

R. Paradise 861

Chapter 861: Scrap Factory

"You just mentioned Bagu; be specific."

Su Xiao held a gun in one hand, smoke emanating from the barrel. He had noticed these people tracking him since he entered the city. Although he had seen them earlier, he had yet to pay them much attention. However, after sleeping for a few hours in the hotel, these people still stalked him, which he couldn't tolerate.

There were only two possibilities: seeking revenge or robbery, and Su Xiao was inclined towards the latter.

The hot suppressor of the gun was pressed against the man's forehead.

Sss...

Smoke rose, a burnt smell permeated the air, and the man lying on the ground convulsed as his arms were pierced.

"Bagu is... a drug lord. I've heard about him for a long time. He suddenly appeared in the town a while back and wiped out other forces, and his... subordinates are strong, ruthless killers. So, he quickly took control of the small city. That's all I know; give me a quick death."

Knowing he wouldn't survive, the man sought a swift end.

"Where is his headquarters or stronghold? The scrapyard on the edge of the small city?"

"Yes, hit the nail on the head. You've shattered my vertebrae. I wish you a miserable life."

No wonder the man sought death; a stray bullet had previously hit him in his spine. Su Xiao pulled the trigger, and the man lying on the ground was shot in the head.

After searching through several bodies, Su Xiao found several pistols and three grenades. The guns were not in great condition; they were regularly used and poorly maintained, unlike the one Su Xiao had in his hand.

He left behind the 9mm caliber bullets from the guns, kept two of the three grenades, and discarded the damaged one. Carrying these grenades, these guys were desperados.

This city was different from what Su Xiao had seen two years ago. Back then, although it was lawless, there wasn't this kind of greed-driven ambush of desperados within the small city.

Now, these types of people were not uncommon in the small city. From this, it was evident that Bagu hadn't been in charge here for long and perhaps needed more time to maintain order.

Under the cover of night, Su Xiao drove towards the scrapyard on the edge of the small city. The city wasn't large, so he almost reached the scrapyard quickly.

Su Xiao approached the scrapyard and caught a faint, acidic smell. A chimney rose within the scrapyard, emitting a pale yellow smoke.

Several guards were in front of the scrapyard, all wearing gas masks. Some of them were smoking, occasionally removing their gas masks to take a few puffs.

Seeing these guards, Su Xiao immediately sensed that something was off. There were noticeable muscle bulges on their backs and necks, some deformed. It wasn't a result of exercise but seemed more like muscles produced by injecting some potent drug with significant side effects.

Su Xiao's goal was to enter the scrapyard. The designated spot he needed to reach was there. After surveying the area, he noticed dozens of guards surrounding the scrapyard.

Also, a tall watchtower was in the scrapyard, from which dozens of red lasers shot out. Su Xiao recognized these as heat-sensing alert devices.

With his current physical abilities, the likelihood of secretly infiltrating was slim due to the strict surveillance and guard presence.

As Su Xiao neared the scrapyard, he took out a grenade, released the safety, and gripped the grenade's pin.

"1, 2, 3..."

Su Xiao counted silently to 3 seconds and threw the grenade, setting it to detonate in 5 seconds.

The dark grenade flew through the air and eventually landed under the feet of five guards. The guards hesitated momentarily, then realized what was happening, but it was too late.

Boom!

Debris flew, and three guards were riddled with shrapnel while the shockwave threw back the remaining two.

Dirt scattered; compared to the fire, the smoke was thicker.

After the explosion, alarms blared inside the scrapyard, and numerous guards rushed out. They wore black combat suits and gas masks, resembling anti-terrorist forces, yet the chaotic formation indicated they lacked systematic training.

Near the center of the explosion, three guards got up, but two of them staggered, seemingly stunned by the blast. The remaining one was covered in wounds, blood gushing from his chest.

What was more astounding was that the two guards at the center of the explosion attempted to rise, but a few seconds later, they collapsed.

Seeing this scene, Su Xiao squinted; there was no doubt that their resilience wouldn't be this strong with ordinary physical qualities.

Su Xiao estimated that these guards had stamina attributes exceeding 5 points. In the past, dealing with these people would have been a piece of cake, but now, it would be challenging.

"Contractors?"

With physical attributes surpassing those of ordinary people, Su Xiao immediately thought of contractors. However, he quickly dismissed the idea that contractors wouldn't willingly become lackeys for a certain force, especially when dozens of guards were within the scrapyard.

The guards quickly converged at the explosion site, gathering around twenty of them.

Seeing this, Su Xiao vanished into the night. This was a perfect opportunity for infiltration; he needed to quickly reach the designated location and stay there for half an hour. That specific location was inside the scrapyard.

Amidst the chaos caused by the alarms, Su Xiao successfully infiltrated the scrapyard.

Towards the rear of the scrapyard stood a large factory building, dilapidated, with dim lights emitting from within.

Su Xiao squatted beneath a window, peering inside through the mud-covered glass.

Inside the factory were several rows of large machinery covered in dust, indicating disuse for a long time. Several guards with rifles stood by a staircase leading downward on one side of the factory. How Su Xiao knew this in a rundown single-story factory was a mystery, but he didn't believe the staircase led to the roof.

Su Xiao leveled his gun, aiming the barrel at the head of one of the guards.

Bang!

The gunshot rang out, splattering the head of a guard with blood as he collapsed.

"Enemy attack!"

A guard roared as he sought cover, scanning the area like a hawk. He immediately noticed the broken glass near the window, evidence of bullet penetration.

Lifting the rifle, the guard sprayed the area below the window with a burst of fire.

Clatter, clatter...

Cement and shattered debris flew as the rifle barrage created a jagged hole in the wall.

Rat-a-tat-tat-tat...

Other guards began madly pouring fire towards the low wall below the window. In moments, the wall and window were shattered, littering the ground with cement blocks and glass.

"Tinghuo! (Ceasefire)."

This guard, who had spoken English the whole time, was different from the others. He wasn't an ex-soldier but perhaps a mercenary.

The glass on the other side of the factory shattered with a clatter, and a round black sphere was thrown inside.

"Grenades!"

The mercenary guard dove to the side, taking cover between two abandoned machines.

Boom!

A loud explosion erupted, piercing several guards with shrapnel and disorienting a few others.

Chapter 862: Cut Off

"Su Xiao quickly emptied his gun at the dazed guards. The magazine ran out, and he swiftly pulled out a new one from his belt, completing the reload extremely quickly.

Rolling into the factory, Suo Xiao's body crouched low, both hands holding the gun level in front of him, aiming at an abandoned piece of machinery while rapidly moving forward.

Bang.

Suddenly, Suo Xiao fired. Ding! Flames erupted from the abandoned machine, causing the mercenary guard behind it to retract.

"Expert."

The mercenary guard hid behind the abandoned machine, removing his gas mask and revealing a Caucasian face.

The mercenary guard attempted to peek his gas mask out from behind cover.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

A tremendous force hit his hand, and the gas mask was instantly shattered.

Ding! A black, round object was thrown near the mercenary guard, causing a chill to run down his spine. Instinctively, he thought it was a grenade.

In an instant, the mercenary guard ripped off his shirt, tossed it aside, and leaped in the opposite direction, aiming to reach another piece of cover.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Gunshots echoed rhythmically, and as the mercenary leaped in the air, blood splattered in bursts from several wounds. Hit by five bullets, he thudded onto the ground, the force of the bullets altering his jump.

Normally, being hit by five bullets in the torso would be fatal. However, the mercenary, although hit, ignored the gunshot wounds, rolling on the ground.

Bang.

Suo Xiao fired the last bullet from his gun, which pierced through the mercenary's eye socket without exiting, instantly turning his brain into a pulp due to the bullet's rotation.

Changing the magazine, Suo Xiao's face turned grim. He had fired five bullets directly at the guard, hitting the torso each time and even piercing through the lungs.

The enemy was difficult to deal with; more than relying on a handgun might be required.

Suo Xiao approached the staircase leading downstairs. A guard, heavily injured by shrapnel, reached out for a nearby rifle.

Suo Xiao handed him a shot and took a concussion grenade from his waist, hesitated, then picked up a gas mask from the ground and put it on.

The noise of footsteps came from outside the factory. A large group of guards had reached the factory entrance.

Suo Xiao pulled the pin of the concussion grenade and threw it towards the entrance before darting into the stairwell.

Boom!

The concussion grenade exploded. Suo Xiao covered his ears; a flash of white light illuminated the factory, followed by painful screams. Nighttime concussion grenades could cause irreversible damage to one's optic nerves.

Suo Xiao descended the stairs slowly, approaching a corner. He leaned against the wall, took a small mirror from his waist, and used it to observe around the corner.

A dozen guards were stationed below the stairs, holding various automatic rifles and aiming their barrels upward.

Bang!

A gunshot sounded, causing cement near Suo Xiao's ear to explode—a ricochet!

Cement fragments grazed Suo Xiao's cheek, drawing blood that trickled down his face. He tasted the iron flavor in his mouth, smiling slightly. His heartbeat accelerated, and the seals restraining him began to flicker.

"Not easy to handle."

Suo Xiao tossed a black travel bag and quickly retreated.

Rat-a-tat-tat!

Bullets rained on the travel bag. It was instantly reduced to shreds, and the rifles inside had numerous dents. At close range, a handgun was more effective than a rifle.

Pshh.

Blood burst from Suo Xiao's shoulder. He took two steps back; it was a ricocheted bullet hitting him from the wall.

Footsteps echoed from above the stairwell. Suo Xiao was trapped inside the building.

As the gunfire from below the stairs subsided, Suo Xiao approached, peeking half his body, head, and arms around the corner, quickly pulling the trigger.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Several guards were shot in the head directly; one guard was hit in the forehead just as he attempted to pull the trigger, and his brains splattered.

Facing Suo Xiao's frighteningly accurate marksmanship, the guards retreated to both sides of the stairwell.

Seizing the opportunity, Suo Xiao threw the gun into his left hand and pulled out a 40-centimeter-long knife from his leg. He charged down the stairs.

Just as he rushed out of the stairwell, Suo Xiao immediately lowered his body, quickly surveying the area.

Six guards remained. Three with rifles, two with pistols, and one holding a grenade. They stood on either side of the stairwell—two on the left, four on the right. The two on the left had someone holding a grenade.

Suo Xiao raised his gun, slowing his breath, and pulled the trigger.

Bang.

The guard holding the grenade was shot in the wrist. Suo Xiao's original target was the grenade, but the firearm expertise of Lv.5 couldn't precisely hit the grenade, especially while moving.

Suo Xiao had to make do; firing two more shots, he removed the two guards on the left.

Just as he dealt with the two guards, Suo Xiao felt a numbness in his lower back—he had been shot. He immediately rolled on the ground, and bullets struck the area near him, leaving numerous craters.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Suo Xiao fired three shots, emptying the handgun's magazine. The two guards on the right were shot in the head, and one was hit in the throat. The remaining guard had already lifted his rifle, aiming at Suo Xiao.

Suo Xiao was well aware of how many bullets were in the gun. As the magazine emptied, he quickly reloaded with a fresh one.

Bang, bang.

Two shots later, the final guard was shot in the head.

Suo Xiao didn't enjoy headshots simply because these guards were not ordinary people. If hit in the torso, their combat effectiveness wouldn't decrease significantly as long as their hearts weren't pierced.

As he dealt with the last guard, Suo Xiao rushed toward the body of one guard and pulled out a grenade.

Boom!

The explosion's strong force pushed Suo Xiao back a few steps.

Boom, boom, boom.

Each grenade exploded in the stairwell, and Suo Xiao took cover behind a cement pillar. He was now in a basement several hundred square meters in size.

Rows of stainless steel tables were in the basement, filled with test tubes or beakers. Nearby, there were many square plastic bags containing white powder.

Several workers in hazmat suits stood still by the tables, totaling dozens. One of them slowly leaned backward, a handgun placed on a table nearby.

Suo Xiao aimed the gun, firing a shot and hitting the person in the head.

Two seconds later,.

"Ah!"

The workers screamed in terror, instinctively crouching down, hands covering their heads.

Suo Xiao threw the grenade among them. Most of them remained motionless on the ground, but three immediately leaped behind cover, swift in their movements.

Bang, bang, bang.

Three precise shots—the three fake workers aiming for cover—were shot in the head."

Chapter 863: Uncaged monster

Suxiao pointed to a nearby worker and then to a grenade with the pin still intact in the distance. The worker immediately understood, quickly reaching for the grenade and picking it up. Just as she was about to throw it at Suxiao, she noticed that Suxiao had already aimed his gun at her.

After a moment's hesitation, the worker wearing a chemical protective suit approached, handed the grenade to Suxiao, and then immediately crouched, covering her head, showing extreme cooperation.

[Hint: The hunter has arrived at the designated location and needs to stay for 28 minutes and 43 seconds.]

Receiving the prompt from the Reincarnation Paradise, Suxiao hung the grenade from his waist, again wielding a gun in one hand and a short knife in the other, of which he had four.

"Do you speak Chinese?" Suxiao looked at the worker closer to him.

"Yes," came the response, a woman's voice with an unknown age or appearance.

"Are there any other exits here?"

"No, only that one," the female worker pointed to the staircase. Dust was billowing out from it at this moment.

Suxiao leaned against the cement. There were an unknown number of guards, but a conservative estimate would be over 50, armed chiefly with AKs or standard rifles. With Suxiao's current attributes, it was entirely possible, if not likely, for him to die at the hands of these people, especially considering his severe injuries—a heavy wound on his shoulder caused by a rifle round, despite being a ricochet, still wielded substantial force.

Tearing his shirt, Suxiao revealed two gunshot wounds, one on his shoulder and the other on his lower back. The shoulder injury was severe from the rifle round; although it was a stray bullet, it held significant power. The wound on his lower back from a pistol round was comparatively better, likely from a 9mm bullet. That bullet had penetrated Suxiao's body; while penetration was manageable, the problem was if the shell stayed inside, like in his shoulder, where it got lodged in the bone.

Initially, when shot, he barely felt anything, but now the pain in his shoulder was intense, causing numbness in his left arm and affecting his shooting ability.

Clank! A 'grenade' rolled into the basement. Seeing its appearance, Suxiao immediately put on his gas mask as if it were a tear gas grenade.

Smoke filled the basement, providing cover as guards armed with firearms entered.

Upon seeing this scene, Suxiao's eyes gleamed. Tear gas grenades were precisely what he was hoping to acquire.

As the white smoke spread towards Suxiao, his body arched and leapt from behind the cement pillar.

Bang! Bang! Bullets showered in his direction, and despite Suxiao's attributes and reflexes, deflecting the bullets was impossible.

Hiss! Suxiao's left arm was pierced, and his gun slipped, but he had already dashed into the smoke. Taking advantage of the cover, Suxiao swiftly moved towards several nearby guards, engaging in close combat.

While charging forward, Suxiao retrieved the back-held sheath, unsheathing Tang Hong.

Clang! The long blade unsheathed with a clear friction sound. With the long knife in hand, Suxiao's demeanour turned sharp.

Though not as sharp as the Dragon Slaying Flash, Tang Hong was also a lethal weapon, sufficient to deal with these enemies.

Within the smoke, the blade flashed, accompanied by the sounds of flesh being cut and cries of agony.

Thirty seconds later, several guards who entered the basement were lying on the ground, some twitching, blood gushing from their mouths.

Suxiao's breath became rapid; he had lost a lot of blood. Wearing the gas mask restricted his breathing. He searched the bodies and found four tear gas grenades.

Stepping out of the smoke, Suxiao glanced at the ventilation ducts above and followed the wires to the basement's power source.

Placing Tang Hong on the ground, Suxiao dropped the handgun and fired several shots at the power source and the motor next to the ventilation duct.

After completing these actions, Suxiao dropped the handgun, pulled out a tear gas grenade from his waist, took a deep breath, removed the gas mask, bit the pin, and threw the four tear gas grenades into the corners of the basement, which was now semi-sealed. Smoke quickly enveloped the area.

Wearing the gas mask again, Suxiao took out Tang Hong and walked towards the staircase.

In the upper-level factory, a middle-aged man with a slightly chubby build and a grim face stood near the stairs.

"What's going on? Who can give me an explanation?" The man was Bage, once a notorious drug lord who, after being suppressed by other forces, became a stranded dog, almost dying. Now, he was the manager of a small city.

"Boss, there's an intrusion in the factory, probably aimed at the goods. Tomorrow is the delivery time, and there's a lot of stock in the warehouse on the second floor underground," a young Caucasian man said, his head bowed, filled with dissatisfaction.

Slap! After a resounding slap, the young man turned his head, a red mark visible on his face.

"Now, go and deal with him for me."

"Yes, boss, but others can't enter the basement, or I might die," the young man's jaw tightened. He could have efficiently dealt with Bage instantly, but he didn't dare. For a long time, he had been living under the threat of the other man, a danger to his family.

The young man walked alone to the staircase, thinking that others would only get in the way. Perhaps these people injected with the compounds he prepared didn't know that their lives wouldn't exceed three months.

"The time is running out; the penalties from the Paradise are getting heavier. I have to figure out a way to excessively interfere with the real world; the next punishment will be execution."

The young man mumbled to himself, taking out several glass vials filled with chemical reagents from his pocket.

Inside the basement, white smoke filled the air, and Suxiao's breathing became increasingly rapid. He had lost a lot of blood. However, he felt a strange sensation, as if his suppressed 75 points of vitality were about to be restored at any moment.

Footsteps approached. Based on their direction, Suxiao hurried over. His vision began to blur, and he knew he had to act swiftly.

"Pointless struggle. You're one of 'us,' but you're still too weak, just good at shooting," a voice came from within the smoke.

Suxiao stood up, flexing his neck. Crack! Crack! Some dislocated bones snapped back into place accurately. He looked at his blurry left arm and chest, where the injuries were gradually healing.

Suxiao lifted his right foot and stomped fiercely.

Boom!! The entire factory trembled like an earthquake! The smoke in the basement was blown to the corners by the powerful pressure. A dumbfounded young man stood in the basement.

"I was joking just now, friend. Stay calm."

Clang! Countless blade flashes spread out. The young man lost consciousness, Lv.39 Master of Swordsmanship against Lv.5, not even in the same league.

Five minutes later.

Suxiao emerged from the half-collapsed factory. The wounds on his arm had stopped bleeding, and he was starting to regain sensation.

"Monster... a monster..."

Bage, buried under a lot of building debris, let out a long breath, then lost consciousness.

Suxiao tore off his tattered shirt, calmly disappearing into the darkness.

Chapter 864: Reason

In a mansion courtyard on the east side of a small town.

The courtyard is shaded by green trees, with a fountain pool in the center.

Several pit bulls bark wildly, restrained by thick iron chains. Though not as large as some dogs, they are exceptionally fierce, especially provoked by the smell of blood in the courtyard.

Su Xiao stands by the fountain pool, cleaning up the bloodstains on his body. He is at the residence of Ba Gu, not related to any mission, having successfully surpassed his physical limits.

His primary purpose in coming here is to investigate why those guards have such strong physical abilities, surpassing the limits of ordinary people.

Su Xiao feels annoyed by the pit bulls barking at him as he cleans the fresh blood off his body.

"Shut up."

Su Xiao turns his head towards the pit bulls. However, pit bulls are breeds cultivated later and have serious genetic defects. A large secretion of *** hormone allows them to ignore the pain in a short time and overcome the fear of other creatures.

"Woof, woof, woof..."

Su Xiao shakes his head. There's no point in arguing with a few genetically defective dogs. He turns and walks towards the mansion behind the courtyard.

Click.

A strap around the neck of one pit bull breaks, and without hesitation, it charges toward Su Xiao.

Five meters, three meters, two meters.

Suddenly, this fiercely charging pit bull stops, tucks its tail, and turns to run, a faint red aura enveloping it—something beyond mere fear.

He was receiving a warning from the Reincarnation Paradise, which surprised Su Xiao. He just used the 'Release Aura' passive effect, inducing panic in the enemy.

While the Reincarnation Paradise didn't give a prompt when using the Blade Edge, this time, after using the Aura Release, he received a warning. It may be because aura release combines active and passive skills.

Although somewhat perplexed, Su Xiao doesn't delve deeper. He has already figured out several abilities that can be used in the real world.

Moreover, in the real world, where equipment and active skills can't be used, Su Xiao, who has developed four attributes simultaneously, is very strong, surpassing his imagination.

Su Xiao's accumulation of attributes differs greatly from that of other contractors. Most contractors accumulate details through attribute points and equipment, with a larger proportion of attribute points, say 50 points, with about 35–40 points added as permanent attributes. The remainder comes from temporary details added by equipment, which are ineffective in the real world!

Su Xiao is different; almost all his attributes are accumulated through attribute points, with little enhancement from equipment. He mostly chooses equipment that tends towards passive functional capabilities.

This is because Su Xiao is trying hard to avoid relying on himself rather than on equipment as the primary means of combat during battles.

While equipment is an important part of the strength system, certain risks, such as damage, suppression, interference from enemy abilities, etc., make the factors unstable.

As Su Xiao contemplates attributes and equipment, he pushes open the main door of the mansion, only to find a gun pointed at him.

"Don't move."

Zhi~

A glint flashes by, a sharp steel wire stained red with blood, droplets floating in the air.

"Ah!"

A butler in a suit screams, clutching his severed arm against the wall, blood staining the once-pristine white fence, and his face and lips rapidly turning pale due to intense pain and rapid blood loss.

"Where is the study?"

Su Xiao stands before the butler, flipping a short knife in his hand.

"It's upstairs, the third floor; turn left."

The butler's compromise is straightforward, without the pressure of betraying his boss, Ba Gu.

"Take me there. Who else is in the villa?"

Su Xiao slips a painkiller from his sleeve. Amidst the butler's terrified gaze, he injects the needle into the butler's neck.

After injecting the painkiller, the butler's mind clears a bit. He immediately removes his suit and wraps it around the wound on his severed arm.

"Several guards and Ba Gu's lover are still in the villa. Ba Gu is dead."

"Yes."

"Excellent!"

The butler's face lights up excitedly, surprising Su Xiao, who realizes something.

"Take me to Ba Gu's study, now."

The butler keeps his head down, swiftly heading upstairs, an ambition stirring within his eyes.

On the way upstairs, the butler says, "Sir, I can transfer Ba Gu's properties to your name and spare my life. I can help you."

"Okay."

Su Xiao smiles. Seeing this, the butler breathes a sigh of relief, unaware that Su Xiao's smile usually doesn't bode well.

Guided by the butler, Su Xiao quickly arrives at Ba Gu's study.

"This is Ba Gu's study. As for Ba Gu's assets, I can transfer his liquid funds..."

Before the butler finishes his sentence, Su Xiao slits his throat with a knife.

Splurt.

Blood sprays, and the butler, with his remaining arm, clutches his throat, blood seeping through his fingers.

"Why..."

With a thud, the butler falls.

"Why? Foolish question. Reading."

Su Xiao pushes open the door to the study. Initially, he didn't intend to kill the butler. After all, he was just a butler. However, the butler's excited expression upon learning of Ba Gu's death made Su Xiao cautious.

The butler's expression conveyed his lack of loyalty to Ba Gu and the possibility of him taking over Ba Gu's influence.

As for gaining control of Ba Gu's assets, that's a joke. Ba Gu was a drug lord, and numerous people had their eyes on his assets. Su Xiao's legal status in the country made him not want to turn his domestic status sensitive because of money.

If there was any possibility of the butler surviving earlier, after his numerous displays, he had to die.

Su Xiao had earlier severed one of the butler's arms. If he became another Ba Gu in the future, there would be endless troubles. Most people wouldn't easily forget the grudge of an arm being severed. Rather than gambling on the butler's magnanimity, Su Xiao chose a more direct approach.

This is the level of danger in this small town. One wrong choice could lead to a series of troubles.

Inside Ba Gu's study, Su Xiao starts rummaging through cabinets and drawers, quickly finding some documents.

Sitting on the leather chair, Su Xiao goes through the documents in his hand.

"I see."

Su Xiao tucks away the documents. He has now understood how those guards exceeded the limits of ordinary people.

The contractor he encountered in the basement earlier used to be a high-achieving chemistry student before entering the Reincarnation Paradise.

However, due to suddenly gaining supernatural powers, the student became arrogant. That wouldn't have mattered much, but encountering a destitute drug lord was unfortunate. That drug lord was Ba Gu.

After Ba Gu discovers the student's secret, he immediately gathers his few subordinates, wanting to control him. There's nobody who doesn't yearn for extraordinary power.

Chapter 865: Tempting Idea

After all, the talented student was a contractor, and people like Baku were different from his match. After a skirmish, Baku and the others were half-dead. However, having just experienced his first derivative world and living in a peaceful world, the talented student couldn't comprehend how terrifying it was not to kill a snake. In his view, breaking Baku's limbs and having him grovelling in agony in front of him would eliminate most threats from the other side. After all, he had already defeated his opponent.

This talented student had seen too many heroic stories. But, in three short days, Baku's retaliation arrived.

Baku couldn't do anything for the talented student, but the student's family were ordinary people—this was the turning point.

The student broke down when Baku presented the talented student's father's limbs in front of him. What happened afterwards can be guessed. The gifted student, enduring the warnings from Reincarnation Paradise, retrieved the data from Su Xiao in the real world.

From the chemical formulas in the data, a potion called 'Muscle Burst Growth' could be concocted and accessible to anyone. After using it, one could gain physical attributes beyond regular people, roughly between 7 to 10 points. However, the side effects were highly severe, distorting the derived material facts achieved through overdrawing life force.

Su Xiao could decipher the information because of his understanding of chemistry and the similarities between alchemy and chemistry.

According to the information, Su Xiao could even refine a more perfect potion, significantly reducing the side effects.

Of course, he wouldn't do this in the real world—interfering excessively in the real world was very dangerous. However, while this potion couldn't be manufactured in the real world, it could be produced within the Reincarnation Paradise.

The severe side effects were inconsequential because Su Xiao had no intention of letting humans use it. He had an idea long ago: to unlock the third level of alchemy.

The third level of alchemy involved creating alchemical beings. Initially, Su Xiao had yet to unlock the third level because he was used to fighting alone. During battles, he didn't have the energy to control summoned creatures.

However, after summoning Mus, Su Xiao was surprised to find that using an alchemical creature as a shield was a good choice. Simply because he could transfer control to Bubu Wang, this was something he hadn't considered before.

He didn't need the alchemical creature to have strong combat abilities, only the ability to stand in front. During fights, Su Xiao didn't need to control the alchemical creature; Bubu Wang took charge, using its hiding ability. At that point, it became an amateur nursemaid, top-notch scout, and invisible summoner. The final invisible summoner was practically invincible.

This way, Su Xiao could concentrate on fighting while having a crucial shield at critical moments. Moreover, with the addition of his 79 intelligence attributes, if the alchemical creature leaned towards defence, its endurance and survivability would be extreme. Most summoners simultaneously develop intelligence and charisma attributes, with charisma ensuring the loyalty of summoned creatures and intelligence boosting their details. Therefore, the intelligence attributes of most second-tier summoners were lower than Su Xiao's.

Su Xiao was different—he didn't need to ensure the loyalty of alchemical creatures because he was their creator.

Absolute loyalty + augmentation from the stamina potion + 79 intelligence attributes + Bubu Wang's control = an undying main tank. This main tank was a renewable resource.

Thinking of this, Su Xiao's eyes began to sparkle. When he returned to the Reincarnation Paradise this time, he wanted to unlock the study of creating alchemical creatures.

...

Two days later, inside Su Xiao's accessory shop.

"So, you returned from the Reincarnation Paradise to here two days ago?"

Su Xiao leaned against the counter, a thick bandage on his neck suspending his left arm. Although the injuries on his left arm mainly had healed, the bones were severely fractured and required a few days of rest. From this, one could see how insane the recovery power derived from an 80-point stamina attribute was. An injury that would take an average person months to recover from only needed Su Xiao 3 to 4 days. His left arm wouldn't hinder him the day after being injured if required for combat.

Su Xiao didn't have active recovery skills, but with Bubu Wang around, bone injuries recovered even faster.

"I-I-I've been here for two days..."

The timid Fat Ma rushed into the accessory shop.

"Su-Su-Su..."

Fat Ma's speech could have been more coherent, which puzzled Su Xiao.

"I'm here, in between the wheels, no, in between the rims, no, whatever it is, you found this..."

Fat Ma handed over a black bag of fragments. Fat Ma's character was interesting; when he was nervous, he began to stutter.

Taking the bag of fragments, Su Xiao found a severed finger inside. This was likely a remnant left after he attacked the junkyard, and the shockwave blew away this severed limb.

"I'll handle this."

Su Xiao went upstairs, and the flushing water could soon be heard.

After a while, Su Xiao came downstairs carrying a travel bag and handed it to Fat Ma. Fat Ma opened the bag and found bundles of crisp hundred-dollar bills inside.

"This is... a hush payment?"

Fat Ma's expression turned a bit sour.

"A hush payment? No, consider these funds as me buying your car. This also serves as a fee for a new car."

Su Xiao's intention was quite evident. Although it had no practical impact, finding a finger inside the aluminium alloy wheel was very inauspicious. This was Su Xiao's unclean clearance from before. He also needed a car, so he bought this one and let Fat Ma buy a new one.

"Fine, to be honest, finding a finger in a tire made me feel quite devastated."

Fat Ma chuckled. He wouldn't accept it if it were a hush payment, but the new car fee was different. Inside the travel bag, conservatively estimated, there were over 800,000 dollars.

"Have you had lunch?"

Fat Ma tied the travel bag, already considering what new car to get.

"I have."

"Then I'll go now. My brother called me for a drink. Want to join?"

"I have some other things to do. Maybe another time."

While Su Xiao spoke, he picked up a string of amber beads from a nearby shelf and tossed it to Fat Ma.

"Is this amber?"

Fat Ma examined the yellowish transparent beads in his hand.

"Natural amber, with high transparency."

"Expensive?"

"Very expensive."

"Thanks a lot."

Fat Ma had no idea about formality. Leaving the car keys, he carried the travel bag in his left hand and played with the amber beads in his right, humming a tune as he walked out of the shop.

Not long after Fat Ma left, Su Xiao received a prompt from the Reincarnation Paradise and locked the shop door.

[Prompt: A new derivative world will open, and the Hunters will return to the Reincarnation Paradise. Ensure there are no witnesses around.]

[Transferring... Transfer complete.]

When Su Xiao's vision was restored, he found himself inside his exclusive room.

[Prompt: The Hunter has successfully broken through the body's limits. You will receive clues about the 'Proof of the Strong'.]

Chapter 866: Games and New Worlds

"Warning: The Hunter must not disclose any information related to the 'Proof of the Strong' to others. If the Hunter reveals this information, they will receive two warnings in a very short time. If the Hunter continues to disclose related news, they will incur a penalty of -30% to all attributes and be forcibly separated from this type of information in their brain.

The 'Proof of the Strong' is a consumable medal with three acquisition methods:

Challenge powerful plot creatures higher than one's level. The challenge fee is five Soul Crystals (Large). Participate in the 'Black Abyss Experience.' The Hunter's current strength shows that the survival rate is between 4% and 6%. Participate in the 'Alice Demon Castle Game.' An invitation is required, and a group of seven participants is needed. The invitation can be obtained by exchanging 200,000 amusement park coins and fifteen Soul Crystals (Medium).

...

There are three options available. The first option is challenge-oriented, which should be the simplest but the most expensive method, requiring five Soul Crystals (Large).

As for the second option, the Black Abyss Experience, Su Xiao didn't even consider it. It's a survival-oriented experience, requiring strength and luck. Surviving in the 'Black Abyss' would be a miracle with his fate.

Regarding the third option, it's a compromise. The cost is lower than the first option, and the danger is lower than the second, but there are restrictions. One needs to wait for six other contractors to participate before starting.

Seeing the name 'Alice,' Su Xiao immediately thought he seemed to have an 'Alice Demon Castle Game' invitation, which he obtained by killing the third-tier contractor Butterfly in the Holy Grail world.

The Butterfly should have reached 80 attribute points and successfully broken through the body's limits, obtaining information about the 'Proof of the Strong' and exchanging it for an invitation using amusement park coins and Soul Crystals.

After Butterfly's death, Su Xiao activated the opponent's Crimson Card and obtained [Alice's Invitation]. When he first checked this invitation, he had no idea what it was. The initial check results were:

[Alice's Invitation]

Origin: Unknown

Quality: Unknown

Type: Invitation

Effect: Unknown

Rating: Unknown

Introduction: An invitation inviting you to enter...

Price: 1 Amusement Park Coin

...

Su Xiao once tried to spend amusement park coins to appraise this thing, but the result needed more permissions + conditions not activated.

Now everything is explained. Su Xiao couldn't view the properties of [Alice's Invitation] due to insufficient permissions, and his attributes still needed to reach 80 points and break the body's limits.

Su Xiao took out [Alice's Invitation], and indeed, the properties of [Alice's Invitation] appeared.

[Alice's Invitation]

Origin: Reincarnation Paradise

Quality: None

Type: Invitation

Rating: 0

Price: 1 Amusement Park Coin

...

After some hesitation, Su Xiao used [Alice's Invitation]. The balanced ' Alice Demon Castle Game ' seemed the best choice compared to the costly challenge or hazardous experiential training without entry conditions.

"The Hunter has used 'Alice's Invitation.' You will wait for 2-3 natural days. If, during this time, you enter the derivative world, you will receive the 'game invitation' after returning to the Reincarnation Paradise."

Su Xiao will enter the derivative world in about an hour, so he can only start the so-called Demon Game after this derivative world ends.

In this derivative world, Su Xiao will begin the third-tier trial assessment. He will be promoted to a third-tier Hunter if he passes the inspection.

If he successfully advances to the third tier, three-quarters of the barrier of reaching 80 points will be completed. Only the 'Proof of the Strong' remains, and there's also a clue about the 'Proof of the Strong.'

But before that, Su Xiao needs to unlock the third level of alchemy, which is also the final level. A prompt for opening alchemical creature creation appears:

[Prompt: Alchemical Creature Creation Study Locked.]

[To unlock the 'Alchemical Creature Creation Study,' Alchemy Potionry must be raised to Lv.10 (achieved) and pay one Soul Crystal (Medium) + 10,000 Amusement Park Coins.]

The cost of unlocking alchemical creature creation is low. Two Soul Crystals (Medium) are left, so Su Xiao chooses to open them.

"You have successfully unlocked the third level of alchemy, Alchemical Creature Creation Study and all branches of the alchemy skill tree are unlocked."

A vast amount of knowledge about the 'Alchemical Creature Creation Study' appears in Su Xiao's mind. He presses his forehead with one hand, and his brain rapidly absorbs this knowledge. With his current physical quality, he no longer feels dizzy or disoriented.

Thirty minutes later, Su Xiao unlocked the 'Alchemical Creature Creation Study' and casually opened the alchemy skill tree.

Alchemy Third Level: Alchemical Creature Creation Study Lv.1 (Quantity Degree 0/10)

Alchemical Raven: Each creation requires 150 mana, pseudo-life bones (3 portions), monster crystal nucleus (1 piece), biological magic organization (2 parts), and soul shards (4 bits).

Alchemical Raven

Initial Strength: 10

Initial Agility: 22

Initial Stamina: 8

Initial Intelligence: 5

Initial Charm: 6

Skill 1: Shared Vision (Initial Distance 50 meters).

Skill 2: Rapid Flight (Initial speed 128.72 km/h, approximately equivalent to a car's speed of 80 mph).

...

The initial attributes of the alchemical creatures can only be described as poor. As for the shared vision of 50 meters, it's too far, useful in limited places, and the ability to fly rapidly could be faster in Su Xiao's view.

There are still 5,800 amusement park coins left. If he uses amusement park coins instead of materials to create the alchemical raven, it will cost 4,000 amusement park coins to create one.

A few days ago, when Su Xiao left the Reincarnation Paradise, he spent 20,000 amusement park coins to create four bottles of Type 1 potion. Due to insufficient mana, he spent only some of the amusement park coins on potion creation. If he had enough mana at that time, Su Xiao would have needed to sell some less commonly used items to gather enough amusement park coins to upgrade alchemy.

Four thousand amusement park coins for one, considering the attributes of the alchemical raven, this cost can be called absurd, and this is only the initial attribute without Su Xiao's intelligence bonus.

The most significant advantage of the alchemical raven is that it's not a living creature and can be stored in the storage space.

After some hesitation, Su Xiao chooses to create one.

After paying the amusement park coins, various materials simulated by consuming amusement park coins appear. These materials cannot be stored in the storage space or taken out of the Reincarnation Paradise; they can only be used on-site.

The light in Su Xiao's hand flashes and mana gradually depletes. This is his first attempt at creating alchemical creatures; even though he understands the creation method, the process is unfamiliar.

Ten minutes later, the light in Su Xiao's hand dissipates, and a pure black raven sculpture appears. This raven is the same size as a normal raven, but its feathers are as stiff as steel. Its beak is sharp. Su Xiao consumes one mana to activate the alchemical raven.

The alchemical raven opens its eyes, revealing an alchemical array in its sights. Alchemical creatures have a time limit and won't exist permanently. When the alchemical raven's collection loses its lustre completely, it will be deemed scrapped without the possibility of recharging or repair. The higher the level of the alchemical creature, the longer it will exist.

Su Xiao activates the alchemical raven using mana, signifying that this alchemical raven becomes his summoned creature. He closes his eyes and senses. Indeed, he can easily control the alchemical raven. After flapping its wings to fly for a while, the alchemical raven perches on Su Xiao's shoulder.

The current alchemical raven has an additional 79 intelligence points due to Su Xiao. He checks the alchemical raven's attributes:

Alchemical Raven

Type: Alchemical Creature

Existence Time: 15 natural days

Life: 100%

Mana: 180 points

Strength: 29

Agility: 62

Stamina: 32

Intelligence: 18

Charm: 14

Skill 2: Rapid Flight (Speed 586.72 km/h).

...

[Prompt: You have successfully activated a summoned creature. Due to not mastering basic summoning skills, the maximum limit of summoned creatures is 1/1.]

[The Hunter will enter the derivative world, 'A Certain Magical Index,' in 1 minute.]"

Chapter 867: Protective Measures

[Time reached. Derivative world: A Certain Magical Index is activated—no anomalies have been detected in the current world. Space coordinates are stable. Consumed temporal power: 0.021 ounces.]

[Based on the consumed temporal power, the contractor must achieve a minimum overall rating of C- in this world.]

[Activating Derivative World Communication Platform... Activated. Remaining communication attempts: 8/8.]

With a surge of spatial power, there was a loud bang, and Su Xiao's vision turned completely dark.

...

In an abandoned laboratory...

Bubbles rose within a pale green solution.

Several sealed glass columns filled with pale green liquid were placed around the laboratory. Su Xiao was submerged in one of these columns, his eyes suddenly snapping open.

"Bubbling..."

Bubbles escaped from Su Xiao's mouth as he realized his situation and immediately held his breath. The liquid he was submerged in seemed to have strong paralyzing effects; his body was immobile.

"Bubbling..."

Next to him, in another glass column, Bubu the dog was also submerged. Bubu's column was significantly larger, around five meters in diameter and four meters wide, resembling a cylindrical aquarium.

"Bubbling..."

The familiar sound of bubbles came from a nearby column, where a man dressed in black leather, with short hair and carrying a 'European-style coffin' on his back, was also submerged in the liquid.

The man with the coffin couldn't move either. A white light flashed on his body as he attempted to use a skill to remove his abnormal state, but it seemed to have no effect.

Seeing this, Su Xiao closed his eyes and focused on sensing his condition. As he gradually became aware, he realized it wasn't the pale green liquid that paralyzed him but a form of restraint limiting his movements.

[Notice: Time remaining until entry into the Derivative World: 2 minutes and 36 seconds.]

Seeing this prompt, Su Xiao understood what was happening; the spatial power hadn't yet been lifted. He had experienced this situation once before.

Not far from Su Xiao's glass column, several men and women lying on the ground slowly regained consciousness. They looked around in confusion before greeting each other and then focusing on the two men and a dog in the glass columns.

"These three are unlucky, getting trapped there as soon as they enter the derivative world," a female contractor said, smirking as she walked towards Su Xiao.

"Don't you dare provoke them! That's the derivative world's protective mechanism," a burly man glared at the female contractor.

"Protective mechanism? We're all third-tier contractors. Do we still need the park's protection after entering a derivative world?" The female contractor seemed scared of the burly man and reluctantly stopped.

"The park is protecting us. Let's go. Don't provoke them," the burly man said. The female contractor scoffed but followed him, clearly recognizing him as the leader of their small adventuring group.

Su Xiao held his breath at the solution, not worried about the contractors attacking him. Generally, these restraining mechanisms were two-way; he couldn't move, and they couldn't attack him.

Two minutes passed quickly, and as the time limit ended, the restraint on Su Xiao vanished. He pressed a hand against the glass in front of him.

Boom!

The glass column shattered, and the pale green liquid gushed out. Su Xiao stepped out of the broken column, and simultaneously, the man with the coffin emerged from his glass column. The two of them locked eyes but remained silent.

The atmosphere was tense. Su Xiao could sense from the man's aura that he was formidable. The thick scent of gunpowder was palpable even from a distance of ten meters.

After a tense standoff of several seconds, the man with the coffin slowly reached for the coffin on his back, and Su Xiao's hand moved to his sword, Dragon Flash.

"Usually, this means the world we're entering is very dangerous. That's why the park grouped us to form a team or temporary adventuring group," the man with the coffin said, his voice hoarse.

"..." Su Xiao remained silent. Engaging in conversation with an unknown enemy was risky. He had once encountered a contractor in the arena whose ability, known as 'Quirk,' sealed 1-3 of the opponent's abilities based on how much they talked.

"Seems like forming a temporary team is out of the question," the man with the coffin said, slowly backing away. He sensed that Su Xiao was a close-combat specialist and wanted to keep his distance.

The further the man with the coffin moved, the more vigilant Su Xiao became. Based on various factors like the man's aura, habitual actions, calluses on his hands, and the scent of gunpowder, Su Xiao deduced that he was either a long-range or close-combat gunner, with a higher likelihood of being the latter.

When they were several dozen meters apart, the man with the coffin stomped on the ground, turning into a black blur and disappearing into the metallic corridors of the abandoned laboratory.

Left alone, Su Xiao sheathed his partially drawn Dragon Flash and walked towards the glass column containing Bubu.

Bubu hadn't broken the glass column. It was swimming leisurely in the pale green solution, resembling a frog, its smooth fur floating in the liquid.

"Stop swimming and see what's going on in this world," Su Xiao said, kicking the glass column. The pale green liquid gushed out, carrying Bubu with it. The dog shook its fur, looking melancholic as if lamenting the loss of its swimming pool.

[Entering World: A Certain Magical Index]

World Difficulty: Lv.15~?? (Tier 3 semi-open world)

World Source: 0%

World Description: A world where magic and science coexist.

Magic Faction: For a long time, the magic faction has influenced the world in various forms. Major factions include the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church.

Magicians: Infuse magical power into their blood vessels and nerves. They can cast corresponding spells by performing specific actions or gestures or using symbols or cards. Powerful magicians can set up large-scale magic using the terrain.

Science Faction: Academy City, with a population of 2.3 million, 80% of whom are students. The city is divided into 23 districts and is isolated from the outside world. It boasts technology 20-30 years ahead of the rest of the world. All students undergo superpower development overseen by the 'Board of Directors.' Academy City strictly controls entry and exit to prevent the leak of technology and superpowered individuals.

Espers: Academy City's superpowers are significant breakthroughs in 'quantum mechanics theory.' By manipulating their perception of reality, they create extreme 'quantum anomalies' that result in superpower phenomena. Superpowers are developed through memory techniques, drug injections, and physical or auditory stimulation. Due to the mental burden, espers can only possess one ability at a time.

Trial Mission: Obtain the Index of Prohibited Books.

Hunt Mission: Eliminate abnormal violators.

Notice: Hunt mode activates automatically within one kilometer of a violator.

Warning: Do not mention anything related to 'the park' in this world or face execution!

Notice: The hunter has not mastered the language of this world. They are spending 100 park coins to master the language automatically.

World, start!

Chapter 868: Under Attack

The mission consisted of two parts. The first was a tier-three trial mission, while the second made Su Xiao feel uneasy when he saw it.

Su Xiao had killed many violators before, but this was the first time he had heard of 'abnormal' violators. This seemed like a title similar to the 'leader' or 'lord' titles given to plot creatures. Thinking of this, he immediately opened the mission list.

[Trial Mission: The Grimoire of the End]

Difficulty Level: Lv. 23

Mission Brief: The Grimoire of the End is a special magic book not recorded in the Magical Library and has been lost for 300 years. Its current location is Academy City.

Mission Information: You can seek information about the Grimoire of the End from the plot character Tsuchimikado Motoharu and obtain the Grimoire within the mission timeframe.

Mission Duration: 13 days

Mission Reward: Promotion to Tier 3 Hunter

Mission Penalty: All attributes -10.

[Hunting Mission: Abnormal Violators]

Mission Brief: Eliminate abnormal violators by any means.

Mission Information: Abnormal violators are extremely dangerous and have life signs between those of contractors and void creatures.

Mission Duration: Before leaving this derivative world.

Mission Reward: 2 Gold Honor Medals, Permission Level +3.

Both missions were difficult. This time, Su Xiao's main goal was to advance to tier three so he could temporarily put off the hunting mission. In most derivative worlds, violators were quite active. With the 'Derivative World Communication Platform' function, contractors could share information and learn about major events in the derivative world through the communication platform, making it easier to expose violators.

Drip, drip...

Pale green liquid dripped from Su Xiao's hair. This liquid was similar to water and had no smell. He needed to determine his location, although he had a rough idea already.

He was currently in an abandoned laboratory, deserted for a long time. The backup power was almost depleted, and the lights flickered intermittently.

Su Xiao focused ahead, narrowing his perception for more acute sensing. He vaguely felt that something was monitoring him in the laboratory.

This surveillance was constant. In his perception, jellyfish-like objects floated with the airflow, similar to dandelion seeds. These things were too small to be seen with the naked eye, and Su Xiao could only vaguely sense them.

Su Xiao knew what these were. They were a type of surveillance device called Aerostatic Reins, used by Aleister Crowley, the chairman of Academy City, for monitoring. These things were almost everywhere in Academy City.

Upon discovering the Aerostatic Reins, Su Xiao confirmed he was in Academy City. He recalled the plot and worldview of A Certain Magical Index. Overall, it had a somewhat ambiguous power system featuring angels and saints.

Having experienced the Holy Grail War world, Su Xiao knew the power system here would be clearer. Even if some beings were called angels, their abilities wouldn't be overwhelmingly powerful.

But since this was a tier-three semi-open world, the power system wouldn't be significantly higher than the tier. A semi-open world allows contractors of any tier to enter but limits the power system to within tier four. Only tier-three contractors could enter.

Based on the original story, Su Xiao suspected Aleister Crowley was at least tier four, even if limited by the world's tier, making him a top-tier figure not to be provoked.

Aleister was the leader of the science side. Since this was Academy City, there wouldn't be too many magicians. The relationship between the science and magic sides was generally non-interfering, though some factions ignored this rule. Aleister's constant presence in Academy City deterred invasions without a solid plan.

Therefore, Su Xiao guessed that most enemies in this world would be at various levels of Espers, with a few magicians.

If the enemies primarily used superpowers, the power system was clearer:

Lv.0: No Power, unable to bend a spoon, but not completely powerless. Makes up 60% of students.

Lv.1: Low Power, with little practical use, can barely bend a spoon.

Lv.2: Sub-Power, abilities useful in daily life.

Lv.3: Medium Power, providing significant daily convenience and some combat capability.

Lv.4: High Power, abilities valuable for tactical use in the military.

Lv.5: Superior Power, able to single-handedly confront a military force.

Lv.6: Absolute Power, reaching god-like levels, which no one has achieved.

These Espers might have bodies as strong as ordinary people, except those with physical enhancement abilities. Despite this, their combat capabilities shouldn't be underestimated due to various powers like electricity, space, elements, force fields, and mind control. Espers develop various offensive and defensive methods to compensate for their physical weaknesses.

Su Xiao used his senses to locate the laboratory's exit. After forcibly breaking the door, he stepped out.

It was around 8 to 10 PM. Streetlights illuminated the roads, and the city was bathed in colorful lights, with sparse traffic moving along the streets.

In Academy City, only teachers and researchers could drive. Students were prohibited from driving and could only use public transportation like buses and subways.

Su Xiao leaped to the top of a three-story building, then jumped to a high-rise overlooking the city.

Academy City's technology was 20-30 years ahead of the world, though 50 years wouldn't be an exaggeration, making the city extremely prosperous.

However, Su Xiao saw it as a large, legal testing ground. Under the guise of developing superpowers, they attracted many qualified individuals for various experiments.

This didn't concern Su Xiao. He was just passing through as a righteous man. He was more interested in finding Tsuchimikado Motoharu, a double agent serving both the magic and science sides, wielding magic and superpowers.

Finding someone like him and extracting information wouldn't be easy and could attract attention from both sides.

He needed to act quickly to avoid giving the major players on the science side time to react or consider joining the science side himself. He never considered joining the magic side due to its chaos.

As Su Xiao stood on the rooftop, a bowl-thick green laser shot toward him, breaking the night sky's silence with incredible speed and without warning!

Chapter 869: Equipment

The green beam struck almost instantly, faster than one could imagine.

Boom!

The green beam, mixed with firelight, illuminated the night sky. The rooftop where Su Xiao stood had a hole several meters in diameter blasted into it. The edges of the hole, made of steel and concrete, were glowing red from the high temperature of the green beam.

A tall woman in a purple dress stood in a nearby alley, about fifty meters away. She had long, wavy brown hair and was in her twenties. She yawned, seemingly bored with the task.

"All done. This job was too easy," she said.

This woman was Mugino Shizuri, a Level 5 Esper ranked fourth in Academy City's Esper rankings. Her ability was Meltdown, and she currently worked for Item, a dark organization under Academy City's General Board. Item was responsible for suppressing riots and assassinations and eliminating foreign intruders—essentially, Item handled any shady jobs.

The task this time was to eliminate the foreign intruder, Su Xiao. Mugino Shizuri had chosen to kill him directly. Despite her sweet appearance, she was exceptionally ruthless.

Two other girls stood beside Mugino Shizuri. One wore an orange short jacket with a hood and had her hands in her pockets. Due to the darkness and the hood, her appearance was unclear, but she appeared to be quite young, possibly a middle school or even elementary school student.

The other girl, who had wavy blonde hair, wore a black baseball cap and a white skirt and looked like a high school student.

The girl with the hood was Saiai Kinuhata, while the blonde girl was Frenda Seivelun. Both were members of Item.

Item was an organization comprised entirely of women, four Espers.

All three girls in the alley wore wireless earpieces. The fourth member of Item, Takitsubo Rikou, was a sensor-type Esper. After taking drugs, her sensing range would become enormous, although she could only sense other Espers by their AIM fields, which were unique to them.

However, when drugged, her abilities would increase significantly, allowing her to sense non-Espers within a certain range by detecting other AIM fields nearby.

"He's still alive," came a sleepy voice through Mugino Shizuri's earpiece. It was Takitsubo Rikou, sounding like she might fall asleep at any moment.

"He's not dead?" Mugino Shizuri was surprised. She was sure the enemy had taken a direct hit from her beam cannon, which should have struck his head.

As the firelight on the opposite rooftop faded, a cracked light blue energy shield slowly dissipated into the air. This shield had a strength of 200 points, yet it had been shattered by one hit.

"Takitsubo, where is the enemy?" Mugino Shizuri pressed her earpiece, quickly scanning the surroundings.

"Above you," the voice replied.

Just then, a clear sword sound rang out.

Clang!

A light blue blade descended rapidly from above, slicing straight toward Mugino Shizuri.

At the same time, a small figure jumped up—Saiai Kinuhata. Her hands clasped together as she intercepted the blade.

Saiai Kinuhata's slender arms met the blade, and an invisible armor shattered with a crack, dispersing the blade.

Saiai Kinuhata was a Level 4 Esper with the ability of Nitrogen Armor, forming an invisible layer of nitrogen around her body, several centimeters thick, that could be used for defense and attack. Despite her elementary school-sized body, she was essentially a human tank, turned into a killing machine by working for Item.

As her Nitrogen Armor broke, Saiai Kinuhata pulled a metal canister from her waist, quickly opening it. With a hiss, liquid nitrogen sprayed out, forming a thicker layer of Nitrogen Armor around her.

"What's happening?" The blonde girl, Frenda Seivelun, looked confused. Her ability was unknown, but she relied on explosives in combat. Though she had no visible backpack, she likely stored her bombs within her ability.

Whoosh.

A man in a black coat landed a short distance before the three girls. A faint red shockwave spread out as he landed, washing over Mugino Shizuri and the others.

Mugino Shizuri's long brown hair was blown up, her pupils shrinking rapidly as her heartbeat quickened and her muscles instinctively relaxed.

In that moment of distraction, a bright sword light appeared before Mugino Shizuri!

Almost instinctively, she formed a green barrier in front of herself. This was her Meltdowner ability, a green barrier with high temperature, corrosion, and decomposition capabilities.

The long blade stopped abruptly before the green barrier, less than thirty centimeters from Mugino Shizuri's throat.

Holding the Dragon Flash, Su Xiao halted his attack. Though the Dragon Flash could withstand the Meltdowner ability, its durability would be significantly reduced. Since this world had just begun for him, damaging the Dragon Flash would hinder future battles.

Su Xiao recognized Mugino Shizuri, who ranked fourth among Espers. This official ranking wasn't entirely reliable.

Su Xiao leaped back, observing the three girls in front of him.

From his initial skirmish with the Espers, Su Xiao noted several points:

Espers had strong attack power without warning, making it difficult to sense killing intent or hostility. This might be related to Mugino Shizuri's ability.

Espers had keen senses and at least excellent dynamic vision, possibly due to their high mental load from developing their abilities.

Espers' physical strength wasn't weak and varied based on their abilities. Su Xiao used an active ability that caused 100 points of damage plus his willpower multiplied by five. This damage ignored armor, magic resistance, shields, and equipment defenses.

Among the three opponents, the blonde girl Frenda Seivelun was coughing up blood, indicating that Espers weren't as fragile as ordinary people. If their physical strength were that low, she would have been killed instantly by the damage from Su Xiao's ability.

This suggested that developing superpowers might increase life points or reduce damage. Su Xiao leaned towards the idea that it increased life points.

This world wouldn't be considered a tier-three challenge if Espers were fragile.

From his initial engagement, Su Xiao gathered a lot of information. As for why they came, he could guess it was likely Aleister Crowley who sent them.

Mugino Shizuri extended her hands in the alley, forming a green barrier separating the alley. The barrier began to melt and decompose the walls upon contact.

"This guy is something else. Is this just a superpower? More like a superhuman!" Mugino Shizuri's voice quivered as blood dripped from her mouth. Her legs trembled, and her instincts screamed to run away as fast as possible.

Chapter 870: Waiting

Cough, cough, cough...

Frenda Seivelun leaned against the wall, coughing violently, her pale hands covering her mouth as blood seeped through her fingers.

"Frenda, you retreat first," Kinuhata Saiai said, wiping the blood from the corner of her mouth. Her long life in the dark side had made her resist the urge to turn and flee.

"Okay," Frenda Seivelun, who tended to betray, turned and fled immediately.

"Shh..."

At the forefront, Mugino Shizuri let out a light scold. Not only was Frenda Seivelun seriously injured, but she also heard steady breathing coming through her earpiece. This was the sound of Item's fourth member, Takitsubo Rikou, who had previously locked onto Su Xiao's position using the nearby 'AIM diffusion field.' However, when Su Xiao released his aura, her superpower was affected. Combined with the effects of the drug she had taken, the 'Body Crystal' (Body Crystal: full name 'Ability Body Crystal,' which causes superpower to rampage upon use, greatly enhancing superpower but also causing it to become uncontrollable), Takitsubo Rikou had fallen unconscious for a short time.

Body Crystals were not good items; using them damaged the brain. Repeated use could turn one into a psychotic, with long-term use potentially resulting in becoming a vegetative state or even brain death.

Two of the four members of Item had lost their combat ability in just one encounter. Although this seemed pathetic, it wasn't the case. Takitsubo Rikou's main role was to find the enemy and sense their precise location, which she had done perfectly. Even if she was unconscious for a short time, it didn't matter.

As for Frenda Seivelun, she could set bombs. Her direct combat ability was equivalent to that of a well-trained high school girl. In a direct fight, Su Xiao would completely crush her.

Moreover, Frenda Seivelun wasn't truly escaping; she would set up bombs in a favorable position nearby.

The main combat forces in Item were Mugino Shizuri and Kinuhata Saiai, one for long-range and one for close combat.

"Super crisis," Kinuhata Saiai said, standing before Mugino Shizuri. Mugino Shizuri was stunned momentarily; then her face turned to rage.

"Move back, and don't interfere with my fight."

"You can't beat him, Shizuri."

"Huh?"

Mugino Shizuri's expression became strange, one eye wide and the other narrow, her face filled with killing intent.

"I'm super serious, and I'm going to use my super ultimate move," Kinuhata Saiai said, taking out a small pillbox.

"Super ultimate move..."

The anger on Mugino Shizuri's face subsided, replaced by a cold expression.

"Do you... want to die?"

"No, it's just that the enemy is super tough, Shizuri. Haven't you noticed? The enemy doesn't seem serious."

Hearing Kinuhata Saiai's words, Mugino Shizuri looked at Su Xiao.

Su Xiao looked up at the sky, not even paying attention to them.

"Chance."

A fist-sized green light ball appeared above Mugino Shizuri's head, shooting out a green beam known as the 'Particle Wave High-Speed Cannon.' Its destructive power was immense, and it was Mugino Shizuri's main combat technique.

The beam cannon shot towards Su Xiao almost instantly. A light blue energy shield appeared in front of him.

As the beam cannon hit the energy shield, there was a loud explosion, and green particles scattered everywhere. The walls and ground hit by the particles melted instantly.

With a strength of 200 points, the energy shield cracked under the impact. However, the beam cannon continued like a laser, causing continuous damage to the energy shield.

Crack, crack, crack...

The cracks on the energy shield grew more numerous. Energy lines spread out, distributing the force of the attack across the shield. In less than a second, the energy shield shattered.

Su Xiao sidestepped and easily dodged the beam cannon using the shield as a buffer.

Su Xiao was waiting for the people behind the scenes to react. He had already shown his combat strength and didn't believe the people behind this would let him rampage without a response.

Su Xiao's goal wasn't to kill someone but to complete the third-tier assessment as quickly as possible. This was the most important thing. If he failed the mission, the penalty of -10 to all attributes was something he couldn't afford, especially with his luck attribute. Losing 8 points in luck would mean he'd be so unlucky that even drinking water could kill him.

Aleister Crowley was very strong, and Su Xiao knew his strength. Now that he was in Academy City, acting recklessly without reaching an understanding with Aleister would be suicide, given the city's extensive surveillance.

Su Xiao was certain that over 80% of the contractors, upon entering this world, would try to escape Academy City if their mission didn't require them to stay.

However, Su Xiao couldn't leave. His mission target was here, which presented him with only one option.

If Aleister Crowley was a villain, joining him wouldn't be difficult. With his aura, the villain faction would easily accept him.

The trouble was Aleister Crowley was more like a neutral figure. The man had no concept of good or evil; he kept those with value and eliminated those without.

If Su Xiao demonstrated his abilities, he would be seen as highly valuable, not only for his combat skills but also for his alchemy.

Su Xiao had gained the trust of many factions through his alchemy: the World Government in One Piece, the Akatsuki in Naruto, and the military in Fullmetal Alchemist.

"Where are you looking during a fight?" Mugino Shizuri shouted, forming several green light balls beside her—beams of light shot toward Su Xiao.

Su Xiao frowned. Mugino Shizuri was tough to deal with. Her Meltdown ability was powerful, had low consumption, and offered a strong defense.

He had tried using Qing Gang Ying's energy, but it couldn't extinguish the 'Meltdown' ability because it wasn't energy but a physical reaction, though extremely unscientific.

Several beams shot toward him, and dozens of hexagonal energy shields appeared around Su Xiao, forming a circular barrier to protect him. The beams hit the shields.

Boom!

Thick smoke rose as Su Xiao's feet dug into the ground, pushed back by the impact. Once he stabilized, he stood up.

"Still not showing yourself? Looks like I need to kill one of them first. Who should it be? Hmm, the arrogant one."

Su Xiao flexed his shoulders, his eyes narrowing as his aura changed.

Seeing Su Xiao's fierce gaze, Kinuhata Saiai felt bitter. She couldn't help but complain internally. Letting the enemy stand there would have been fine, but why provoke him? Waiting for reinforcements would have been the smartest choice.

"I have to go all out. The super ultimate move is ready, Shizuri. Step back."

Usually, if Kinuhata Saiai had said this, Mugino Shizuri would have blasted her. However, this time, Mugino Shizuri stepped back a few paces. She had seen Kinuhata Saiai use her 'super ultimate move' once before. It was indeed powerful but had severe side effects. Using it multiple times within a year could shorten her life and even cause her abilities to degrade.

For those in the dark world, losing power was almost equivalent to death.

"It's been eight months since the last use. It should be fine, probably."

Kinuhata Saiai opened the matchbox-sized pillbox in her hand and poured all the pills into her mouth, chewing them.

"The taste is super strange."

Blood vessels appeared in the whites of her eyes, but other than that, there were no other changes.