

R. Paradise 851

Chapter 851: Sell

Enhancing himself, Suxiao walked out of the alchemy laboratory and lay directly on the bed, closing his eyes to sleep. During the days of the World War, he couldn't get good rest. Once he woke up, he had to participate in battles, or he was confined to the Twilight Palace's severely suppressed perception. In that kind of place, entering deep sleep was no different from seeking death.

Suxiao quickly fell asleep. He didn't know how long he slept but heard the crackling sound, like mice gnawing on wood.

Turning over in bed, Suxiao wondered how mice could be in his exclusive room, let alone gnawing on wood.

Wait! Is it gnawing on wood?

Suxiao's eyes opened wide, and he abruptly sat up.

"Bubu!"

Suxiao shouted, but the room remained silent. It seemed like Bubu, his dog, was not at home, out wandering.

Getting up from the bed, Suxiao casually grabbed the oversized slipper used for "warding off evil spirits" from the bedside table. This thing was at least 70 centimetres long, made entirely of unique rubber, providing excellent grip and impact.

Suxiao searched the room but didn't find Bubu, and the sound of wood gnawing he had heard seemed like an illusion.

Approaching the bed, Suxiao suddenly bent down, startling Bubu hiding underneath.

"Found you."

Suxiao pulled Bubu out from under the bed and carefully inspected the area beneath. However, he saw no wood chips, and the bed was intact.

Holding the oversized slipper, Suxiao hesitated for a moment. Without direct evidence of Bubu gnawing on the bed, beating it wouldn't be appropriate.

"You're lucky this time."

Suxiao placed the oversized slipper back on the bedside table, continuing to "ward off evil spirits." He seriously doubted the efficacy of this thing.

Looking at the slipper, Bubu couldn't help but sweat nervously. Being beaten by that thing was not a pleasant experience.

Gurgle.

Bubu gulped hard, visibly struggling to swallow what was in its mouth. It seemed to say with its aggrieved eyes, "Wood is tough to swallow."

Bubu's skill at dismantling things had improved. This was Bubu's hobby, frequently using this trick to compete with Suxiao.

Suxiao sat cross-legged on the bed and took out a golden chest. This item was his reward from the Reincarnation Paradise after killing Lan Jue, with a 100% chance of obtaining gold-quality equipment upon opening it.

Seeing Suxiao about to open the chest, Bubu immediately jumped onto the bed, sneakily getting closer.

"Bubu, I have a feeling that today we'll get something good."

Upon hearing Suxiao's words, Bubu nodded, its eyes clearly saying, "Master, Bubu believes in you."

"Yeah, if we get something good, I'll take you out for a big meal."

Suxiao lit a cigarette, igniting it with the Redemption of Fate, entering a three-minute "lucky" state.

In the state of luck, Suxiao directly opened the chest. A faint golden light emerged, revealing a rather large object on the bed.

With a snap, the four legs of the bed were broken, the entire frame touching the ground. Bubu's expression turned joyful; its "crime evidence" had been "silenced."

[You opened the chest (Gold).]

[You obtained Malicious Shock and Swig.]

[Malicious Shock and Swig]

Origin: Reincarnation Paradise - Dark Abyss Ruins

Quality: Gold

Type: Tower Shield (Height 2.8, Width 3.)

Materials: Sandek Alloy, Anti-shock Steel, Spirit Powder, Devouring Beast Skin

Durability: 28/28

Defense: 83-94

Equipment Requirements: Strength 40 points, Stamina 78 points, Shield Basic Skill Level 35 or higher.

Equipment Effects: Anti-shock (Passive): When receiving an attack, return +% damage from this attack to the enemy +30 points.

Tip: Anti-shock (Passive) is only effective in close combat.

Equipment Effect 2: Rock Solid (Active): After using this skill, the total defence will increase by 20%, movement speed will decrease by 50%, and Anti-shock (Passive) damage will double. The effect lasts for 30 seconds.

Tip: Rock Solid (Active) consumes 80 mana points.

Tip: Rock Solid (Active) has a cooldown time of one hour.

Equipment Effect 3: Spirit Summoning (Passive): When subjected to melee/long-range attacks, there is a 5% chance of summoning a spirit. The spirit has no physical form and can absorb the

designated target's health from a distance, absorbing two health points per second. The energy lasts for 40 seconds; after 40 seconds, it will explode. The health absorbed by the heart during its existence will heal itself at a rate of 40%.

Tip: Spirit Summoning (Passive) has no cooldown time.

Tip: Spirit Summoning (Passive) has a maximum of three spirits simultaneously.

Tip: If three spirits exist simultaneously and absorb the same target's health, the enemy's defence will be reduced by 8%, and the reduced protection will be added to oneself.

Rating: 370 (Gold equipment rating is between 30-400 points)

Introduction: As sturdy as a mountain, as fierce as a ghost, unmovable like a mountain.

Price: 5000 Reincarnation Paradise coins.

Suxiao obtained a pretty good equipment piece, with a rating of 370 points, a shield that enhances defence and survivability and can rebound melee damage. However, Suxiao couldn't use this; he needed a basic skill level of Shield Lv. 1, let alone Lv. 35 or above.

While looking at the properties of this thing, an idea popped into Suxiao's mind - to sell it and exchange it for a large amount of Reincarnation Paradise coins. The more, the better.

Suxiao was currently short on Reincarnation Paradise coins despite having 40,380 coins. He urgently needed more cash because of the items he acquired this time:

8 Large Soul Crystals
Jasmine Injection (Gold) (Already used)
Aura Projection (Gold)
Proof of Demon Hunting (Set/3)
Green Phosphorus Melt (Used for research)
Holy Oak Branch (Already used)
Essence of the Moon (Can be compounded twice)

Among these items, the eight Large Soul Crystals were meant to advance the Blade Master. To reach one level in Blade Master, 10,000 Reincarnation Paradise coins and one Large Soul Crystal are required.

Having the Large Soul Crystals was fine, but advancing the Blade Master by eight levels required 80,000 Reincarnation Paradise coins, an astronomical figure for most Tier Two Contractors.

Not only that but after reading, Suxiao still had to learn Aura Projection and improve its level, which was another significant expense.

Simply selling the gold shield wasn't enough. Thinking about it, Suxiao shifted his focus to the Essence of the Moon.

This item could be compounded twice, transforming from a restorative potion into a permanent enhancement elixir. Suxiao didn't perform the second compound because he had previously consulted with the Reincarnation Paradise at a cost, and the mixture was inclined towards strengthening the skills of magic-based professions. Moreover, the cost of the second compound was not low, requiring Moonlight Concentrate Essence, Starlight Grass, and two Medium Soul Crystals.

Furthermore, the second compound had other requirements, such as mastering 'Advanced Potion Manufacturing Lv. 20' or 'Alchemical Potion Learning Lv. 20' and other potion-related skills.

Suxiao had four Medium Soul Crystals left. As for Moonlight Concentrate Essence and Starlight Grass, he could replace them with 50,000 Reincarnation Paradise coins.

Thinking about it, Suxiao decided to go through with the second compound. He would use it himself if lucky, and the attributes were suitable for him. If not, he could sell it off. Permanent enhancement elixirs were more popular than Soul Crystals.

Suxiao got up and went to the alchemy laboratory. A few hours later, he walked out of the laboratory holding a small vial about the length of a little finger.

"What strange properties; what is 'Elemental Link Strength'?" Suxiao was puzzled because the properties of the potion he held were too unusual.

[Essence of the Moon]

Origin: Dragon-Soaring Empire - Dark Elf Clan

Quality: Pale Gold

Type: Enhancement Elixir (Finished Product)

Effect: After drinking, Elemental Link Strength +3, Elemental Perception Sensitivity +.

Rating: 30+

Price: 90,000 Reincarnation Paradise coins

Chapter 852: The Real Master

Due to the nature of the Shadow Mage profession, even if Suxiao's intelligence attribute reached 79 points, he couldn't perceive any elements. Therefore, he had no idea what "Elemental Link Strength" and "Elemental Perception Sensitivity" were.

Although he didn't know, there might be someone he knew who did—Yan Chen.

He had previously cooperated with Yan Chen, and the two had shared life-and-death situations, leaving each other with contact information.

Suxiao contacted Yan Chen. A virtual screen appeared before him within a few dozen seconds, showing a tired Yan Chen.

"In this early morning, can't a person sleep in?"

Yan Chen was waking up, and as the leader of many neurotics, he wasn't in a good mood after getting up.

"What's the use of Link Strength and Elemental Perception Sensitivity?"

Suxiao got straight to the point. He had tried asking the Reincarnation Paradise before, but annoyingly, this information required payment at 10,000 Paradise coins per message.

"Just for this question? I thought you were going to treat me to breakfast."

Yan Chen seemed slightly displeased, but he still answered Suxiao's question. He provided detailed information that clarified the long-standing confusion for Suxiao.

"Elemental Link Strength is essential for every mage. You can understand it this way: there's a line between a mage and the elements. The thickness of this line represents the value of elemental link strength. The thicker the line, the faster and more stable the mage can use spells.

Elemental perception sensitivity is rare. For example, a mage with an intelligence of 50 points can perceive an essential concentration of 300 TC grams in its surroundings. Regarding what 'TC grams' are, consider it a unit, a measurement used explicitly by mages. The higher the elemental TC grams a mage perceives, the less mana is consumed when using spells. Simply put, it reduces mana consumption, but this reduction only applies to mages, not wizards."

Yan Chen emphasized "mages" and "wizards" twice, indicating there might be some difference between the two.

Clearing his throat, Yan Chen continued:

"Casting a spell goes through several processes: first, sensing a specific concentration of TC grams of elements, then mobilizing these elements, converting mana into similar pieces, manipulating, shaping, splitting, secondary shaping, compressing, tertiary shaping, followed by silent chanting + mana resonance, and finally casting it. In short, it's a lot of trouble, and this is the necessary path for academic-oriented mages.

Also, distinguish academic-oriented mages from skill-based mages. The term 'mage' used in the Reincarnation Paradise refers to what academic-oriented mages have established. Among mages of the same level, academic-oriented mages are several times or even tens of times more potent than skill-based mages. However, academic-oriented mages are rare. Most so-called 'mages nowadays rely on fixed spell skills and are mediocre."

Yan Chen spoke a lot, and Suxiao concluded that the Essence of the Moon might be valuable if he could find a genuine buyer, an academic-oriented mage.

"So, do you have any equipment that can increase 'Elemental Link Strength' and 'Elemental Perception Sensitivity'?"

Yan Chen seemed uninterested in the essence of the moon. He was just a fake image.

"It's a kind of potion. Do you have a market for it?"

"Of course... we do."

Yan Chen's drowsiness faded.

"7%."

"Max 3%."

"I'll help you raise the price, so 6%."

"Deal."

Suxiao made a deal with Yan Chen. Yan Chen knew academic-oriented mages.

Suxiao had been puzzled before. In the Reincarnation Paradise, mages were referred to as "mage lords," but most of the mages he encountered weren't exceptionally powerful; they just randomly cast skills. The stronger ones were only more strategic in skill casting. The term "mage lord" seemed misapplied.

Now, he finally understood that "mage lords" were not a general term for all mages but an exclusive term for academic-oriented mages.

Academic-oriented mages also learned skills, but they delved into the skills they mastered, analyzing the principles of these skills and then incorporating their insights.

This was like Suxiao, who, even after advancing in Blade Master using Soul Crystals and Paradise coins, still meditated for 1-3 hours every day without fail. Moreover, he performed an in-depth analysis of the Qinggang Shadow Energy, allowing him to develop the Counter Shield technique.

Yan Chen mentioned that contacting academic-oriented mage lords took some time. According to him, most of these mage lords were homebodies, spending most of their time researching magic in their exclusive rooms.

For academic-oriented mage lords, studying magic was the most exciting thing. They pursued knowledge, armed themselves with it, and gained higher levels of understanding.

Suxiao left the exclusive room and headed to the trading market. He intended to sell the Malicious Shock and Swig Tower Shield first; this item could fetch a reasonable price.

The main tank might not afford this thing, but the adventure team behind the main tank would approve. An excellent main tank was equivalent to a "giant panda" in the Reincarnation Paradise, a profession needing protection.

Usually, the leaders of significant adventure teams took extra care of their main tanks, treating them like their own sons. However, in battles, sorry, the main tank had to bear the brunt and take hits until they fell. In most cases, when the main tank fell, it was connected to the entire team wiping out.

Suxiao arrived at his "exclusive" stall, which he frequently used.

Sitting behind the stall, Suxiao hesitated momentarily and priced the Malicious Shock and Swig Tower Shield at 600,000 Paradise coins. This price was low. The cost of shields was much lower than that of staff; after all, there were far fewer main tanks than mages. When the output quantity exceeded demand, the price naturally decreased. As for shield-type equipment, it was in an output-lower-than-demand situation. There were too many mages in the Reincarnation Paradise, and mages were already safe within teams, not to mention the stylish and impressive spells, plus the title of "mage lord."

Just as Suxiao opened his stall, a golden light attracted a large crowd of contractors. However, when they saw it was a shield, they appreciated it briefly and dispersed. Out of nearly a hundred contractors, only one burly man stood before the stall, eagerly eyeing the golden guard on display.

"Sir, can this shield be a bit cheaper?"

"Sure."

Suxiao wanted to retain this rare customer.

"Um, how about 210,000?"

The burly man chuckled.

"That's a bit low—at least 550,000."

Suxiao smiled; the other party wasn't causing trouble, just financially tight.

"Excuse me, but could I feel this shield?"

The burly man felt relieved because Suxiao didn't show any mocking expression.

"Sure."

The burly man excitedly picked up the shield. Even though his attributes and skills weren't enough to activate the shield's abilities, holding the golden shield made him feel great. He couldn't help but chuckle.

"Thanks."

Carefully placing the shield back down, the burly man secretly resolved that he would hold a security of similar quality in the future, standing in front of his teammates.

The contractors continued to come and go from the stall. Soon, a burly man wearing a red shirt with exposed chest hair stopped before the booth. He had a muscular build, a characteristic of most main tanks.

Instead of immediately asking for the price, the chest-haired, burly man began to contact someone. Seeing this scene, Suxiao knew that the actual buyer had arrived.

A few minutes later, a gloomy middle-aged man with triangular eyes approached.

"Captain, it's here."

The chest-haired, burly man waved his hand. Upon seeing the chest-haired man, the gloomy captain smiled—a smile that looked more like a cry. He didn't know how to smile.

The gloomy captain examined the shield on the stall, hesitating for a long time.

"548,620 Paradise coins. How's this price?"

This gloomy captain was accurate down to the tens for something worth several hundred thousand Paradise coins.

"Not bad, but why the precision to tens?"

"It's a personal preference. Just consider me obsessive-compulsive."

The obsessive-compulsive captain's offer was based on a comprehensive judgment of the market price and their team's affordability.

"Fine, but let's leave out the 20's place."

The counterparty's offer was a little low, so Suxiao naturally wouldn't make it easy for them.

As expected, right after Suxiao spoke, the obsessive-compulsive captain looked highly uncomfortable, as if he had eaten something foul, but both sides still completed the transaction.

"Steel Bullet, come with me for breakfast immediately, and make sure the price stays exactly at 20 Paradise coins."

The obsessive-compulsive captain left with Steel Bullet, the main tank, who wore an expression of utter speechlessness. They were going to eat a breakfast that cost exactly 20 Paradise coins. If the

breakfast's price exceeded 20 Paradise coins, the obsessive-compulsive captain would feel uncomfortable for several days.

Chapter 853: Unique understanding of knife skills

Inside the exclusive room.

Crystals of Souls (Large) appeared in eight of Suxiao's hands.

Suxiao obtained these eight Crystals of Souls (large) after countless hardships, including fighting Lanjue, participating in large-scale wars, guarding the Twilight Palace, and experiencing numerous life-and-death situations.

Fortunately, all of this was worthwhile. With the Crystals of Souls (large), he could expedite the advancement of his swordsmanship. Within the brutal Reincarnation Paradise, his training couldn't keep up with the pace of battles. Thus, he could only use the Crystals of Souls to enhance his skills, opting for a faster and more stable approach.

902,480 Paradise coins, 8 Crystals of Souls (large). These resources allowed Suxiao to advance his sword master to level 8.

"Advance Sword Master to Level 31 (Passive). It requires the consumption of 100,000 Paradise coins plus 1 Crystal of Souls (large). Proceed?"

"Advance eight levels consecutively."

As soon as Suxiao finished speaking, the eight Crystals of Souls (large) in his hands burst open, turning into numerous sparkling and translucent fragments.

The consumption of Paradise coins rapidly depleted until it stopped at 800,000 points. The 900,000 Paradise coins he had just acquired were instantly reduced to just over 100,000.

The fragmented Crystals of Souls formed radiant silver light chains, rushing straight into Suxiao's mind.

With a loud bang, Suxiao's vision plunged into darkness. This wasn't the first time he had experienced this; when advancing his swordsmanship, this situation would occur if he attempted to progress several levels at once.

Darkness. Endless darkness.

Suddenly, a ray of light flickered in the darkness.

Clang!

A blade flashed, and seeing this blade, Suxiao's consciousness felt dazed. It was a powerful strike as if it could cleave through space, time, and darkness.

The darkness lasted for an unknown duration. Finally, Suxiao felt his existence. Floating beside him were vast amounts of sparkling silver fragments—the remnants of the Crystals of Souls (large).

After swirling around Suxiao for a while, the fragments of Crystals of Souls drifted towards the darkness before him.

The darkness was illuminated by the faint light emitted from the fragments, and through this dim light, Suxiao vaguely saw an ancient tree.

The tree appeared somewhat withered, with numerous sword marks on its thick trunk. Suxiao tried hard to examine these sword marks, but they remained blurred no matter how he focused his gaze.

The fragments of the Crystals of Souls floated near the ancient tree, gradually forming eight human-shaped silhouettes.

Standing under the ancient tree, these eight silhouettes manifested blades in their hands, starting to practice swordsmanship.

Suxiao's spirit had unknowingly connected with these eight silhouettes, which the Crystals of Souls framed, while the Paradise coins were the cost of moulding them.

As the eight silhouettes practised swordsmanship under the ancient tree, Suxiao's physical and mental states rapidly absorbed knowledge of swordsmanship. It seemed these silhouettes were him; they were like his avatars or entities existing on a higher dimensional level than avatars.

Suxiao couldn't help but think that if he could maintain these eight avatars, his swordsmanship improvement would be swift.

However, this was utterly impossible. These "avatars" would only exist for a short time. As the price, he paid eight Crystals of Souls (Large) and 800,000 Paradise coins.

Moreover, that ancient tree in the darkness was the key to rapid advancement in swordsmanship, and the environment around it contributed to the enhancement of swordsmanship. Both were indispensable.

Not long after, one of the silhouettes under the ancient tree gradually dissipated, triggering a chain reaction as the remaining seven silhouettes also began to dissipate rapidly.

Suxiao's eyes suddenly opened. The dark space vanished, the ancient tree with myriad sword marks disappeared, and he sat on the bed in his exclusive room. Bubu Wang hid in the corner of the room, intimidated by the several times Suxiao reinforced his swordsmanship, leaving a considerable shadow on him.

Bubu Wang's eyes seemed somewhat aggrieved as if saying, "I'm upset. I've already planned 20 strategies to wreck the house."

As the level of swordsmanship continued to increase, the phenomena that occurred during Suxiao's advancement became more intense. Initially, he could improve his swordsmanship after a brief daze, but now he could see various scenes vividly—a qualitative change.

Suxiao grabbed the Zhanlong Flash on his legs, unsheathing a small section.

Clang!

A blade about five meters in diameter shot out from the edge at an invisible high speed, slicing through the wall.

"Not good."

The blade flew into the opposite room, followed by the sounds of heavy objects toppling over.

This particular wall of the exclusive room had been reinforced by Suxiao using 500 Paradise coins to experiment with his swordsmanship. Strength: it could easily withstand a direct bombardment from large missiles; its power is comparable to the Twilight Palace walls, even slightly stronger.

However, Suxiao could cleave through this wall with a casual sword strike after advancing their swordsmanship by eight levels. What was more important was that the Zhanlong Flash hadn't fully unsheathed when it released the blade, something he had never been able to do before.

The numerous advantages gained from advancing swordsmanship by eight levels were substantial but had drawbacks.

Advancing swordsmanship too quickly vaguely exceeded Suxiao's 'comprehension' of swordsmanship.

As for what 'comprehension' was, Suxiao couldn't explain. He only knew that his understanding of swordsmanship would increase every time he meditated.

This comprehension had always been balanced with his level of swordsmanship, even vaguely surpassing it. However, after this significant advancement in swordsmanship, that feeling disappeared. There were no direct negative consequences, but Suxiao didn't like this sensation.

Suxiao secretly decided that until his comprehension and swordsmanship reached equilibrium again, he wouldn't drastically advance his swordsmanship, especially not the advancement to level 40. That was a qualitative change, and he vaguely speculated that if he could maintain a balance between comprehension and swordsmanship, the abilities that appeared at level 40 would significantly improve.

Although the enhancements in the Reincarnation Paradise had no side effects, Suxiao had a habit. He would only advance his primary combat abilities a second time once he was thoroughly familiar with those abilities.

Entering a spacious room, Suxiao drew out the Zhanlong Flash at his waist, beginning his sword practice—chopping, hacking, and thrusting. He practised only the basic techniques. Despite their simplicity, the most potent techniques were derived from these basic ones. Stability and rapid advancement in swordsmanship required a stable foundation.

Chapter 854: Solomon

Clang.

The blade's aura sliced through the air. Sweat dripped from Su Xiao's chin as he wore a heavy black vest that weighed at least 900 pounds.

Wearing this thing while practising swordsmanship consumed a significant amount of physical energy. However, Su Xiao planned to increase their weight during practice shortly despite its minimal impact on improving swordsmanship; increasing the weight served to hone his willpower.

Su Xiao removed the metal vest, which clanged loudly as it hit the ground. He felt a sense of relief all over his body.

"Drip, drip, drip..."

The communicator in the room started beeping. Su Xiao checked it; it was a message from Yan Chen.

"The buyer is set. Meet at Locke Street."

"Okay."

After ending the call, Su Xiao casually put on some casual clothes. As he was about to leave the exclusive room, he noticed Bu Bu Wang lying on the already discarded bed.

Su Xiao had transferred 2460 amusement park points to Bu Bu Wang. With just 10,000 amusement park points left, he gave the remainder to Bu Bu Wang as pocket money.

"Pocket money, and hey, get a new bed."

Bu Bu Wang, with sleepy eyes, made a slight whimper while twitching its front paws.

"It's time to lose some weight; you can barely move."

"Whim~"

Bu Bu Wang replied, looking a bit disheartened, as if saying, "I'm upset. I've already planned 20 strategies to wreck the place."

Ignoring Bu Bu Wang's antics, Su Xiao left the exclusive room and headed towards Locke Street.

Locke Street, the so-called "black market" of the amusement park, was a place where goods were no longer legitimate. Items sold here were mostly peculiar and priced relatively cheaply.

They said cheap goods are no good, but good items could be bought inexpensively on Locke Street. However, these items were often dangerous, sometimes being signature gear of certain large adventuring groups or objects that caused strife between hundreds of contractors, leading to their "mysterious" disappearance.

The common trait among these items was that they could cause trouble, even invite fatal danger.

A faction within the amusement park, the Travelers controlled Locke Street. The rights to use and rent all shops on Locke Street were in the hands of the Travelers' members.

Hence, it became a gathering place for eccentric and neurotic individuals. Most working staff didn't come here, as the contractors wandering around emitted terrifying auras. It was unknown if any small matter could suddenly trigger their rage.

Su Xiao didn't frequent Locke Street much. After all, he had killed members of the Travelers, and he held grudges against Left-Handed Man and Gulugulu, two Travelers members.

Yan Chen chose Locke Street as the meeting point, this time according to that mage's suggestion. It was said that this mage had dealings with the Travelers and even moved his exclusive room near Locke Street.

Walking into Locke Street, the structure was straightforward: a street flanked by various shops with bizarre names like "Old Stories House" (an intelligence organization), "Incinerate Store" (hiring powerful contractors for assassinations), and "The Ear" (an intelligence relay station).

There weren't many contractors on the street, but each passing contractor emitted a strong aura, behaving strangely.

"Here."

Yan Chen stood in the middle of Locke Street, near a restaurant, one of the few regular establishments on Locke Street.

Su Xiao approached, and Yan Chen gestured to sit down. They ordered a few items and sat facing each other at a round table.

"Where's the man?"

Su Xiao lifted a glass of watermelon juice and gulped it down. The high-intensity sword practice had drained a lot of fluid from his body. The icy watermelon juice refreshed him immensely.

"We'll have to wait a bit. The guy's name is Solomon. He hates waiting despite us being the sellers. He's one of the few buyers, so we must endure this for the amusement park points. You okay with that?"

Yan Chen seemed to have a headache when mentioning Solomon.

"That dark mage, right?"

Su Xiao suddenly spoke.

"How did you know? Have you met him?"

Yan Chen was quite surprised.

"Not really. He's here."

Su Xiao sensed a bunch of darkness approaching. It was gloomy and oppressive as if it had swallowed the surrounding light.

A man wearing a black pointed hat and a black robe, with most of his face covered, leaving only his eyes visible, pushed open the restaurant door and entered.

The man's eyes were pitch black. There was no distinction between the whites of his eyes and pupils; they were just black. As he entered, the surfaces of all glass items began to frost, forming water droplets.

"Manager, the air conditioning is too cold."

A customer shouted out from the side while the manager leaned on the counter, eyes downcast.

"Even if this were a volcano, the temperature would remain the same. Looking for excitement, newbie."

The manager exhaled a breath of cold air and shook his head.

"Alright."

Solomon adjusted his collar slightly and stepped into the restaurant. Meanwhile, a few customers got up and left.

Su Xiao observed Solomon. He didn't feel any human aura from him; instead, it seemed like he was merged with darkness. This wasn't a kind of bloodline or skill; it was the overwhelming dark energy within him.

Solomon glanced around the restaurant. When his gaze landed on Yan Chen, he walked over. As he approached Su Xiao and Yan Chen, about ten meters away, he stopped, his pure black eyes fixated on Su Xiao.

"Natural enemy."

A completely black venomous snake wriggled out inside Solomon's collar as he spoke. The snake had a triangular head, fine and dense scales, and was silently hissing. It was a mutated black mamba.

After a brief pause, Solomon stood up and approached, sitting directly opposite Su Xiao, slightly closer to Yan Chen.

"Here."

Solomon was concise, speaking at most five words.

"As a middleman for both of you, Solomon, this price seems a bit low."

Yan Chen could earn a commission from this transaction, so there was no need for Su Xiao to negotiate.

"Tight budget."

After uttering those four words, Solomon remained silent, no matter what Yan Chen said.

After raising the price for five minutes, Yan Chen's chest heaved slightly, not because Solomon had moved like a statue and remained silent throughout.

"You mentioned before... a natural enemy, right?"

Su Xiao spoke, and Solomon's demeanour showed a slight change.

"35,000. Not selling. Forget it, natural enemy."

Solomon seemed to want to leave. He didn't want to stay too long and had referred to Su Xiao as a natural enemy throughout.

Chapter 855: Brainstorming

After Solomon left for five minutes...

In the restaurant, Su Xiao handed 21,600 amusement park coins to Yan Chen; this was Yan Chen's brokerage fee.

Yan Chen left with a statement, "Remember to foot the bill and run away." He effortlessly earned 21,600 amusement park coins with just a few words, leaving him in a good mood.

Sitting alone in the restaurant, Su Xiao recalled Solomon's aura. Even if both sides were to engage in a conflict, his odds of winning wouldn't be high, at most fifty-fifty.

"The scholarly magician, worthy of the title 'Lord of Magic.'"

Su Xiao got up and headed towards the door. Just as he pushed it open, a petite figure approached him. It was a little girl in a red dress, sucking on a lollipop, carrying a travel bag emitting a strong smell of blood.

This girl in the red dress was Gu Lu, an expedition team member who loved killing and eating candy.

Their eyes met, and Gu Lu crunched the lollipop in her mouth.

"It's you, Spider-Man Bi Chi!! The one who can shoot webs."

Gu Lu's teeth itched with hatred, munching on hard candy.

"..."

Su Xiao remained silent and walked out of the restaurant.

"Hey, how does being chased by Blood Gate's people feel?"

Upon hearing Gu Lu's question, Su Xiao paused.

"Oh? Did you send them to chase after me?"

"Of course... not. How could I do such a nasty thing? But you not being burned to death by Huang Fen was surprising."

Gu Lu's expression changed to a smile on her face. "Stan must be furious. If that's the case, how about we make a deal?"

Gu Lu's personality could be described as erratic. Initially wanting to devour Su Xiao alive, she wanted to make a deal.

"A deal?"

"Yes, a deal. Return the Hunt Demon Ring to me; I can provide crucial information. It concerns your life and death. Aren't you curious why Stan sent people to chase you? If Blood Gate isn't wiped out, they will continue pursuing you until your demise."

It seemed that Gu Lu still yearned for the Hunt Demon Set. Su Xiao needed one piece to activate the set's attributes. How could he give up?

"Not interested."

Su Xiao turned and left, leaving Gu Lu behind.

"Bi Chi, Bi Chi, Bi Chi... Ah, my beloved Hunt Demon Ring. This guy is not easy to fool, but... why are Blood Gate's people chasing after him?"

Gu Lu scratched her head. She didn't know why the people from Blood Gate were after Su Xiao. She only discovered that Blood Gate's vice-captain, Huang Fen, went to the Second-Tier World to chase after Su Xiao through a particular channel, but the reason was unknown.

...

Not only was Gu Lu curious about why Blood Gate was chasing Su Xiao, but Su Xiao himself was also interested. Their grudge with Blood Gate shouldn't be significant enough for Stan to send people specifically to the Second-Tier World to chase him.

However, there were too few clues, and Su Xiao could only watch and wait.

After browsing the trading market for a few laps and not finding any suitable equipment or items, Su Xiao headed straight for the Skill Upgrade Hall.

The war world had just ended, and the Skill Upgrade Hall was bustling with people. The bunny girls and cat girls inside were busy handling the incoming contractees.

"Lord Contractee, may I help you with..."

A smiling, slightly weary bunny girl bowed to Su Xiao.

Su Xiao waved his hand, indicating he didn't need assistance. The bunny girl breathed a sigh of relief, thanked him, and went to attend to other contractees.

Su Xiao walked towards the depths of the Skill Upgrade Hall. Each skill upgrade compartment showed 'in use.' Fortunately, there were plenty of them. After walking a distance, he found an unused skill upgrade compartment.

When entering the compartment, the door automatically locks. Su Xiao took out the 'Aura Release' scroll and hesitated before using it.

"You've used the 'Aura Release' skill scroll; aura solidifying in progress..."

Su Xiao stood still in the skill upgrade compartment. His aura was ultimately released, but fortunately, the room was sealed.

Usually, even if Su Xiao intentionally released his aura, it would be colourless. It would only take on colour and form in others' eyes after causing them to feel intimidated. However, this time was different. Su Xiao's aura began to condense, gradually becoming visible from being invisible.

Soon, a faint red aura appeared in the skill upgrade compartment. Within this faint red aura were numerous faint blue threads, barely noticeable without careful observation.

After about half an hour, Su Xiao's vision cleared.

"So, this is Aura Release?"

Su Xiao surveyed the aura around him. The faint red represented his high number of kills, and those invisible blue threads were somewhat similar to the attributes of the Azure Steel Shadow energy.

Opening the skill list revealed a new skill.

[Aura Release Lv.1 (Passive)]

Skill effect: Can release aura. If the opponent's willpower is lower than yours by 3 points, they will fall into a state of panic. The panic status can be removed using mind purification skills.

Reminder: This skill, when improved, will increase aura intensity and slightly enhance willpower.

...

Seeing the attributes of Aura Release Lv.1, Su Xiao was taken aback. He was already aware of weakening the enemy, but after mastering this skill, he was surprised to find that it could also enhance aura intensity and willpower.

To enhance willpower was a scarce opportunity, yet this golden-quality skill scroll had such an ability.

Su Xiao immediately activated the function of the skill upgrade compartment. A prompt appeared.

"Welcome to use the skill upgrade compartment. Please choose the skill to be upgraded."

Su Xiao selected [Aura Release Lv.1 (Passive)], and the prompt reappeared.

"To improve 'Aura Release Lv.1 (Passive),' you must pay 30,000 amusement park coins. Yes/No."

Su Xiao thought it was pretty expensive. To increase one level required 30,000 coins, while previously, enhancing firearm proficiency cost only 2,000 coins per level.

Although the price was high, it didn't require soul crystals. Su Xiao would end up bankrupt if another skill required soul crystals for upgrades.

After hesitating for a moment, Su Xiao chose to upgrade.

Suddenly, the surroundings dimmed, and a sense of teleportation occurred. Subsequently, Su Xiao found himself on an ancient battlefield. Corpses littered the ground, and a faint red mist hovered over the battlefield.

A giant dragon had its head severed, and the bodies of numerous powerful beings were scattered around. The bodies of demon goats emitted a sulfuric smell. Any of these creatures' bodies had the strength to overpower Su Xiao easily.

The red mist on the ancient battlefield began to invade Su Xiao, seeming to enhance him.

However, it wasn't an enhancement; if Su Xiao were consumed by this mist, even if he didn't die, he would likely suffer from mental disorders.

Su Xiao's aura exploded, and the faint blue threads within his aura shimmered.

The blood aura on the ancient battlefield started compressing Su Xiao's aura. He had to use all his strength to protect himself from the blood aura's corrosion.

Su Xiao hadn't expected such risks in upgrading skills, but now, he couldn't stop and had to continue.

The blood aura from the ancient battlefield seemed to want to swallow Su Xiao, but of course, he wouldn't just wait for his doom. He used his aura to resist, but the blood aura was too strong, and his aura couldn't stop its invasion.

Gu Lu Gu Lu...

Su Xiao's aura completely turned blood-red, and simultaneously, his eyes began to emit a red light.

Suddenly, the sense of teleportation reappeared. When Su Xiao regained his senses, he was back inside the skill upgrade compartment, and the blood aura that had invaded his body had been completely cleared.

[Aura Intimidation (Passive) has been upgraded to Lv.2.]

[Reminder: Your willpower +1 point.]

...

Seeing these two prompts, Su Xiao narrowed his eyes. The feeling just now... seemed quite reasonable. If his aura were stronger, he could devour the blood aura on the ancient battlefield. Could he use that aggressive aura to enhance his ambience? He could create a unique skill.

This method would be too risky for everyone, but Su Xiao possessed the Devouring Core and the Demon Seal, which can be devoured and filtered. If he could consume and purify the violent blood aura, turning it into energy suitable for his atmosphere, his aura might rapidly improve.

This approach was hazardous, but Su Xiao felt it was feasible.

"Continue the upgrade."

As soon as Su Xiao said this, 30,000 amusement park coins were deducted, and the sense of teleportation occurred again.

Chapter 856: Simple Version

It was still that ancient battlefield. As soon as Su Xiao arrived here, the blood essence of the ancient battlefield surged towards him.

Su Xiao's aura emanated outward. Compared to last time, his aura was noticeably stronger this time. However, the blood essence of the ancient battlefield was too powerful, and his atmosphere was insufficient to resist it fully.

If Su Xiao wanted to devour these blood essences through the Devouring Core or the Demon's Mark, he first needed the ability to resist these blood essences.

He couldn't do anything else besides constantly emanating his aura. Even a slight distraction would result in the invasion of the blood essence. Once completely invaded, the consequences would be severe.

The blood essence gradually permeated Su Xiao's aura. These blood essences would affect his consciousness and rationality.

Blood-red lines gradually appeared on Su Xiao's cheeks; a crimson light emanated from his eyes, and the blood essence rapidly eroded his consciousness.

Su Xiao struggled to maintain his sanity, but he could feel his rationality gradually fading. If it weren't for the Mind Blade keeping him awake, he would have been consumed by the blood essence. These blood essences had already surpassed the scope of mental influence.

Just as Su Xiao was about to be unable to withstand the erosion of the blood essence, lights flickered before him, and he returned to the skill upgrade chamber, causing the blood essence within him to dissipate instantly.

["Aura Emission (Passive)" has been upgraded to level 3.]

Su Xiao leaned against the skill upgrade chamber, panting heavily, his body covered in cold sweat.

Absorbing those blood essences was more difficult than he had imagined. Let alone absorption; even initial resistance is now arduous.

"Continue."

Su Xiao paid another 30,000 amusement park coins and was teleported back to the ancient battlefield.

Half an hour later, Su Xiao's figure suddenly appeared again in the skill upgrade chamber. His face was covered in blood-red lines, his eyes flickering with crimson light. He looked like a blood demon from purgatory. He had repeatedly entered and exited the ancient battlefield several times.

Green dots enveloped Su Xiao, causing his blood essence to dissipate.

"Cough, cough, cough..."

Su Xiao erupted into a fit of violent coughing, spitting out droplets of blood. When he attempted to absorb the blood essence during his sixth entry into the ancient battlefield, the blood essence lost control as soon as it entered his body. He couldn't remember anything that happened afterwards. When he regained consciousness, he was in the skill enhancement chamber, feeling heavy and weak, as if recovering from a severe illness.

["Aura Emission (Passive)" has been upgraded to level 7.]

"Warning: The hunter has been affected by the blood essence invasion on the ancient battlefield. Do you wish to spend amusement park coins for recovery?"

"Spend."

As soon as Su Xiao spoke, the amusement park coins rapidly depleted at an astonishing rate, with 13,500 points consumed instantly.

"What the..."

Su Xiao couldn't help but curse. He could accept the high cost of upgrading 'Aura Emission,' but why was recovering from injuries so exorbitant?

The discomfort within him vanished. After hesitating momentarily, Su Xiao upgraded 'Aura Emission.'

It was still that ancient battlefield. Su Xiao had just arrived, sitting cross-legged on the ground and instinctively emitting his aura, resisting the blood essence surrounding him. He didn't use any other abilities, even compressing the Qing Gang Yin energy near his heart.

He came here to enhance the strength of his aura. Using other abilities to resist the blood essence would render the spending of amusement park coins meaningless.

Su Xiao had already sensed that its strength gradually increased while resisting the blood essence with his aura.

Su Xiao's aura formed a circular shape, creating a beautiful and dazzling five-meter-sized ball of pale blue threads.

As time passed, sweat dripped from Su Xiao's cheeks. His aura had compressed into a two-meter-sized sphere, and the blood essence was about to invade his body.

As the aura compressed, it became denser, both in intensity and quantity, due to external pressure.

The surrounding blood essence wasn't targeting Su Xiao; it was unconsciously invading. However, as it infringed on Su Xiao's aura, these blood essences formed blood-red spikes that pierced his aura.

One of these blood-red spikes gradually touched the back of Su Xiao's hand. In an instant, blood-red lines appeared on his hand and quickly spread throughout his body.

When the blood-red lines spread to Su Xiao's neck, his cheeks began to twitch.

Swoosh...

Su Xiao disappeared from the ancient battlefield and returned to the skill upgrade chamber.

The blood essence within him dissipated instantly, and the blood-red lines on Su Xiao's body peeled off his skin, disappearing rapidly into the air.

["Aura Emission (Passive)" has been upgraded to level 8.]

Su Xiao's eyes opened. After this upgrade, he could resist the blood essence for a while. Initially, he would be sent out of the ancient battlefield in less than 5 seconds, but now he could endure for 48 seconds.

"Just a little more."

After hesitating for a moment, Su Xiao chose to continue. Even though that place on the ancient battlefield was dangerous, risks and rewards coexisted.

Ten minutes later, a heavily blood-red Su Xiao collapsed. Once again, his attempt to absorb the blood essence failed.

["Aura Emission (Passive)" has been upgraded to level 10.]

["Tip: Since 'Aura Emission (Passive)' has reached level 10, the hunter can choose a level 10 branch reward."]

Iron Will: +3 Willpower. Asura's Soul: Able to morph his aura into a Blood Asura, enhancing the deterrent effect (no offensive power). Aura Amplification: +10% Aura Strength.

...

In the past, Su Xiao would have undoubtedly chosen option A, but this time, he had grander ambitions.

After much consideration, Su Xiao ultimately chose option c, Aura Amplification: +10% Aura Strength.

As he made the selection, Su Xiao's aura suddenly emanated outward.

Boom.

An extreme aura spread within the skill upgrade chamber, rapidly increasing in intensity.

After a while, Su Xiao breathed a sigh of relief.

"Now, perhaps there's a chance."

Su Xiao took out a bottle of chewing gum, poured out a piece, and gnawed it. Though his mana consumption was not high, he needed to maintain it at its maximum value. The next time he entered the ancient battlefield, he had a plan.

"Continue to upgrade 'Aura Emission.'"

"To upgrade 'Aura Emission lv.10 (Passive),' you must spend 50,000 amusement park coins. Do you wish to proceed?"

Su Xiao grinned; the cost to strengthen Aura Emission had increased even more.

"Spend."

Light flickered, and Su Xiao appeared on the ancient battlefield, becoming familiar with the place.

When he arrived at the ancient battlefield, Su Xiao immediately sat down and released his level 10 aura. This time, he resisted the surrounding blood essence much more effortlessly.

Closing his eyes briefly, Su Xiao knew he could only endure for about five minutes under the invasion of the blood essence. Time was of the body; he needed to act quickly.

Su Xiao rapidly converted his mana into Qing Gang Yin energy, gathering it in his hands and compressing it to a high density.

As his mana quickly depleted, having converted all 1200 points into Qing Gang Yin energy, a honeycomb-like sphere appeared in Su Xiao's hands.

The structure of this sphere was highly intricate. If observed closely, it might even cause dizziness.

Continuing to inject Qing Gang Yin energy into the sphere, its size gradually increased from a walnut to an apple.

Yet, it was not enough. Su Xiao had crafted this simplified version of the Devouring Core, closely resembling its structure. He had facilitated the Devouring Core, specializing this version in three abilities: absorption, purification, and refinement.

Su Xiao's main focus was on purification for this simplified version of the Devouring Core. The blood essence on the ancient battlefield was too diverse, containing many energies that couldn't be absorbed into his aura.

With only 300 mana points left, a basketball-sized simplified Devouring Core floated above Su Xiao's head. He had once crafted a complete version of the Devouring Core, so constructing this simplified version was simple.

Chapter 857: Let Me... Kill You

At this moment, Su Xiao had already compressed his aura to a size of three meters, and time was running out. He needed to experiment to see if the envisioned method was feasible quickly.

Of course, even if unsuccessful, with the protection of his aura, Su Xiao wouldn't be in much danger, just losing some Paradise Coins.

A transparent energy thread connected the simplified Devouring Core and Su Xiao. Please don't underestimate this thread; once the Devouring Core successfully absorbs the aura, purifies it, and refines it, the pure atmosphere obtained will be conducted to Su Xiao through this thread.

This energy thread was created by Su Xiao, who spent nearly 500 points of mana. Internally, it contained eight ultra-small, simplified Devouring Cores, each capable of only one function: purification.

From the entry of the aura into the simplified Devouring Core until its conduction to Su Xiao, there would be a total of nine purification processes. Su Xiao would be helpless if there were any negative energies among them.

Taking a deep breath, Su Xiao activated the simplified Devouring Core above his head.

Dozens of small holes opened on the Devouring Core, akin to a whale sucking in water, instantly drawing in the aura within dozens of meters without any erosion. Su Xiao felt a sudden decrease in pressure.

Cracks appeared on the simplified Devouring Core with a clicking sound. Su Xiao wasn't surprised. This was a simplified version he had made. When he created the complete Devouring Core, he had been immersed in the Azure Steel Shadow Energy Pool, consuming an unknown amount of Azure Steel Shadow Energy.

Now, relying solely on his own Azure Steel Shadow Energy, the vulnerability of the simplified Devouring Core was expected.

After a large amount of aura was absorbed into the simplified Devouring Core, it began its operation, purifying and refining the atmosphere.

Soon, a faint red energy surged from the simplified Devouring Core. At this point, it had turned entirely blood-red inside, filled with impurities of the aura.

The pure aura was conducted to Su Xiao through the energy thread. Inside the line, the eight even more simplified Devouring Cores started operating, purifying the atmosphere repeatedly.

Finally, the aura had been purified to almost transparent, with only a faint red colour visible.

Su Xiao gathered a clump of his aura in his hands, integrating the ambience purified nine times into his own without effort. He noticed no anomalies and a delighted expression appeared on his face.

The initial experiment was successful. Afterwards, the process became much more straightforward, allowing the simplified Devouring Core above his head to continuously absorb and filter the aura, transforming it into an absorbable, pure atmosphere.

Su Xiao managed to pull off this skill upgrade, something most contractors wouldn't even think of. However, he was aware he wasn't the first to do so.

The facilities of the Paradise of Reincarnation were there for a reason. Su Xiao spent Paradise Coins on using these facilities. As for how to use them specifically, it depended on him—whether he stuck to conventional methods or minimized expenses to achieve more significant improvements.

What Su Xiao was doing now would draw attention from the Paradise of Reincarnation. However, he hadn't received any warnings, indicating that the Paradise of Reincarnation tacitly approved contractors acting this way.

The simplified Devouring Core absorbed large amounts of aura, and Su Xiao soaked the resulting pure atmosphere after several layers of purification.

Absorbing a substantial amount of this aura, Su Xiao didn't feel any abnormalities. He only sensed his aura rapidly increasing. However, there were also downsides; the blood scent on him grew more assertive. Who knew if this would affect his charm attribute?

Compared to the aura floating in the ancient battlefield, what Su Xiao absorbed was merely a drop in the ocean. On this battlefield lay fallen giants, demonic goats, old behemoths, and influential individuals of various races. How much aura would these individuals produce after death?

Ten minutes later, cracks covered the simplified Devouring Core above Su Xiao's head, on the brink of shattering at any moment. The energy thread had turned blood-red, filled with remnants of the aura—remnants that should never be inhaled, leading to endless troubles.

Su Xiao breathed a sigh of relief. There was little time left for continued absorption. As he was preparing to absorb one final wave of aura, he suddenly sensed something amiss in his surroundings.

The aura from the entire ancient battlefield began converging towards Su Xiao. If the simplified Devouring Core absorbed such a quantity of atmosphere, it would instantly shatter, let alone purify and refine it.

Realizing the danger, Su Xiao immediately disengaged the simplified Devouring Core. Allowing the aura to invade him was the only way he would be sent back to the Skill Enhancement Hall.

Bloody patterns emerged on Su Xiao's body.

Simultaneously, the aura above him formed a colossal hand, nearly solidified, its palm lines visible.

As the blood-coloured hand descended, Su Xiao felt an intense chill. If struck by this thing, he would undoubtedly die, without a doubt!

Boom!

A loud sound echoed across the ancient battlefield. A seemingly bottomless palm-shaped abyss appeared, and Su Xiao had vanished.

Boom!

A sonic boom reverberated as a man with white hair, standing about three meters tall, his face withered, appeared.

Pointing his finger into the air, the scenery began to reverse. The palm-shaped abyss disappeared, and the figure of Su Xiao sitting on the ground reappeared.

"Hmm? Annihilation law?"

The white-haired man's pupils constricted, and his face, resembling dry wood, turned icy.

"Another appearance? Since I've encountered you during your growth period, let's turn you into a corpse."

The space in front of the white-haired man shattered without any visible action. He stepped into the void, starting to track Su Xiao.

Two seconds later,

Bang!

The space ruptured once more. The already distorted, white-haired man flew out of the ruptured area and crashed to the ground.

"What kind of existence is this? What great power..."

The white-haired man's lips trembled as if he had seen something terrifying.

Clang!

A crisp, slashing sound echoed as a spatial fissure appeared. A humanoid creature holding a long blade, emanating blue smoke all over its body, emerged from the rift.

"Who's this again? No, it's a blade..."

Swish~

The head of the white-haired man flew off. The humanoid creature enveloped in blue smoke stared at the corpse for a long time before turning and entering the rift.

"Comrade, wherever you are, let me... kill you."

The voice of the humanoid creature came from within the spatial crack.

Several minutes later, the ruptures and fissures in the ancient battlefield were healed.

...

Inside the Skill Enhancement Chamber, Su Xiao lay on the ground, covered in blood, on the verge of losing consciousness at any moment.

The blood-coloured hand hadn't struck him, but he still suffered severe injuries. This made him vigilant; given the multitude of unknown factors, he couldn't quickly enter that ancient battlefield in the future.

[Warning: Hunter has suffered aura invasion from the ancient battlefield, multiple fractures throughout the body, severe internal bleeding, and trace remnants of aura mixed into the breath.
[Pay Paradise Coins for recovery.]

Squinting his eyes, even after purifying the aura through multiple means, trace remnants of atmosphere still mixed into his breath. Fortunately, they could be removed with Paradise Coins.

"Pay."

As soon as he uttered the word, Su Xiao felt a pang.

[Prompt: Clearing aura invasion requires 10,600 Paradise Coins.]

[Prompt: Multiple fractures and severe internal bleeding require 1,300 Paradise Coins.]

[Prompt: Removal of aura remnants from breath requires 47,200 Paradise Coins.]

[Paradise Coin payment completed.]. Recovery initiated.]

One hour later, looking at the remaining 35,800 Paradise Coins, Su Xiao couldn't help but sigh. The rate at which he spent Paradise Coins was too fast. He needed to use the remaining coins to create Potion No. 1.

Despite spending a large amount of Paradise Coins, they were well spent. He immediately opened the skill list to check the aura projection skill.

Chapter 858: Suppress

In the real world, Su Xiao's jewellery store.

The second-floor living room was dim, with the curtains tightly drawn.

Sitting on the floor, Su Xiao scanned his surroundings. This time, Bubu Wang didn't return with him to the real world; he was forcibly kept within the Reincarnation Paradise.

Sensing this situation, Su Xiao vaguely guessed the gist of the mission. Perhaps it was to kill those who violated the rules and stayed in the real world.

Thinking it over, Su Xiao felt that facing rule-breakers would be a complete defeat in his current state. If it was to "Break the Limits of the Body," it might involve some exercise. However, considering the usual style of the Reincarnation Paradise's missions, a relatively safe practice was unlikely.

Without external pressure, hoping to break his physical limits within a few days was a pipe dream. That would require years or even decades of training.

Su Xiao clenched his fist, feeling the surging power within had vanished. Before, he could easily dismantle a Gundam model by hand, but now he needed tools like a wrench or a cutter.

He checked his current abilities:

Health Points: 100%.

Mana Points: 50 (3116, sealed).

Strength: 5 (76+3 equipment bonus, closed).

Agility: 5 (76+3 equipment bonus, closed).

Stamina: 5 (80, closed).

Intelligence: 5 (79, closed).

Charisma: 5 (6, closed).

Skill 1: Master of Swordsmanship Level 5.

Skill 2: Firearms Proficiency Level 5.

Skill 3: Insight Level 5.

Skill 4: Devil's Mark (completely sealed).

Skill 5: Aura Emission (filled).

Skill 6: Absolute Demon Physique (70% filled).

Skill 7: Spirit Shadow Physique (65% sealed).

Skill 8: Meditation of the Mind Level 4 (unsealed).

After checking his attributes, Su Xiao frowned. The suppression was more thorough than he had imagined, with some passive skills even wholly sealed.

Now, he could only rely on three skills for combat—Swordsmanship Mastery, Firearms Proficiency, and Insight. As for the other passive abilities, they were either fully sealed or more than 50% filled.

However, Su Xiao's "Meditation of the Mind" had reached Level 4 compared to these. This wasn't enhanced through the Reincarnation Paradise but resulted from his daily meditation persistence.

[Hint: "Break the Limits of the Body" mission has been issued; hunters can check it themselves.]

Upon receiving the prompt, Su Xiao activated the Reincarnation Mark with his mind. Indeed, the previously darkened task list in the real world was now accessible. He opened the task list:

[Special Mission: Brave the Demon Cave]

Difficulty Level: Adaptive

Mission Summary: Located at 97°105' E, 19°27.3' N

Mission Deadline: 5 natural days

Mission Reward: None

Mission Penalty: None

After reviewing the mission details, Su Xiao felt a bit puzzled. What were these abnormal individuals? Pacemakers? And from the Hint at the end of the task, the task content wasn't crucial; the key was breaking the physical limit, and this task was released for that purpose.

Putting aside how to break the limit, Su Xiao sensed maliciousness in this task. His combat ability could have been more vital with his current physical qualities. Even a first-tier Pactmaker could overpower him in attributes and skills.

However, in a battle with a first-tier Pactmaker, Su Xiao might still need to win despite the opponent's superior attributes and skills. The combat experience was entirely on a different level. Even if a tiger was restrained, it was not something a cat could provoke.

Su Xiao went to the shop's ground floor, turned on the computer, and wanted to confirm the mission's location.

After cross-referencing, Su Xiao found that the mission location was highly remote and uninhabited.

He began investigating information about this uninhabited area. The more he looked, the more off it seemed. This place he was heading to was hundreds of kilometres away from civilization, surrounded by vast forests, many of which had started to become desertified due to over-harvesting.

Not only that, there was also a natural wetland nearby, home to numerous wild animals. Seeing this terrain, Su Xiao suddenly remembered that he had been there. In this uninhabited area, there was a hazardous small town that couldn't be found on any map, where many poachers lurked.

If it were just that, the place wouldn't be too dangerous. However, this small town was located in a nook between the borders of three countries. Gazing at the other two countries, Su Xiao immediately associated it with drug lords.

"So, this ghostly place is why it felt familiar before."

After pinpointing the destination on the map, Su Xiao touched the left side of his neck. He had been there before and nearly lost his life after being shot on the left side of his neck.

Confirming the location of the destination, Su Xiao understood the degree of danger in this trip. Going there would be like a vacation if his attributes hadn't been suppressed. However, for someone with average features, losing their life there wouldn't be surprising.

Su Xiao stood up, walked to the utility room, and pulled out a sledgehammer before heading towards the basement.

The basement door wasn't locked. Following the stairs, Su Xiao entered the basement and turned on the lights.

A faint, musty odour wafted in; he hadn't cleaned this place in a long time. However, all the weapons, trophies, contraband, etc., he used as a killer were hidden here.

Clearing the clutter in the centre of the basement, Su Xiao took off his shirt, rotated his neck, and swung the sledgehammer.

Boom!

As the cement debris scattered, Ma Pangzi, who was in the neighbouring wreath and funeral store, trembled in fear and entered a saint-like state.

"This... this is bad."

Ma Pangzi's lover was wearing heavy makeup. She grabbed Ma Pangzi's ear; this woman in her thirties was dissatisfied. They say women in their thirties are like wolves, in their forties like tigers, and in their fifties can sit and suck up the earth. In the prime of her years, this woman wouldn't let Ma Pangzi off so quickly.

"Mistake, mistake. Let's stop here for today. You go home first."

"You..."

The fury in the woman's heart surged. Seeing that Ma Pangzi wasn't joking and had something serious going on, she reluctantly agreed to leave. Soon, the roar of an engine was heard from outside.

Bang, bang, bang...

The hammering sound came from the next room, and Ma Pangzi grimaced.

"What's Su Xiao up to? Is it enemies at the door?"

Shirtless, and covered in fat, Ma Pangzi gritted his teeth, retrieved a crossbow from under the bed, loaded it with a cocking tool, and held a stun baton in his other hand as he approached the back of the jewellery store through the rear door. Soon, he entered the small courtyard behind the store.

Click.

There was a crisp sound under Ma Pangzi's feet.

"What's this?"

"Don't move!"

A loud shout echoed, and Su Xiao dashed out of the store's back door. The alarm inside the store had gone off, indicating someone had entered the backyard, triggering the warning system.

"What's... happening?"

Ma Pangzi trusted Su Xiao, so he didn't move.

"It's okay. You just stepped on a landmine. Don't worry; this is an old-fashioned Pineapple-type mine."

Su Xiao squatted in front of Ma Pangzi, recalling the disarming method for this mine. It could have been more, but it was troublesome to disarm.

"Damn!"

Ma Pangzi's legs began to tremble. He couldn't believe he was witnessing this; was this a movie scene? Who would bury a mine in their backyard? Was it wartime?

However, Ma Pangzi needed to learn that Su Xiao was a hunter. Once his identity was exposed, planting a mine in the backyard was nothing for a Pacemaker.

Chapter 859: Fatty Ma

Ma Pangzi was leaning back on the sofa inside the jewellery store, holding a cigarette, staring straight at the ceiling. A landmine covered in dirt sat in front of him on the coffee table.

The landmine's fuse had been disarmed. Su Xiao hadn't placed any more dangerous pressure-activated mines in the backyard; he merely needed a warning not to kill with landmines.

Even if Ma Pangzi were to trigger the landmine, it would, at most, make a loud noise. The explosive force would only be enough to knock him off his feet.

"I mean, seriously, planting landmines in the backyard? Weren't you a killer in your previous profession? You seem more like a spy to me."

Ma Pangzi shivered as he took a drag of his cigarette, not entirely aware of the actual power of the landmine. He only believed the thing could blow him into pieces, as depicted in movies.

"BKT-35 Type Warning Tripwire Mine. It's mostly a war toy made of plastic. Invented by a colleague. The explosion sound and effect are similar. The most you've experienced is stepping on a delayed 15-second firecracker, which could, at most, give you a startle. No need to be so terrified."

Carrying a black travel bag, Su Xiao walked out from the basement.

"Easy for you to say; I almost wet myself back then."

Ma Pangzi rolled his eyes.

"But, how many of these things did you set up?"

"A few dozen."

Su Xiao sat behind the bar counter, placing the travel bag on the wooden table.

"You're amazing."

After taking a drag of his cigarette, Ma Pangzi suddenly burst into laughter.

"Does this mean you're going to rob a bank?"

Ma Pangzi's eyes glowed with curiosity, clearly seeing real guns for the first time.

"This is... an M416?"

Ma Pangzi looked at the automatic rifle on the table.

"Huh? You know about firearms?"

"Of course, I even used it to wipe out a squad last night."

"What?"

Su Xiao looked Ma Pangzi up and down.

"Cough, in the game..."

Understanding dawned on Su Xiao; it wasn't surprising for Ma Pangzi to be familiar with the M416 as a classic firearm.

"Wanna give it a try?"

"Can I?"

"Of course... Not."

The automatic rifle, even with a suppressor, still made considerable noise. Su Xiao had even suspected that the arms dealer had sold him counterfeit goods.

"The automatic rifle won't work, but the handgun can."

Su Xiao loaded the magazine into the handgun, attached the suppressor, unlocked the safety, and briefed Ma Pangzi on the essential operation of the pistol.

"Go to the basement, and remember to close the door."

Ma Pangzi took the handgun, grabbed two more magazines, and excitedly rushed downstairs.

"Remember to grip firmly with both hands. The recoil of the handgun is no joke. Don't accidentally shoot yourself in the head, and aim at the wooden crate in the basement."

"Got it."

Ma Pangzi shut the door with a bang, and soon, faint gunfire echoed from the basement.

As Su Xiao packed his belongings and opened the basement door, Ma Pangzi awkwardly removed the magazine and loaded the last one.

He was squatting, with a stable stance, both hands gripping the gun, arms slightly bent. As Ma Pangzi pulled the trigger, his arms extended forward and backwards.

Witnessing this shooting posture, Su Xiao immediately associated it with the infamous traitorous shooting technique and instinctively moved behind the wall beside the door.

Pew pew pew...

Ma Pangzi's arms were stretching back and forth as he enjoyed shooting. Watching this, Su Xiao's lips twitched involuntarily.

"Quite something."

After emptying the magazine, Ma Pangzi blew on the muzzle, his face displaying a mix of satisfaction and a hint of sensuality.

Chapter 860: Small Town

Two days later.

The yellow sand was flying, grains of sand fell on the road, and a rugged off-road jeep whizzed by, kicking up a large cloud of dust, the tires crunching on the sand.

In the main driver's seat, Su Xiao let out a sigh. He had been driving for two days straight and was now navigating a deserted area. This car was Ma Pangzi's prized possession, with excellent off-road performance.

Su Xiao picked up the electronic navigation map from the passenger seat. He was very close to his destination.

As a strong wind blew, a gust of yellow sand hit the windshield, making a crackling sound.

After another hour of driving, a cement bridge appeared ahead. The guardrails on both sides of the cement wall had been forcibly removed, and a dilapidated SUV was skewed on the stone bridge. The car windows were covered in fine sand, making it impossible to see inside.

From a distance, the gap on one side of the stone bridge seemed wide enough for a car to pass through, but in reality, it was impassable unless forcefully rammed.

"Hey~"

In front of the dilapidated SUV, a woman covered in dust waved her arms. Her lips were cracked, indicating the vehicle was probably stranded in the deserted area.

Su Xiao slowed down his car, and the woman immediately rushed forward, leaning against the car window beside Su Xiao. She tapped on the glass with a gasping expression, shouting for help or something similar.

Su Xiao turned to look at the woman, thinking her acting skills were impressive. She must have gone without water for at least 10 hours.

Su Xiao rolled down the car window, and the woman breathed a sigh of relief, getting closer.

"My car broke down, help..."

The woman's expression gradually stiffened, and she slowly raised her hands while moving backwards.

"How can I help you?"

Su Xiao's elbow rested on the window, holding a pistol.

"It's... It's okay; I'm just trying to get some food. Sorry for bothering you."

The woman gestured towards the dilapidated SUV, which immediately started and drove away from the stone bridge. As she moved back, the woman clasped her hands together, seemingly apologizing.

Su Xiao started the engine and drove away. As Su Xiao left, the woman pulled a water bottle from her waist and gulped it down.

"I'm so thirsty, waited a whole day, didn't catch any rabbits passing by, and got a 'lion' instead. Unlucky."

The woman dropped the empty water bottle, bent her leg, twisted her arm, and pulled out a dagger inside her brown boot.

Swoosh~

The woman threw the dagger with practised ease, embedding it into the sand nearby. A grey snake, over a meter long, twisted in agony with the sword piercing its head, nailed to the ground.

"You'll be tonight's dinner."

The woman touched her dusty cheek, and soon after, the dilapidated SUV returned, blocking the stone bridge in its original manner.

Locals called this stone bridge the "Misfortune Bridge," indicating that crossing it cost one's fortunes but would protect against calamities.

In this area, it was no longer considered part of any country. It was a no-man's-land between the borders, highly active with organized poaching groups, drug traffickers, and organized bandit groups.

There were no resources here; it was filled with yellow sand. The most valuable things were the wild animals. Hence, no country would go to war over this barren area; besides, it perfectly served the needs of certain influential people.

A no-man's-land didn't mean it had no rules; on the contrary, the rules here were more lawless. For instance, the gang of bandits Su Xiao encountered would only extort valuables, leaving the victims with food, water, and enough gasoline to reach a human civilization area, but everything else belonged to them.

After another three hours of driving, a checkpoint appeared ahead, with several soldiers in green uniforms holding rifles stationed there.

These soldiers didn't belong to any country but to the local forces. There were six soldiers from four different countries.

Su Xiao's car was stopped, and two soldiers holding rifles stood in front while the other four soldiers appeared to surround him.

Don't think of it as an ambush on Su Xiao; anyone coming here would face the same reception.

Su Xiao lowered the car window, holding a roll of brand-new currency.

One soldier quickly approached and relaxed visibly upon seeing the red currency.

"Gaba Tama****."

Su Xiao couldn't understand what the soldier said. It was probably a language from a small South American country.

A soldier standing before the car stepped forward and spoke broken Chinese, "You, okay, carrying firearms, entering the city, fee, 3000 increased."

Su Xiao removed his tea-coloured sunglasses, opened the storage compartment on the passenger side, and took out a bundle of currency, handing over about one-third of it.

After collecting the money, several soldiers affixed a blue sticker on the car's windshield. They all knew Su Xiao wasn't a good person, but would good people come here?

This place didn't exist on any map, and even the news wouldn't report it.

The extinction of this small city in the no-man's-land was just a matter of time. However, for now, many important figures need its existence. This 'city' had an expiration date. Once it expired, this place would become a no-man's-land again, as if it had never existed.

Su Xiao slowly drove into the small city. It was relatively bustling; it was noon, and rows of barbecue stands were set up along the streets, each with cages stacked beside them. Instead of common domesticated animals, these cages contained wild animals.

Su Xiao parked the car by the roadside, not bothering to lock it or even take out the key.

In a civilized society, Su Xiao's actions were unwise. However, here, this was the correct choice.

The security here could have been better. If someone wanted to steal the car, and Su Xiao removed and locked the key, they might smash the glass and forcibly start the vehicle.

Having travelled all the way, Su Xiao had slept rough. His original physical condition was good, but his physical qualities were now suppressed, and he needed to find a hotel to rest.

As the night fell, Su Xiao carried a travel bag downstairs. The car remained intact, and the blue sticker on the windshield played a significant role.

Su Xiao hadn't seen this emblem before. It was a rising force within the small city.

The name of the small city was "Small City," or rather, it couldn't have a name. The less attention it drew, the better.

Su Xiao had arrived at the approximate coordinates. As expected, more detailed coordinates appeared.

With the electronic navigation map, Su Xiao confirmed the precise location, carried his travel bag, and wore a knife bag, walking toward the specified area.

Several pairs of malicious eyes were fixed on Su Xiao in the dark of the night.

"We've been watching all day. Shall we make a move?"

"No, he's very cautious and dangerous. Let's target someone else. But lately, Bah Valley's influence has been growing."

"What can we do? Bah Valley calls the shots in this small city."

"He's just a drug lord. Damn it, there's been a weird smell lately. That guy must be mass-producing."

"That's for sure. I'm just curious where Bah Valley's men come from. Those people are monsters."

The conversation came from a dark alley.

"Bah Valley?"

A male voice came from behind the group.

"Who the...?"

Bang, bang, bang...

The distinct sound of a gun loading and a suppressor appeared, splattering brains and blood on the walls of the alley.

"Ah... oops!"

A man whose arm was shot through was about to scream, but a foot stepped on his face, silencing him.