.

Garen looked up at the time, 6:21.

The wall clock ticked, its sound crisp and rhythmical.

He sat down, slowly relaxed his body and carefully observed the transformation of this Willpower Imprint. But unfortunately, such transformation was too rapid and the degree of sophistication far exceeded his imagination. Just watching for a few minutes, his conscious was a little blurred and his energy was over-exhausted. He could only stop.

Sitting quietly on the sofa, the sofa cushion under his buttocks was soft and firm. It was a leather surface and there seemed to be metal springs inside of it. It was bouncy when one sat down on it.

Minutes and seconds ticked by.

The sky was getting brighter outside.

Someone started to call on the men guarding the wall to prepare for a change of shift. Three rounds of shifts, this was previously arranged by Garen.



The footsteps of the guards who passed through the room were sparse. The people who came down were breathing deeply. No one spoke. There were only heavy breaths.

Garen looked up and glanced at the time, 6:44.

It had been twenty-three minutes.

The pain in his body continued and the intensity was increasing. He endured it, quietly sitting on the sofa and waited for everything to past.

6:51.

There were subtle noises coming from the outside and there was the sound of gunfire. Hurried footsteps swept past the room and it seemed that someone was running to the wall.

"It's alright. Just a few Predators who had been singled out rushed over and was gotten rid of," said a voice. Then everything went quiet again.

6:59.

There was a knock on the door and then came the voice of East Perrin from the outside.

"Are you there? It's going to be daylight soon."

"Don't worry. There's no need to rush," Garen sat on the couch with his eyes closed. His sweat ran down his forehead towards the edge of his cheeks and dripped on his clothes. The clothes he wore were still the plain clothes from the inner region. There was blood, engine oil and black soot on it. The outfit looked like a painter's work suit. Besides the long sleeves and long pants, it was hard to spot any pattern or color. There were smudges all over.

Hearing Garen's answer, East Perrin was silent and went away again.

7:12.

Gunshots were heard outside once more. This time, it was no ordinary gunfire, but a clutter of noises.

In the midst of the mess, there was the voice of people cursing and occasionally, someone screaming.

"It had really begun..." Garen opened his eyes, but he could do nothing except for moving about freely.

Boom boom boom!!

East Perrin knocked at the door again.

"A group of Predators came from the outside but have been repulsed by us. I suspect they are just testing our forces. A few brothers have died."

"Help me prepare some basic materials," Garen raised his voice. "The root of Loquat leaves and Dragon-beard Grass. The higher the radiation, the better they are; more than 20 grams each. The blood and brain of radiation beasts, higher grade would be even better. If not, general ones would do as well. The more, the better. Also, Tomb-branches and Winter Flowers..."

He casually named a series of things, all which were common materials in the radiation belt. These things more or less had radiation. Many of them were used as substitutes for the Nutritional Liquid to create the Biochemical Pool. Garen had no other way. Although these alternatives might be less effective and might affect the strength of the final bred-creatures, there was no other way. Just create some first and see how it goes later on.

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With enough Nutritional Liquid, this was the basis of everything.

"I remember them," outside of the door, East Perrin repeated what Garen had asked for. Her memory was not bad and she could remember everything just by hearing once. Soon, she left and seemed to be going somewhere to find the materials.

However, as noises arose from the outside, Garen knew that he was wrong. Voices of exclamations were faintly heard.

“Chief has gone out!!”

“Why is she when it’s so dangerous!?”

“Get back! Big sister!”

People shouted again and again but no response was heard from East Perrin.

Within ten minutes, she had returned.

“Thank God!”

“Chief, you can never run a risk again! You are our only hope!”

“Chief...!” “Chief...”

Flustered voices followed, with the voice of East Perrin constantly apologizing.

Garen looked up, and suddenly, all the pain in his body disappeared without a trace as if it had never emerged before.

Time, 7:22.

“Finally it has ended...” Garen let out a sigh of relief and wiped his sweat with both hands. He felt that there was a difference in the two imprints behind him.

He found a mirror and looked at himself. Under the control of his Willpower, a greatly altered Willpower imprint gradually appeared.

The original two imprints had now become a larger single unit. The original diamond shape had also turned into the form of a tiny wild wolf with a black body and green eyes. It didn't look too bad, even a bit ferocious.

"This is Energy Machine Imprint?" Garen tried again to calculate the stereoscopic computational model for the advancing of Level Three Energy Machinist. Sure enough, it was no ordinary task. It was almost incomparable to the previous straining effort.

"If there was enough time, I need five days to break through to Energy Machinist Level Three!" He made a simple calculation of the progress in his mind.

"Sure enough, having three times more the computing power is different."

"The materials have been found!" The voice of East Perrin came from outside of the door, calm and exhausted.

Garen stood up and walked over to open the door. He looked at East Perrin, her hair scattered over her forehead. This agile and brave woman still had a straight face on. There was a thin trace of blood on her cheek. Clearly, the trip was not entirely smooth.

The tight gray dress she wore was snagged and had several holes. Blood marks were vaguely visible on the skin.

"Take me there," Garen exclaimed.

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On the edge of the processing workshop at the rear of Leo City, a square pit was dug out in an open space. It was piled with a variety of messy materials, including roots, flowers, bloody flesh and bones.

Garen and East Perrin stood alone in front of the pit.

“What do you want to do?” East Perrin asked Garen. “Everything has been found for you.”

“There is still a lacking of one last thing,” Garen said plainly.

“Still lacking!?” East Perrin’s eyes widened. “Few of my brothers are dead because of these things, I myself almost died outside. Now you tell me that there is still something lacking?!”

“What’s lacking cannot be found by you,” Garen said plainly. “We’re all in the same boat together now. If you die and I’ll also die. What’s there to be desperate about?”

East Perrin wiped her face.

“Alright, I’ll calm down. Now there are a few waves of small-scale attacks out there. The number is about a dozen. But when I went out and looked through the telescope, Vulture City has basically been digested. The Predators inside seems to have begun to shift out and head over here. We don’t have much time.”

“How much longer? An estimation?” Garen asked.

“No more than three days. Although the number of Predators has increased, their speed has also reduced. It takes five days to walk over here from Vulture City. Since the speed of the Predators are fast, it should take them about three days to journey here. The discrepancy would not be huge,” East Perrin answered in a low voice.

“Just wait for it. There will be hope,” Garen jumped down and began to pick up a piece of material by hand. Traces of Cold Radiation flashed in his hand from time to time, freezing the better part of the material to prevent it from deteriorating.

East Perrin did not know what to do and could only watch from the edge.

“Prepare a room for me, a bigger one,” Garen ordered.

“Alright.”

Minutes and seconds ticked by and it was time for breakfast. Radiation people were accustomed to eating two meals a day, one about nine in the morning and another at six in the evening. However now, when the few women who were in-charged of meals served some food to eat, not many people had the appetite. There were children silently helping to refill the food and water.

Garen directly consumed the highly irradiated Nutritional Liquid. With a grab, blue threads emerged from his palm and directly absorbed the Nutritional Liquid, leaving only useless impurities behind.

Time passed quickly and noon soon arrived. Garen looked up to the sky from time to time as he was waiting for the drone sent out by Celine. If his luck was alright, perhaps with the distance from Polar Region to here, it would reach today.

East Perrin had already gone to defense. Now the atmosphere in the town was somewhat in despair. Without her taking command in the city, it was very likely that something catastrophic would happen.

Garen stayed here alone and quietly worked on the material in his hands.

Two large basins were placed beside each other and the parts he had dealt with were placed in them.

The Predators were gradually approaching. There were definitely Level Two Predators in the vast army. When Garen saw the end of Caster who had tried to escape, he knew that he had hit jackpot. A one in a million Level Two Predator was actually present here.

According to the data records, Level Two Predators could produce a Willpower Field-liked Mind Force, which could produce a substantial effect. This was the scene that everyone saw at that time. Caster was crushed by an invisible force and died without leaving a complete corpse behind.

“Now that there is Energy Machine Imprint and most of the materials are available, the only thing that is lacking is the Biochemical Pool...” Garen lifted up his head and looked at the gray-blue sky.

This was the fifteenth time he had looked to the sky today.

This time, the margin of the endless sky finally did not disappoint him. A blue dot was flying at high speed toward this side. Its outline looked like a drone.

Garen's face finally showed a smile. If it came any later, he probably would have to consider expanding one Soul Seed to reincarnate...

He quickly jumped out of the pit and ran to look for East Perrin to have her tell everyone not to shoot down the drone in the sky.

At this moment, as soon he ran out from the rear of the city, he realized that something was amiss.

There was no one in the houses of the city. Everyone seemed to be concentrated at the front and vague screams could be heard from that side.

From far, East Perrin saw Garen ran out.

"Be careful! There are Predators that have sneaked in! They are invisible!" She yelled.

Invisible Predators!!

Garen was surprised. This was a rare species among the Predators! How could there be any here?

He suddenly felt a deep chill coming behind him.

He spun around, gave a sidekick, and released cold air!

Three fluent and continuous moves emerged instantly.

Garen felt as if he had kicked something hard. With a loud boom, a large amount of cold air quickly covered the entire body of that object which he had kicked. The hoarfrost completely revealed its form.

This humanoid creature was kicked right in the head. It stumbled out a few steps, drowsily fell to the ground, and was swamped by the subsequent white air, directly freezing into a large piece of ice.

Garen looked at his trousers. There was blood on it. With his physical fitness, he was actually at a disadvantage in the direct confrontation just now. Moreover, he felt some pain in his bones where there were probably some fractures.

“This is the Invisible Predator?”

He took a close look at this thing. It had the same shape of a human but without hands. There were two stout, octopus-like tentacles at that place of its arms.

East Perrin also brought some people as she rushed over here. When she saw the ice on the ground, she sucked in a breath of cold air.

“This is the guy who had killed eight of my brothers and sisters!” She raised her hand and shot the ice to pieces.

Krak!

The whole piece of ice shattered into glass-like pieces.

Garen glanced behind East Perrin. There were only more than a dozen people left. It seemed that these were the remaining manpower of the entire city. There were also a few children and women who were covered in blood.

“What about the rest?”



"All dead..." East Perrin replied in a low voice. There was also blood on her face and it was unclear whether it was hers or someone else's.

"We have no idea when the Invisible Predator sneaked in. When we realized it, it had already killed half of the logistics personnel. It also killed a few men who had gone over to help," the old man Malone said palely.

At this time, the drone flew down from the sky and descended towards Garen.

Someone raised their gun and aimed it at the drone out of conditioned reflex.

"Don't shoot!" Garen quickly shouted.

This made everyone loosen up a little. They watched Garen reach out his hands to grab the small drone and took down a small fist-sized black box from it.

"Take care," he whispered the cipher to the black box.

Pap. The box opened automatically. The cover rose slowly, revealing a round thing wrapped in white silk.

Garen took out this thing and left the rest of it with East Perrin.

"This stuff can be used as an investigating drone."

"What is that?!" East Perrin looked at the ball in his hand.

"This is hope!"

Garen answered without looking back and hurriedly ran towards the rear of the city.

Following the path between the houses in the city, he went straight back to the side of the pit. Garen lifted the material basin that he managed and walked into a large, empty stone house on the right.

This stone house just so happened to have a basement. It was the residence left by a man who had died in battle. He had no wife and children, so this place was assigned to Garen as a laboratory house.

Uncovering the fist-size thing in his hand, it was a black stone.

Garen gripped the stone with both of his hands and applied force to both sides of it.

Krak!

The stone was divided into two in a crisp sound and a piece of pale yellow soft meat fell out. It was caught by Garen.

“This is it! Mila Cells, Stoneheart Flesh... The main part of the Biochemical Pool!!” Garen knew that in the present plight, there finally was hope...

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The Stoneheart Flesh in his hand was like a soft and warm cotton.

Garen held it and smelled a faint scent that seemed to be coming from his arm, not from the air but really from his arm.

This feeling was very strange. As if the palm of his hand had become a nose, he even felt as though there was something soft lightly touching the tip of his nose.

He walked to the center of the basement and set aside the Stoneheart Flesh. He then picked up the shovel in the basement and began to dig into the ground.

This was the interior of the stone house, so the excavated ground was also part of the entire stone.

Garen dug a small pit and stopped. He then picked up the Stoneheart Flesh beside him and put it in as if sowing a seed. After placing the Stoneheart Flesh, he took out a black spray that had a few small black fruits on it and gently crushed the small fruits.

A few drops of black juice slowly dribbled down his fingers and onto the surface of the Stoneheart Flesh.

Hiss...

A clear white steam rose, along with a pungent scent.

Suddenly, the Stoneheart Flesh began to wriggle slowly like a viscous liquid. It began to spread around, covering a large surrounding area.

In less than a few minutes, a large piece of pale yellow fleshy membrane was formed and it covered the ground. It was still moving.

Garen stood by the side and waited quietly.

As time passed, the fleshy membrane on the ground gradually became darker in color, slightly grayish.

Sssrraaak...

A hole gradually cracked in the center of the fleshy membrane and it seemed to be emitting steam.

Garen's gaze was fixed on the spot where the crack was. In it was darkness and nothing could be seen.

As time went on, the rift increasingly got bigger and wider.

The entire rift gradually formed a round crater with a diameter of about two or three meters and the color of the entire fleshy membrane gradually turned black. It was no longer wriggling but was becoming more rigid and solidified.

Garen once again took out the two half-shell of the Stoneheart Flesh, gently chipped off some powder, and sprinkled it evenly on the four corners of the fleshy membrane that had turned into a black flesh-pool.

The flesh-pool, which was still moving slightly, instantly became still and was even more condensed and solid.

“Done... my Biochemical Pool,” Garen was relieved. Finally, following the records of the Energy Machinist training method, his first Biochemical Pool had succeeded. Although the whole process was very simple, he had been constantly worried. After all, this thing was the key to whether he could survive this crisis.

Quickly taking the well-mixed Nutritional Liquid for the Biochemical Pool, he slowly poured it down the edge of the Biochemical Pool. Several kinds of well-mixed biochemical fluids quickly mixed together. Garen then squatted down and slowly released his Energy Machinist Willpower.

The Energy Machine Imprint at the back of his head suddenly disappeared. They disintegrated into countless transparent silk strands and densely pierced into the edge of the Biochemical Pool. They were like needles, swimming and quivering between the flesh and blood of the Biochemical Pool, forming many vein-like bulging things.

A virtual screen was faintly displayed before Garen’s eyes.

‘Wild Wolf Imprint is ready. Please name your Biochemical Pool.’ This text message appeared on the light screen.

“Just call Wild Wolf No. 1.” Garen took a random name for easy memory.

'Wild Wolf No.1 has been completed. The biochemical fluid in Biochemical Pool is filled. The analysis level is Level One basic level and can cultivate fifteen Level One creatures. After that, it needs to be refilled.'

The light screen showed the information and data of the Biochemical Pool.

'Please insert the basic organization.'

Garen stood up but his body's Energy Machine Imprint remained in the Biochemical Pool. He went out to move the pre-prepared flesh and blood of mutated beast into the black Biochemical Pool.

Splash.

The mutated beast that looked like a wild boar was directly submerged in the biochemical fluid and soon, it melted like a candle.

A series of tiny bubbles constantly emerged from the Biochemical Pool, accompanied by strange gurgling sounds.

'Basic organization had been acquired complete. Begin to create wild wolf units?' The light screen informed again.

Garen answered yes with his consciousness.

The light screen suddenly disappeared. This was a virtual screen that was presented in front of an Energy Machinist through the direct connection of Willpower. Others could not see it except for the Energy Machinist themselves. This also ensured the high degree of mystery and safety level of an Energy Machinist.

With the feedback through his Willpower, Garen could control the progress of the Biochemical Pool anytime. It could be stopped and restarted at any time.

In accordance with the standard of an Energy Machinist's number of control, him being a Level Two Energy Machinist could only control one imprint. In other words, he could control only one cannon fodder. If there was an experimental platform, he could then create an elite unit, which was the elite version of cannon fodder. However, the experimental platform was not something that he could obtain now. It required a lot of materials and high technical requirements. Generally, only very wealthy Energy Machinists would dare to build an experimental platform while still at a low level because they could use space tools to bring it alongside with them.

Simply put, what low-end Energy Machinists did was actually the work of ancient Modulation Engineers. Theirs was a purely biochemical route. This was because the elite version of biochemical machinery was the patent of the experimental platform, the general Energy Machinists would not even think about it if they had not reached a high level.

In addition, this profession itself demanded crazy computing power. The untalented person at most would be a low-level Energy Machinist for his whole life. If one could become a Level Three or Four Energy Machinist, one would be considered not bad. What more those high levels of Level Five, Inheriting Level and above.

Most of the general Energy Machinists in the market reached their limit at Level Three. This was because the entry requirement for Energy Machinists was too high and more time would be needed as the level increased. Therefore, without talent, it would take a lot of time to accumulate practices. This had also caused a lot of Energy Machinists to reach the stage of Level Three and Four only when they were at seventy or eighty years old. Level Four was the limit that most people could achieve.

However, Garen was different. He had potential points that could increase intelligence and computing power. Even with his current computing power talent, he was at the top level, a standard genius amongst the general Energy Machinists. One had to know that the profession of Energy Machinist could only be undertaken by people who were computing genius and of super scholar level, whereas, the geniuses of Energy Machinists would truly be the top prodigies among the average people.

A series of situational information flashed through Garen's thoughts but his eyes were focused on the changes in the Biochemical Pool. The milk-like colored biochemical fluid that was poured in had now begun to tumble. The body of the mutated beast that had just been thrown in had completely dissolved and now, small algae-like floaters began to appear on the surface of the liquid. With the passage of time, this kind of floating object was also increasing.

In the basement, a faint stench began to develop slowly. It was a bit like the smell of mutton and was also somewhat like the smell of fish.

Garen did not have any changes in his facial expression. He just quietly stared at the biochemical fluid in the Biochemical Pool and waited for the result. At the same time, he also had to carefully calculate how much time it took to cultivate one time. After all, the conditions here were not of standard conditions. The biochemical fluid was made using many substitutes, the cultivating environment was also not maintained with the optimum temperature and humidity radiation instruments and so on. In such an environment, the general data on the record had lost its meaning and so, the calculation time for the actual operation of the unit was required.

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In a distance from Leo City, large groups of Predators slowly gathered towards this side. Their numbers totaled tens of thousands.

The Predators that first appeared were now riding motorcycles at the rear end. It was as if they were monitoring and were constantly making an unintelligible roaring sound.

The speed of the entire Predator group was not fast, but their number was packed and the entire grassland horizon seemed to be completely occupied. The number of over ten thousand simply made them look vast and enormous.

Vulture City had become history. It had been completely destroyed behind the Predator group. There was no living person, bones and rotting flesh were everywhere. Skulls and limbs that were not gnawed finished were scattered on the ground.

On the walls, ground, and gates were dried blackened blood spots. Two lengths of human intestines were used as ropes to secure the door knockers on the main gate. To make the rope, countless people's intestines were taken to be twisted into the thickness of a small arm. It looked tough and had turned black.

Caw, caw!!

A flock of scavenger crows flew down. They were flapping their wings and jumping here and there from time to time, competing for carrion.

“Charge!!”

The Level Two Predator leader in the Predator group roared.

“Hiss!!”

All the Predators lifted their heads and yelled as if they were responding to the leader’s call.

From the sky, it could be clearly seen that at this time, more and more Predators were gradually encircling Leo City as the center point from all directions. Not only Leo City, but the remaining towns were also like standalone islands teetering in the vast sea.

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“Managed to contact the people of Doe City?” East Perrin stared at the communication staff who was running over here and asked.

“No... The signal disturbance was too much. We couldn’t hear any sound at all.” The communication staff was trained by Malone. Although his skill was still satisfactory, due to the lack of good equipment, he could only reply the Chief helplessly.

“Could it be that Doe City has boded ill?” East Perrin mumbled.

“Don’t worry that much. We will hold out as long as we can,” Malone whispered from the side. “That Garen still has not come out?”

“Still in the basement. Don’t know what he’s doing,” East Perrin shook her head. “I have placed some people nearby him. As soon as he comes out, we will know.”

“You can’t pin your hopes on him alone,” Malone said in a low voice.



“Do we still have a choice?” East Perrin gave a wry smile. “If it wasn’t for not having any other way, who would pin their hopes on someone whom they had not known for a long time?”

“How about digging a tunnel?” Malone suggested.

“We don’t have the energy and time. And if what you say is true, that the Predators originally came out from the crevices in the ground, then digging tunnels would likely be even worse,” East Perrin replied helplessly.

## Chapter 940: Hope 2

East Perrin looked at the sparse figures of Predators who were watching her from afar and sighed. She looked back at the people left on defense duties on the wall. There were only a dozen or so left and all of them were haggard and listless. They had eaten and drank to their heart’s content, consuming the original portion of those who were dead. Since they were about to die now and might not live till tomorrow, it was completely meaningless to save on food.

“If another Invisible Predator like the previous one comes, just a few more of them and everyone will die,” Malone tiredly remarked on one side.

East Perrin nodded and stopped talking. She was already extremely tired.

If it were not for the little hope on Garen’s side, she might not have been able to hold out and just wanted to give up on her fate.

Looking back at the direction of the stone house where Garen was at, East Perrin renewed her perseverance.

“Never give up until the end.”

She recalled her mother's last words. This was also the law of survival she had been depending on all the while in the radiation belt.

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Basement

After one hour...

Garen carefully watched the bloody creature that was taking shape in the Biochemical Pool. It was a one point six meter wolf dog-like animal. It seemed to have only the torso and the limbs had not fully developed. There was also no skin and the whole body was bloody, like a wild dog that was just skinned.

But what impressed Garen the most was that pair of eyes, dark green, giving people goosebumps.

He looked up at the timetable he had brought in.

"It's been an hour. The theoretical time has been reached, but it has not yet been completed. Maybe the cultivation environment is not ideal, the quality of the biochemical fluid is insufficient, and other reasons also lead to that."

He murmured the calculating of time.

The color of the biochemical fluid seemed to be slightly lighter at this time, not as rich as it was at the beginning.

He continued to wait and did not shift his gaze away from the Biochemical Pool for a moment.

He watched the wild wolf's limbs began to lengthen and develop fully. Then it was the tail and afterward, black skin gradually covered all over it.

Awoooo!

A black wild wolf slowly crawled out of the edge of the Biochemical Pool. When it shook its whole body, thick black hairs quickly grew. It crouched in front of Garen.

It was an hour and a half from the time he had put in the material to begin cultivating.

Garen walked over to it, ignoring the biochemical fluid that was still on the wild wolf, and reached out to gently stroke the head of the wolf.

The wild wolf was half a man's height in its squatting position, the same level as Garen's chest. As its head was being stroked, it also made a deep sound. There was no resistance at all.

Garen observed the wolf carefully. This guy looked no different from a normal wild wolf, except that its claws were sharper, its physique was stronger, and it looked like its combat power was not bad.

One could comprehend with a little imagination. If it were really an ordinary wild wolf, it would be impossible to get a rating of Level One combat power. After all, the Level One standard was based on the standard of a Level One pilot operating a Mech.

"Next is the most critical step..." Garen also began to feel nervous.

Although the wild wolf was only an ordinary Level One basic cannon fodder, the combat power was similar to that of a Level One Mech soldier, only slightly weaker than it. In fact, two wolves could barely confront a single Mech soldier. But if adding in the Distorted Seed...

Garen's outstretched palm slowly cracked open a mouth-like gap and a large number of blue silk threads swarmed out of it. In the center of the silk threads, a twisted and wriggling clump of blue flesh slowly wormed out. When stroking the wolf's head, it silently touched the space on top of the head between its ears.

Ssss...

The Distorted Seed drilled in as if it was virtual and penetrated directly through the wild wolf's skull.

Wooo!!

The wild wolf instantly froze. Its eyes bulged slightly as the glittering green eyes began to fill with red blood traces. Its whole body also started to swell up slowly. Its claws continued to lengthen, growing thicker and harder. Its back was vaguely arched with two strong muscles while its ears grew furrier and a little longer.

The entire body length extended to nearly two meters.

"The unit that had Distorted Seed attached to it will have their original quality increased by three times. I wonder how the wild wolf's strength will be after this increment..." Garen looked at the transformed wolf. "From now on, all these upgraded units will be called Big Wild Wolf."

He named it simply.

"Squat down!"

He ordered.

The Big Wild Wolf immediately squatted down and was very obedient. Obviously, the Distorted Seed did not affect the control center in its brain. That was the most critical core for Energy Machinists to control the cannon fodder units, same as what was deduced by Garen before.

The Big Wild Wolf gained a powerful growth from the Distorted Seed and had perfectly acquired the Energy Machinist's brain control.

"The trouble now is that the Distorted Seed is not limited by its quantity and as many as possible can be developed, but there is a problem in controlling it. On the contrary, the quantity of the Energy Machinist's cannon fodder units is limited but there is no problem in controlling it."

“Quantity and control. How to get the best balance between them both...?” Garen was brooding.

If he abandoned control, he could create an unlimited number of Big Wild Wolves as long as there were materials and biochemical fluid. He would be completely unrestricted by the upper limit number of control imposed on the Energy Machinist.

However, if he wanted absolute control, then the number would naturally not go up because his current Energy Machine Imprint could only control one Big Wild Wolf. The characteristic of an Energy Machinist was that with the advancement of every two levels, the upper limit number of control would increase by one.

In other words, Level Two could control one, Level Four could control two, Inheriting Level Six could control three, progressing as such. Of course, because of the huge limit of the number, most people would choose to continuously strengthen the unit creature of their control. They would enhance it as much as possible and take the elite route.

In fact, there were also Energy Machinists who took the group fight route, but the individual strength of the cannon fodder would not be worth mentioning. This was also a very cost-effective way to burn money and was not subjected to the environment.

The way of the group route was to separately implant control chips for each cannon fodder unit. The advantage of doing so was that it would not completely burden the Energy Machine Imprint. The disadvantage was that it would lose the increment brought about by the Energy Machine Imprint.

This was because every level of the Energy Machine training method would upgrade one's control unit.

Just like Garen's NIS training method, each level could increase the speed and basic defense of his control unit by 0.5 level. This way, compared to the ordinary cannon fodder wild wolf, the wild wolf controlled by Garen could now have one level of advancement in speed and basic defense. The combat power would have increased a lot.

Of course, if this kind of wild wolf made by the same Level Two Energy Machinist was encountered, then it would naturally be about the same.

“Quantity... What I need now is the number that I can control...” Garen stared at the Big Wild Wolf and was deep in thought.

He used to be the top biochemistry master in Totem World and had a world of sedimentation and knowledge of civilization for the cultivation of biological genes. He had more different development ideas than the scientists in this world.

“The limitation of quantity is in the upper limit control of the training method. So if I want to increase the number, I will have to either increase the level of training method or weaken the training method Willpower required by one creature. If controlling one creature would need one unit of Willpower, then if I could reduce it to 0.5 a unit, I would be able to control two creatures.”

Garen found the source.

“Then where is the key module where the Energy Machine Imprint controls the wild wolf?”

His consciousness went deep into the Energy Machine Imprint and began to trace the extremely complex structure to find the relevant module.

The Energy Machine Imprint was like a sophisticated manufactured quantum computer. There actually were traces that could be followed and the division of work in each major modules was clear.

Garen quickly found the module from the records of the Energy Machinist training method.

The Energy Machine Imprint was divided into two parts, the computing part and the production part. The Control Mod was part of the production part. It was a very compact black box-like encryption block. Many thin lines were stretched out from the inside and were gently waving like tentacles. They were releasing an inexplicable fluctuating signal. This seemed to be the source for controlling the Big Wild Wolf.

“The controlling of the wild wolf doesn’t seem to be done through wireless signals?” Garen analyzed carefully and experimented several times before coming to the conclusion. “Instead, the built-in structure of the wild wolf’s brain was implanted in advance so that it will instinctively view me as its

master and intuitively obey my commands. At the same time, it seemed that a linguistic system has been implanted in it. Are these cannon fodder capable of comprehending simple command language?"

Garen reached a somewhat ridiculous conclusion, but in line with logic, this conclusion was indeed highly reliable.

"Can I transfer over here some of the techniques used to control the Silver Totems back then?" Garen began to ponder. The Silver Totems had given him a lot of help at the beginning. Despite its insignificant role in the later period, it did give a huge boost due to the early accumulation.

The current Energy Machinists were somewhat like controlling the Silver Totems at that time and both had somewhat similar effects.

"Back then, Black Sky's crystal ball's derivator was the core used to control the Silver Totems. The principle of that thing was to use a kind of ore called Resonance Stone to control remotely, which was not much limited by quantity. If I can find something resembling Resonance Stone as an alternative, maybe I can overcome this limitation."

Garen's heart moved as he seemed to find a breakthrough.

The Silver Totems in Totem World used the means of resonance to perform complex control.

The resonance of Resonance Stone actually only had a few simple combinations, but the people of Black sky used these combinations as basic units, like how computers used 0s and 1s to combine a myriad of different kinds of software. They also used this kind of combinations to construct an extremely complex crystal ball derivation to achieve the goal of controlling Silver Totems using resonance.

Garen had studied this skill back then. Adding on the information obtained from the help of that female in-house staff of Black Sky, he had done a thorough research on it. It was originally thought that he would not be using it in the future but he did not expect to be able to actually use it again here.

"In this world, although the research on resonance is not in-depth, many of the materials that can generate resonance are available." A variety of materials that Garen had seen before on the computer instantly flashed through Garen's mind. Most of which were plants and part of them were marine life.

He went out, picked up all the remaining unused materials and began to search through them.

Although the plants that could generate resonance were very rare, many plants in effect had such phenomena. Fortunately, there were many such plants in the radiation belt. Through resonance, these plants transmitted basic information including environmental information, survival suitability, and so on, in order to choose the optimum living environment.