

Scholar's Advanced Technological System

Chapter 1401: At Least Bring One Person

The first action meeting of The Gates of Hell expedition team began.

In the meeting room.

A three-dimensional holographic image was presented above the round table.

Lu Zhou stood right in front of the conference table. He looked at the members of the scientific expedition team and spoke in a serious tone.

“Although I originally planned to hold this meeting in the evening, what I’m about to say next is important. So this meeting has been advanced.

“Over the past two months, project 128 team dispatched a variety of detection equipment such as remote control cars, wire-controlled probes, seismic wave detectors, etc. to explore the situation underground.

“The holographic image you see now is the tunnel distribution model under the ruins. The green line corresponds to the most recently detected route, the yellow line is the historical route. The number marked next to it corresponds to the detection time.

“Due to the length of the control distance, the maximum exploration distance of the remote control vehicle we sent is only about one kilometer. It does not reach the deepest point of the ruins. It is not difficult to see that the passage under the ruins is dynamically changing.”

Discussions spread around the conference table.

Lu Zhou looked at the people with different expressions on their faces. He paused for a while before continuing in a serious tone.

“So far, the reason for the changes in these tunnels is not clear, but it is clear that we may not have a fixed map to rely on. We can only rely on intuition and luck to find the way to the underground ruins.

“What worries me is not that we might get lost, but the reason for this strange phenomenon... I’m guessing that the secrets hidden behind the ruins under The Gates of Hell may be more interesting than our phenomenon.

“I’ll be straightforward. There may be certain risks in this task. It is not too late to withdraw.”

Lu Zhou sat back in his chair and gave the team members sitting at the conference table time to discuss.

In fact, he had a feeling before coming here that this trip to Mars would certainly not end so easily. After chatting with Fan Tong earlier, he was even more certain of this.

The reasons behind why the passage to that underground ruin was so complicated, why the Holy Relic set up so many obstacles for this conversation, how its “maze” kept changing... All of these were suspicious to Lu Zhou.

Due to limited information, the current clues were not enough to support him in making a 100% certainty answer.

However, although this was full of many uncertain possibilities, one thing was certain—this mission would be full of danger.

The proof of the ABC conjecture might only be a threshold; the test from “higher civilization” had only just begun.

Just like how the person who claimed to be a Holy Relic didn’t care how many years to wait, if no one could pass the test set by The Observer, they would wait until the next era.

After all, they had waited for billions of years, so a few hundred years might be just a blink of an eye for them.

If the Chosen one could take on the heavy responsibility, they would certainly not hesitate to increase the difficulty of the test.

And even Lu Zhou himself wasn't certain in passing this test.

This wasn't just an IQ puzzle game.

It was a gamble on the future destiny of human civilization...

Five minutes went by.

The whispers and eye contact at the conference table continued, but no one stood up to express their withdrawal from this evil mission.

Perhaps they did not realize the seriousness of the problem.

In any case, Lu Zhou had given them the opportunity to choose.

Lu Zhou sat up straight from the chair and slowly stood up with his hands leaning on the conference table.

"Very well, it seems that you are all mentally prepared, so I won't say much. The meeting ends here. There is nothing more we can do now. We can only wait and see what happens.

"Nighttime is free time. Whether it's writing letters or making videos, do whatever you want. If there is an accident, someone will give these letters to your family... Of course, hopefully, there aren't any.

"We'll leave tomorrow morning!"

The meeting ended.

Everyone stood up and exited from the conference table.

Professor Aubrey glanced at Professor Vernal next to him and spoke with a weird expression.

"Is this implying that we should write a will?"

Professor Vernal shook his head; he was dumbfounded.

"I don't know... Don't ask me."

...

The next day.

At exactly eight o'clock Beijing time, the land of Mars was still shrouded in the dark.

The quiet night was suddenly disturbed.

The silver-white hatch opened. A Mars rover with tires about a meter high drove out of the garage, leaving a straight path in the desert. It went toward The Gates of Hell mountains in the distance.

The secrets of Martian civilization were buried there.

There was also a message that did belong to the human civilization.

The mission of this expedition was to dig these things out from below the surface. If the situation was optimistic, it was best to establish friendly diplomatic relations with the neighbors outside the solar system...

Wang Peng sat on the rover. He took out a unique heavy-duty rifle from the toolbox and assembled components.

This scene frightened the people next to him. Even Fan Tong, who was driving, could not help but ask, "You also brought a weapon?"

"Just in case."

After installing the scope, Wang Peng adjusted the crosshair position.

Lu Zhou glanced at the rifle in his hand and recognized the model.

The QBZ-20 rifle was a multi-purpose paratrooper rifle jointly designed by the Chinese Weaponry Research Institute and the Aerospace Science and Technology Institute. It had an elegant name called "Hellfire".

As for why Lu Zhou could recognize the model, it was mainly because he had trained with the garrison near the Jinling launch site for several weeks. Even if he did not use such awesome equipment, he had seen it many times.

Wang Peng didn't seem to be joking, so Fan Tong said with a weird expression, "I think... If there is an accident, this thing probably won't be useful."

Wang Peng raised his eyebrows.

“Oh, really?”

Fan Tong: “Their technology is totally beyond our knowledge. I tried to continue to explore the ruins, but an invisible wall blocked me. It is difficult to explain clearly. You’ll know when you enter...”

Wang Peng simply nodded and didn’t respond.

It would be best if there were no conflicts. They themselves came here with a peaceful purpose.

But if an accident happened...

He had to protect at least one person.

Chapter 1402: Going to Hell

After a 20-minute drive, the rover reached the edge of The Gates of Hell.

Along the edge, Fan Tong found a pass that could allow the Martian rover to go through. Fan Tong turned the steering wheel and drove the rover over.

The rover continued along the rugged and narrow path toward the depths of the mountains. The signal was affected by the nearby hematite and began to drop.

Aubrey glanced around at the surrounding steep cliffs and rock walls. When he felt the depressive atmosphere, he shrank his neck and couldn’t help but speak.

“Speaking of which, why is it called The Gates of Hell? Doesn’t this name make you guys nervous?”

Fan Tong spoke casually.

“I’m afraid you have to ask NASA about this since they named it.”

As the first organization to send the probe to Mars, the terrains were mostly named by the Curiosity rover.

Perhaps the scientific researcher in charge of the naming at that time felt that the name was artistic. It was difficult to judge whether it was artistic or not, but it was definitely a fitting name.

“There will be several meters of cracks randomly appearing around The Gates of Hell. These cracks are very similar to earthquake cracks, through which you can directly enter the ruins. Of course, these cracks are not the only way to enter the ruins. When I came out, I passed through a fixed entrance. Its location is probably in the middle of The Gates of Hell mountain range, embedded in the rock wall on the side of the rift... Over there, we are here.”

The rover’s engine was turned off. It slowly stopped beside a ridge. After getting out of the car, the group followed Fan Tong’s footsteps to an upright stone pillar about four to five meters high.

Behind this stone pillar was a steep downward slope.

When the shine of the morning light hit the back of the stone pillar, it was like some kind of natural miracle; people couldn’t help but stare in awe.

The appearance did look like a relic.

“Strange...”

Professor Vernal, the archaeologist from Oxford University, frowned and walked to the stone pillar. He squatted down and groped along the surface of the stone pillar for a while. He suddenly spoke.

“Is this a marine sedimentary environment?”

A hint of surprise appeared on Fan Tong’s face. He nodded and spoke.

“I had the same idea... Billions of years ago, this place should have been an ocean.”

“The altitude is quite deep.” Using his palm, Professor Vernard traced the outline of the stone pillar and felt the hard surface through his suit. He muttered, “The hydrogeological environment here is unique. There should have been many major geological disasters in the past. Volcanic eruptions,

plate collisions, and special tectonic movements that are not seen on Earth... This is incredible.”

“Let’s focus on the ruins below the ground.” Astrophysicist Aubrey walked in front of the group of people and turned his head to Lu Zhou. “What do you think? Boss.”

“I have no opinion, but if we stand outside, we won’t be able to figure out anything.” Lu Zhou thought about it for a moment and continued, “Let’s go ahead, I’ll take the lead.”

Wang Peng raised his hand with the paratrooper rifle and walked to the entrance of the cave.

“Let me go first.”

Aubrey and Vernal looked at each other with a strange look. Fan Tong also shrugged helplessly. He threw aside the stone sample he was holding.

“I said that weapons are useless... But since you insist, do what you want.”

However, having a person holding a gun lead the way still brought a sense of security to the group.

Even though everyone knew in their heart, that if there were any living aliens, the weapons on Earth would hardly be a threat. But at least in the psychological sense, the muzzle still brought some comfort to them.

Schultz asked quietly as he walked beside Lu Zhou, “Are you sure those Martians are... dead?”

Lu Zhou looked at the surrounding environment vigilantly. He shrugged his shoulders and replied in a casual tone, “I’m not sure... But if they weren’t dead, we would have seen them from Earth long ago.”

If they could survive in this universe for billions of years...

Even if they couldn’t dominate the Milky Way, they would have dominated the solar system long ago.

Dr. Lomonov, an aerospace engineer who had not spoken yet, suddenly said, “What if we have actually seen them, but we just didn’t realize it?”

Aubrey couldn't help but shiver. He spoke with a dry cough.

"Don't say that!"

The group continued to advance toward the depths of the tunnel.

So far, the expedition had been smooth, without any twists or turns.

By relying on the mark left by Fan Tong when he came out, they smoothly advanced at least two kilometers into the cave. According to the data displayed by the depth detector, they were now more than two hundred meters deep from the surface.

As they walked deeper, the feeling of alienation from civilization became stronger. They felt like a baby cut from the umbilical cord and was thrown into a bottomless well.

There was less and less talking. Everyone remained silent.

Fan Tong suddenly stopped and looked at the fork in the road ahead.

"Something's wrong..."

Everyone stopped.

Lu Zhou cast a questioning glance at him.

"What?"

"The marks end here."

Fan Tong walked to the side of the rock wall. He reached out his hand and fumbled on it for a while. He found a scratch cut off from it.

This was the mark left by the multifunctional shovel when he came out of the underground ruins. Originally, this clue should point directly to the deepest part of the ruins, but it had been cut off.

Fan Tong looked at the two paths in front of him. The expression on his face became more solemn as he muttered to himself, "I see... The passage inside the ruins has changed. I didn't see any intersections in the path before, and I walked about a kilometer before I saw the first intersection."

“But now it’s here already.

“I’m afraid things aren’t that simple.”

Professor Vernal stepped forward and squatted beside the intersection. He used a multifunctional shovel in his hand to crack some debris from the rock wall. He pinched it in his hand.

“This is incredible.”

Schultz gulped, looked at him, and asked, “What’s incredible?”

“Three billion years ago... Or even earlier, this should have been a cave covered with metal alloys.” Professor Vernal stood up and carefully packed the samples into the sample bag. He marked the sample label and said, “Although the traces of civilization have been weathered away by time, the rocks don’t lie.”

Professor Aubrey frowned.

“What are you talking about?”

“What I’m saying is, judging from the weathering traces, the structure of the path on the left is obviously more complex than the path on the right.” After Professor Vernal glanced at Fan Tong, he looked at Lu Zhou and said, “You are the captain, you choose which way to go.”

Chapter 1403: Splitting Up

“Let’s split up.”

Lu Zhou looked at the two paths in front of him and pondered for a moment. He then said, “We’ll move on along the passage on the right. You... take another person and explore along the left. If it’s a dead-end, then retreat and come back.”

“I’m afraid it will be difficult to do.” Fan Tong said, “The underground passage is in a state of dynamic change with a two-hour cycle. Even if we return along the same path, we won’t be exactly where we were.”

The members of the expedition team were shocked. Except for Wang Peng and Lu Zhou's calm expressions, everyone else looked astonished.

Aubrey couldn't help but speak, "How is that possible? How can the paths change? Are there ghosts here?"

Professor Vernal's face was also in shock; his tone was full of suspicion.

"Even if there are violent tectonic movements... Two hours is too short."

"If we can't go back the same way, then we will meet in front." Lu Zhou looked ahead and said, "Since all the roads lead to the same place, we'll just meet at the invisible wall."

Schultz took a deep breath. He then stood up and looked at Lu Zhou.

"I'll go with Professor Vernal. Both you and I are collaborators on the ABC conjecture proof paper. If an accident happens... One of us will still be there."

Lu Zhou nodded in agreement.

"Okay then. Schultz and Professor Vernal are in group A, the rest are in group B. We'll meet at the front."

After separating the supplies for the two groups, the groups began to part ways and continue along two completely different passages.

There was another option, which was for everyone to move forward and retreat together. But Lu Zhou didn't just want to find the Holy Relic, he wanted to be able to learn from this relic. To collect more information about the Martian civilization.

With the help from Professor Vernal, it should not be difficult to accomplish this task.

Also, like Schultz said, at least one of them should reach the deepest part of the ruins.

If another team had an accident, at least they had a second chance...

Schultz continued along the narrow tunnel with a flashlight. His expectation regarding discovering traces of a Martian civilization had completely disappeared.

They had been walking for almost an hour but found nothing.

He felt like he and Professor Vernal were like two headless chickens, running around aimlessly in this maze.

He couldn't help but ask.

"Are you sure there have been traces of civilization activities here?"

Unlike Schultz, Professor Vernal's tone was full of confidence. He spoke excitedly.

"I'm very certain! The surrounding stratum does not appear to be naturally formed. It's a special type of steel mixed with rare metals, formed under long-term oxidation and mechanical fragmentation of hematite containing rare metals. You know, normal hematite is very brittle."

"Brittle?"

"Yes, it's easy to break just by throwing it on the ground or hitting it..." Professor Vernal picked up the multifunctional shovel in his hand and smashed it on the reddish-brown rock on the side.

After taking two steps, Professor Vernal looked at Schultz and smiled.

"See... My shovel can only leave a scratch on it, let alone breaking it. I almost dislocated my hand."

Schultz frowned, not quite sure what Professor Vernal was trying to say.

However, after putting away the multifunctional shovel in his hand, Vernal continued in a fascinating tone.

"This used to be a tunnel paved with alloy steel!

"It's at least three billion years old!

"For some reason, the Martians dove to the bottom of the sea and built this tunnel. Which is the ruins we are now in. Their technology and their motivations are fascinating... Maybe it's because of the Holy Relic? I am getting more and more curious about what is at the end of this passage!"

Schultz opened his mouth. After a while, he gave an ambiguous assessment.

“This sounds like a science fiction story.”

Professor Vernal laughed and said, “People who study fossils and stones are good at making up stories, especially stories that are tens of millions or even hundreds of millions of years ago. But three billion years, Jesus... I have never seen such a thing. Even the age of Mount Roraima is only 300 million years old. If you want to investigate such an ancient place on Earth, you would have to drain the water in the Mariana Trench. If I can go back and put these findings in a paper, I will definitely break a world record!”

Schultz’s expression was not good.

“Not if we go back, when we go back.”

Vernal smiled and patted Schultz’s shoulder.

“Don’t worry, young mathematician, we will definitely go back... I was just making an academic hypothesis. Our archaeologists have a relatively indifferent view of life. Please don’t be offended.”

“I’m not offended, but I want to know, how long do we have to walk?” Schultz glanced around and said, “Judging by your expertise, are there any changes in the path?”

“The only difference is that our position is getting deeper and deeper. The nearby rocks tell me that there was a seawater intrusion here three billion years ago, or even earlier. Hundreds of millions of tons of seawater flooded here. The terrifying pressure tore through all the artificially designed structures in this passage. It dried up hundreds of millions of years ago.”

Schultz stopped walking.

He saw Professor Vernal take two steps forward and grabbed a handful of sand near the wall.

“What did you find now?”

Schultz stepped forward and stood behind him. He looked at the sand in Vernal’s hand, but he didn’t see anything unusual.

“The sand here is new...” Professor Vernal looked around and said, “At least it is much newer than the ones we just saw.”

Schultz frowned.

“What’s the problem?”

“It’s a huge problem... How did these sands get here?” Professor Vernal’s pupils were filled with disbelief, “It’s like the sand that fell in first in the hourglass suddenly appeared on top again... Do you understand what I mean?”

“The sand that fell first appeared on top...” Schultz frowned and said, “How is that possible?”

“But what is in my hand then?”

Vernal stood up and carefully packed the sand into the sample bag he carried with him. With a suspicious expression on his face, he pulled out a sticky note and stuck it on the side of the sample bag.

He looked at the depth value on the wrist-mounted computer. He then scribbled the approximate depth position on the sticky note with a marker and spoke.

“There are two possibilities. Either we lost our way and passed here already, or the tunnels on the surface were moved in front of us.”

Schultz: “Both of them sound impossible.”

“I think so too, but...”

Before Professor Vernal’s words were finished, a strong vibration suddenly came from all directions. The two almost fell on the ground from the sudden earthquake.

Stones fell from the top of the cave, banging on their helmets.

Schultz looked back. He saw that the passage they had walked through before was closing in the middle.

It was different from a normal cave collapsing.

The rock wall moved closer together at a constant speed. It seemed to be pulled by some unknown force. It didn’t give people the solid feeling that rock should have.

It was like a squirming esophagus...

Like it was alive!

"Earthquake!" Schultz screamed in the communication channel. He grabbed Vernal and said, "Get up! Let's get out of here."

Professor Vernal's face was full of horror.

"Damn it! This is more than a thousand meters deep underground, where do we go?!"

"It doesn't matter where we go, it's better than standing here and waiting to die! We have to go forward!"

The fear of death defeated the despair of nature.

Professor Vernal used all his strength to get up from the ground and dropped the multifunctional shovel in his hand. They ran forward without looking back.

The two of them exploded with extraordinary courage and strength. They barely escaped the rock walls closing behind them.

The two were in a spacious rock cave.

Vernal got up from the ground and shook the dust from his body as he spoke.

"Dammit... I thought we would be dead. German guy, are you okay?"

Schultz raised his hand and looked like a mess. But, fortunately, he was fine.

"I'm fine, wait... What did you call me?"

"The German mathematician! I'm sorry, I didn't mean it... I was just a bit excited."

Vernal grabbed Schultz and pulled him from the ground.

The two leaned against the wall. Their faces filled with joy and uncertainty.

"We can't stay here for long... No one knows what can happen again. Damn it, it really is two hours." After taking a deep breath, Professor Vernal checked

the oxygen reserve and looked toward Schultz, "Let's go ahead, my instincts tell me it shouldn't be far away... Wait, what is that?"

Professor Vernal stopped suddenly.

His eyes were fixed on the open space in front of him, completely forgetting what he wanted to say before.

Schultz followed his eyes with a strange face and looked in front. Instantly, he froze.

It was a shovel.

It was clearly the one that Professor Vernal dropped just a second ago.

Professor Vernal knelt on the ground and reached out his trembling hand. When he picked up the familiar multifunctional shovel from the ground, his face was full of shock.

"This, this is... The one I just dropped."

Schultz swallowed and spoke in a trembling voice.

"... And now it's here."

The two of them looked at each other.

They saw the uncertain expressions on each other's faces through the spacesuits.

"... Still go forward?"

"That's the only thing we can do."

There was no such thing as retreating.

Two hours had passed since they went inside. The distribution of underground tunnels had completely changed. Whether they wanted to find the exit or the end of the maze, if they wanted to live, they could only move forward!

The two continued to walk forward.

Ten minutes went by.

They passed through a narrow gate-shaped structure. Suddenly, a scenery appeared in front of them.

The two of them were stunned at the same time.

It took a while before Professor Vernal could squeeze out a word from his mouth.

“Jesus...”

This is...

Unbelievable!

Chapter 1404: Moving to Death

It wasn't just Professor Vernal and Schultz who were left behind.

The other group marching along another spacious passage also encountered the “earthquake” that changed the entire ruins.

Wang Peng climbed up from the ground. He gritted his teeth and removed the stone pressing on his leg. If this was on Earth, his legs would be broken, but fortunately, the gravity of Mars was only 0.37 times that of Earth.

He took out the torch hanging under the muzzle and threw the broken rifle aside. He walked to the side and pulled Fan Tong from under the gravel.

“I told you... cough cough... that thing is useless.”

“Whether it's useful or not, it's broken.”

After checking the operation of various equipment on the spacesuit, Fan Tong leaned against the rock wall next to him with a sigh of relief.

“Where's the rest?”

“I don't know...”

Aubrey and Lomonov fell behind when they escaped and were forced to rush into another path. It was still unclear whether they were alive or dead, but Wang Peng didn't care.

What worried him was that Lu Zhou was gone too!

"Damn it!"

He slammed his fist against the nearby rock wall.

This shocked Fan Tong, who was standing next to him. Fan Tong quickly reached out and grabbed him.

"Bro, calm down... We're already in this situation, we have to think of a solution."

Wang Peng was in the special forces.

After taking a deep breath, he quickly calmed himself down.

"I'm going to find him."

Fan Tong said, "How are you going to find him? Are you going to blow up the rock walls?"

The corners of Wang Peng's mouth twitched, but he did not respond.

He would consider doing this, but, unfortunately, he didn't have explosives or anything in his hand. A broken gun was not useful at all.

Wang Peng clenched his fist.

Fan Tong continued in a quiet voice, "I said before that the tunnel here will change drastically every two hours. However, no matter how it changes, I think its endpoint is the same. If... he is still alive, we will definitely be able to meet at the front.

"In any case, we can only move forward!"

...

On the other side.

Lomonov put his hands on his knees as he leaned against the rock wall, panting.

A weak voice came from the communication channel.

“Sh*t... Give me a hand, I’m stuck.”

After taking a deep breath, Lomonov stepped forward patiently. He reached out his hand to pull the buried American astrophysicist out of the gravel pile.

“This is a mistake!” Lomonov looked at Professor Aubrey and said, “Now look, we’re left behind.”

“We just got separated, stay calm...” Aubrey took a deep breath and looked around. “Aren’t we still alive?”

“Not for long!”

In the entire team, when it came to survival, these two had the most useless skill sets. Lomonov had already started to regret coming on this trip.

Compared with Lomonov’s pessimism, Professor Aubrey’s mood was fairly stable.

After taking a deep breath, he straightened up and observed the surroundings. He thought for a moment and said, “This is not like normal tectonic movement... No, it shouldn’t even be mechanical movement.”

Lomonov glanced at him.

Although he didn’t think this discovery would be any help to survival, he still asked casually, “How did you come to this conclusion?”

“Conclusion? Are you kidding?” Aubrey looked at the Russian aerospace engineering expert. “The rock mass of millions or even tens of millions of tons is moving? A large-scale geological movement every two hours? Well, maybe it is possible, but where does the energy come from?”

Lomonov frowned.

Obviously, he also realized this.

Aubrey gulped and continued, "Rely on the cooled core? And the tunnels, if they really collided with each other because of the movement in the ground, then there is no doubt that the inertia alone is enough to bring down this mountain."

Lomonov frowned and said, "It's not mechanical movement... Then what do you think it is? Magic?"

"Not magic, but for us, this technology is probably no different from magic."

Professor Aubrey sat down against the rock wall and sighed.

He looked at Lomonov and spoke.

"Of course, I have a guess.

"Have you heard of standard Euclidean space?"

...

Inside the empty rock cave.

Except for the dust and the person standing in the gravel, nothing else was nearby.

Lu Zhou felt his steady heartbeat. He slowly opened his eyes and lowered his arms.

He looked at the surroundings. His eyes fell on the giant arch that was about five meters tall in front of him. A thoughtful expression appeared on his face.

"I see..."

"It seems that my guess is correct."

After listening to Dr. Fan Tong's description, he had a suspicion. Now, this was proof that his suspicion was correct.

There was no earthquake here.

These tunnels themselves never changed.

Only the order was disrupted!

Basically, the area where the ruin was in was not a three-dimensional space in the traditional sense but a standard Euclidean space after expansion.

In this space, fragments of four-dimensional space or higher-dimensional space were scattered like bubbles, hidden in corners invisible to three-dimensional creatures.

This explanation was difficult to understand.

Basically, everything in the ruins, including the intricate tunnels and passages, was like pieces of a puzzle.

On the surface, the geological movement caused the collapse and formation of new and old tunnels, but in essence, an invisible hand disrupted these puzzles and put them together again.

Everything never changed.

After realizing all this, Lu Zhou immediately made a decision. When the earthquake happened, he deliberately left other people aside and took the initiative to let the tunnel “collapse” on him.

It now seemed like he was correct.

Otherwise, he would have been crushed into meat sauce, and he would not be standing here.

“This should be the place where the Holy Relic is...”

Lu Zhou did not hesitate. He walked toward the tall arch.

As soon as he stepped into the space behind the arch, the empty communication channel instantly lit up.

Immediately afterward, an electric current sound rang in his ears.

“... You’re here.”

Chapter 1405: Graveyard of Civilization

Vernal swore that even though he had discovered many miracles in the civilized world, he had never been so shocked before.

An open space near the size of a football field was in front of him. The ceiling was about a hundred meters high. The square stone steles were like chess pieces on a chessboard, planted all over the open space. The smooth and flat surfaces were like mirrors. The edges and corners were sharp, like they were cut by a knife.

What was amazing was not the huge amount of work akin to the terracotta warriors, but the fact that even after billions of years, there weren't any scratches on the stone surfaces.

"God... This is incredible."

Professor Vernal took a trembling step forward. He walked past Schultz, who was dumbfounded, and walked to the nearest stone monument. The old professor reached out his trembling right hand and pressed his palm on the flat and smooth surface.

"This is a cemetery..."

Professor Vernal's hand was on the nearest tombstone. He murmured to himself, "The cemeteries of civilization... It is hard to imagine how they have remained intact during these long years, and why they accomplished this miracle..."

Schultz finally recovered from the astonishment. He gulped, walked up, and stood beside Professor Vernal. He looked at him and spoke in a questioning tone.

"Cemetery...?"

"Yeah."

Professor Vernal nodded. After hesitating for a while, he finally took out the multifunctional shovel he had picked up earlier and slammed it up with all his strength.

After some crisp dinging sounds, the mirror-smooth stone finally couldn't withstand the beating. It was broken like a piece of tofu, cracking along the place where the shovel had hit.

A fragment was knocked down along the crack. Professor Vernal picked it up and examined it. He began to analyze.

“Three billion years ago, this piece of fragment in my hand should have come from some kind of metal alloy material. After billions of years of weathering, it turned into hematite. The rare metals scattered in the alloy are not completely oxidized because the oxide layer is well preserved and a special natural alloy with iron oxide as the main component has been formed. This should also contain cadmium, nickel, and carbon. The specific composition requires professional equipment to analyze.”

After a pause, he continued, “This is not the only thing that surprised me. This ‘artwork’ made from high-strength alloys is covered with some kind of debris containing calcium carbonate minerals.”

“These things are like coffins... No, they are coffins to be precise.”

Professor Vernal carefully put the collected sample into the sample bag he carried with him. He added the sampling location and other information on the bag.

Schultz gulped. It took a while before he spoke.

“But... Why did they send the coffins to the seabed several kilometers below the surface? I remember you said that this place was a sea billions of years ago.”

Carrying out such a large project on the seabed was not an easy task.

Schultz was quite skeptical that even with the current technology on Earth, it might not be possible to dig such a huge space on the seabed several kilometers below the surface.

Professor Vernal nodded in response to Schultz’s statement.

“That’s right, I did say that. It is quite deep here. As you said, it must be at least several kilometers or even dozens of kilometers deep.”

He looked at the square stones that were so neatly placed that they could almost be measured with a ruler. He couldn’t help but frown slightly and sink into thought.

“Maybe it’s some kind of special religious ceremony, maybe it’s a sacrifice to that Holy Relic...

“Or... it’s actually not a cemetery here.

“It’s some kind of shelter?”

Vernal felt a little confused.

...

While Professor Vernal and Schultz were so shocked that they almost forgot the purpose of their trip, Lu Zhou was standing in an empty grotto. He finally heard the voice from the other civilization.

“I thought it would take at least a few centuries before I see you guys again. I didn’t expect this day to come so soon.” There was a hint of approval and joy in the voice. “Congratulations, the chosen one, I believe you should have brought the answers I need?”

“Yes.” Lu Zhou nodded and said, “I have turned on file transfer. If you can successfully receive the data, you should be able to see my proof. If you don’t understand something, I can explain it to you.”

“No need, there are many ways to verify your proof. Besides, mathematical problems of this level are not difficult for us.”

Not difficult...

This world-class problem that troubled him and his collaborators for a month was actually “not difficult” in the eyes of this guy.

Lu Zhou had a dumbfounded expression on his face.

Lu Zhou put his sense of frustration aside for the time being. He took a deep breath and spoke in a clear voice inside the empty grotto.

“Can I ask a question?”

“Go ahead.”

“In fact, this is not the only way to get here.”

“Yes, but this is the fastest.” The voice continued with a hint of joy, “There is more than one way to solve the problem itself. Finding all the results through the endless possibilities is also one of the joys of exploration. Of course, you can also be opportunistic as you are now and let yourself flow in the four-dimensional space, but I have to say that this requires not only courage and wisdom but also a lot of commitment.”

Joys?

Lu Zhou had a weird look on his face.

He didn’t know what was joyful about this.

“I don’t understand the reason for this test.”

“Someone asked me this a long time ago... Before humans even exist.”

The voice had a hint of nostalgia.

“The reason for the test is to let the right person inherit what belongs to them.”

“You must know that civilization itself is an abstract concept. It’s not enough to package the gifts and throw them at a civilization. We have to filter using special methods and find the appropriate individuals. Then train the individuals who have passed the tests and guide them to find and inherit the gifts that were given. Only this way, can the gifts be used as they should be...”

Lu Zhou: “So you are not from The Observer’s civilization.”

“No... But it seems you have met them?”

There was a hint of interest in the voice.

Lu Zhou nodded and spoke concisely.

“Fortunate enough to meet once before.”

“Being able to meet with the Void is not some kind of luck that ordinary people have. Although sometimes being too lucky is not a desirable trait.”

Lu Zhou did not speak. He waited for the voice to continue.

“Well, since you have met The Observer, it must have told you about the ‘legacy’. You might even know more secrets than me.”

“Go ahead.”

“The gift from the Void is just ahead.

“Since you are already here, it should not be difficult to pass the last test.”

Lu Zhou nodded.

“Of course.”

After that, he took a step forward and came to the invisible wall. He slowly extended his right hand toward it.

When his right hand finally touched the transparent wall, Lu Zhou could feel an obvious resistance, preventing his hand from moving forward.

However, he could also feel that nothing was there.

It was as if the thing blocking him was not something that could be seen, but something similar to a physical law.

After pondering for a long time, a look of interest suddenly appeared in Lu Zhou’s eyes. He said to himself thoughtfully, “I didn’t expect the cracks in the four-dimensional space to grow like this.”

There was a hint of approval in the voice.

“Not bad, you are the first human to discover this.”

“What about the Martians?”

“They took 20,000 years.”

“20,000 years... That’s a long time.”

“Going from the tribal period to the information age, they were close to the truth, but, unfortunately, those guys were too conceited about their power. This truth eventually destroyed them.”

Lu Zhou's hands continued to fumble on the invisible wall. He casually asked, "What happened to them?"

"Disasters, part man-made, part natural... If you want to know, you'll receive answers when you pass through the barrier in front of you. Some information has been saved. If you are interested, you can take them with you."

"That shouldn't take long."

With that said, Lu Zhou took two steps back.

"What are you going to do?"

There was a hint of curiosity in that voice, as if it was looking forward to Lu Zhou's next move.

Lu Zhou smiled faintly.

"Do you really need to ask that?"

"I'm going to continue the unfinished work from billions of years ago."

After that, he reached out and pressed a few buttons on his wrist-mounted computer.

Soon, lines made of different colors were projected on the screen inside his mask. A reflection could be seen in Lu Zhou's pupils.

The zigzag lines corresponded to the passages in the ruins; the same image he showed in the conference room before.

Although only a small part of the surveying and mapping of the ruins was completed, since the maximum exploration distance of the remote control car operated by Fan Tong was only one kilometer, it was enough for Lu Zhou.

The four-dimensional space fragment interacted with three-dimensional space by certain laws.

It didn't matter if he didn't have a complete map.

A soft voice of approval came from the communication channel.

"I underestimated you..."

“But, unfortunately, you only have two hours.”

“It’s fine, it’s just a topology and geometry problem, although it’s a little complicated...” Lu Zhou turned off the communication module, took a deep breath, and said, “But two hours is enough for me.”

Chapter 1406: Fragments of Four-Dimensional Space

As a three-dimensional creature, it was almost impossible to cross the barrier of a high-dimensional world.

Just like how two-dimensional creatures couldn’t perceive the existence of a three-dimensional world, if they didn’t rely on scientific theories or special technical means, all they could observe was the projection of three-dimensional objects on paper with the help of light sources. The laws of physics were incomprehensible to two-dimensional creatures.

It was almost impossible to stand in the position of low-dimensional creatures and interact with high-dimensional space.

The four-dimensional space fragment and the existence of Z particles were somewhat similar.

But its existence was more complicated.

It was not a thing that existed in four-dimensional space; it was the space itself.

Therefore, it was theoretically impossible to cross this barrier.

It was impossible for any physical force to have any effect on it. Even if a nuclear bomb was brought to the ruins, it would not have any effect.

However, this didn’t mean that Lu Zhou couldn’t do anything.

The internal space of the entire ruins was divided into countless small pieces by the fragments of the four-dimensional space. All of the channels here were continuous in a topological sense. As for the change in position, it was caused by the interference of the four-dimensional space fragments in the three-

dimensional space, which made these tunnels mix together like a jigsaw puzzle.

The reason why he couldn't cross the barrier in front of him was only that the "door" was not there. The inaccessible space in front of him was like a piece of the jigsaw puzzle that was missing.

All he had to do now was to find the missing piece from the thousands of puzzles.

And where it belonged.

If Xiao Ai were here, it would save him a lot of time. But he could only rely on himself now.

Fortunately, since he was level 10 in mathematics, this was not difficult.

Half an hour passed.

Lu Zhou finally found the missing piece of the puzzle. His eyes were fixed on the screen. Finally, a smile appeared on his face.

"I didn't expect the answer to be close by..."

Lu Zhou tapped on the wrist-mounted computer on his left arm. He reopened the communication module.

"See you soon."

He turned and left the spacious grotto. He left the tall arch and returned to the place where he was before.

Without any hesitation, Lu Zhou, who already had the answer in his mind, walked through the dusty tunnels in the opposite direction.

Soon, he came to a bottomless cliff and stopped at the edge of the cliff.

If his inference was correct, this should be the place where the piece of the puzzle was pulled out. The inaccessible space he saw in the grotto originally belonged to this place.

And if he wanted to enter there, he could only go through this "door"!

The voice seemed to have been observing his every move. The voice once again reappeared in his ear.

“Are you ready?”

Lu Zhou, who was about to take a step forward, stopped.

“What does that mean?”

“I’m saying, it’s not too late to leave now.”

Lu Zhou suddenly smiled and said in a joking tone.

“Do you want me to leave?”

“I don’t want anything. The Observers keep me busy; they will always send suitable individuals to me.”

Lu Zhou: “If it doesn’t matter, why should you persuade me otherwise?”

“Because the road ahead is not easy. I’m just providing you with an alternative. If you leave, you can live a happy and stable life.”

There was a bewitching tone in the voice.

Lu Zhou admitted that this sounded really tempting.

He stood at the top of the academic world, the pinnacle of power. Even if he did nothing, he would be able to live the rest of his life happily. There was no need to let himself take such a big risk.

However...

“You are right, but since I’m already here...” After thinking about it, Lu Zhou continued, “It would be a shame for me to leave.”

“Too much curiosity is not a good thing.”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Really? Now I know you’re not an Observer.”

“Oh, why?”

Lu Zhou: "Because I remember that person said that curiosity is an enviable quality."

"It's your decision. But you have to think clearly. Once you make a choice, you can't look back."

"I've already made up my mind before I came here."

Lu Zhou closed his eyes and pondered for a long time. He then silently took off the wrist computer on his left arm and threw it on the open space behind him.

He took a deep breath and used all his courage to leap into the abyss. He let gravity pull himself toward the endless darkness.

His fall lasted for about four seconds.

Then, something magical happened!

The moment he was swallowed by the boundless darkness, a feeling of inertia crawled through every cell in his body.

It was almost like the direction of gravity had been reversed in an instant. A huge force grabbed his shoulders and slammed it onto the solid ground.

"Ouch..."

Lu Zhou felt like his chest was hit by a truck. He panted loudly and climbed up from the ground.

When he raised his head, there was a hint of ecstasy in his eyes.

The space in front of him was exactly the grotto that he left before. He was on the other side of the "wall".

Lu Zhou contained the excitement in his heart. He took a deep breath and calmed himself down.

"Did I pass all the tests?"

"Sort of."

"What do you mean?"

The voice did not give an answer.

Lu Zhou was confused about what to do next. The surrounding space suddenly lit up with a soft light. A crystal that was as flawless and transparent as diamonds appeared in front of him out of thin air.

There were tiny lines printed on the clear and transparent surface. Those lines were like projections of the ruins, corresponding to each tunnel.

Lu Zhou was curious about this magical phenomenon. He was about to reach out to touch it when he was stopped by the voice in his ears.

“Don’t touch it with your hands!”

Lu Zhou’s hand stopped. He put his hand away and stared at the flawless and transparent spherical crystal for a long time. He finally spoke.

“Don’t touch it with my hands... Should I touch it with something else?”

“This is the fragment of the four-dimensional space. All changes in the ruins are caused by it.”

Lu Zhou couldn’t help but wonder. He then asked, “How did you fold the four-dimensional space fragment into such a... perfect state?”

“This is not our technology.” The voice said lightly, “Folding the fragments of four-dimensional space into a three-dimensional sphere can only be done by The Observers.”

Lu Zhou: “This is what the Void intends to give me? A piece of four-dimensional space?”

“No, it’s just a key.”

“Key?”

“Yes, it can lead you to the treasure.”

Chapter 1407: Shelter

Inside the grotto shaped like a tomb.

Professor Vernal, who squatted beside a square stone, slowly stood up from the ground with his hands on his knees.

Schultz, who was standing at a side, took two steps forward and asked, "Did you find any clues?"

"Of course... The relics here are valuable." Professor Vernal looked at Schultz and suddenly raised a question, "Have you ever heard of the legend of the mummy?"

Schultz was slightly stunned. A confused expression gradually appeared on his face.

"A little bit... why?"

"The ancient Egyptians believed that the soul of a person is immortal after death. As long as the corpse is immortal, one day it can be reborn. Therefore, in order to prevent the corpse from decaying, the pharaohs will order their servants to hollow out their internal organs after death, dry and wrap them with salt, spices, ointment, honey, and linen cloth. These mummies won't rot for thousands of years."

Schultz gulped and looked at the square stones with a weird expression. He said, "You mean... The reason for these stones is to prevent the decay of the body?"

"Of course not." Professor Vernal smiled and continued, "If it is for anti-corrosion reasons, it is obviously unwise to store the corpse in a metal container that is prone to oxidation. Let's assume billions of years ago that the oxygen resources on Mars are almost the same as that of the Earth, or even more abundant, and the civilization here had the technology to excavate such a vast project on the seabed several kilometers deep, they wouldn't be ignorant of such basic chemical principles."

"Then what do you think this is?"

"Obviously, this is a shelter."

"Shelter?"

“Yes.” Vernal looked at Schultz, he nodded and continued, “When an irreparable disaster occurred on Mars, they sealed themselves in these iron coffins billions of years ago. Then they were hibernated with the help of special technology, waiting for one day to wake up. You should have heard of it. Cryo-hibernation technology is very popular on Earth, it uses the X-0172 bacteria that the Americans brought back from Mars.”

Schultz nodded, and a look of realization appeared on his face.

He obviously heard of this before; he even remembered that some dormant bacteria caused a lot of sensation at the time.

The X-0172 bacteria had changed from a biological disaster to a miracle technology.

For those who were terminally ill, this was a gift from god. Since current medical technology was not advanced enough to cure them, they could at least survive, albeit they would be separated from their families...

However, Schultz still didn't understand one thing.

If these things were dormant cabins, why did they go extinct?

“Obviously, they failed.” Professor Vernal shrugged and continued, “Although they made some attempts to save themselves, their extinction was almost guaranteed on the scale of hundreds of years. They had no chance of surviving for millions of years. Their planet lost the protection of a magnetic field, their atmosphere, and even the ocean... Even the most developed civilization needs land to live on.”

Schultz thought about the unimaginable doomsday catastrophe and went silent for a while.

After a long time, he asked, “These Martians... What could they be? I mean biologically.”

“I don't know, but mammals can be excluded. The gravity environment here is not good for bone development and calcium accumulation. Even if there are mammals in the ecosystem here, their size should not be large. It is even more difficult to develop sufficiently wide skulls... Instead, invertebrates should have an advantage, especially arthropods. They should be larger than on Earth and theoretically have a larger brain to accommodate more neurons.

“The signs of civilization aren’t fire and the use of tools, but in essence, it is the ability to process and communicate information.”

Professor Vernal shrugged and said with a smile.

“Of course, all of this is just speculation. Even with all the prerequisites, the birth of civilization is full of coincidences. Judging from our ants and bees, arthropods may have evolved to coordinate large groups and a social system engaged in intensive production activities.”

The excitement on Professor Vernal’s face grew stronger.

He squinted his eyes and looked around, as if a gold mine were sitting in front of him!

“... Everything here is interesting. It is like the pyramids of the Martian civilization. We may be able to recover the reason why Mars lost its magnetic field. And what the Martians did to try and save themselves. Whether it is to understand the history from billions of years ago or to help our own future, these precious relics have great significance.

“I want to build a semi-permanent research station here to research these—”

Just as Professor Vernal, who was overexcited, was describing his vision to Schultz, a tremor suddenly came from the ground.

Professor Vernal reached out and grabbed the stone next to him. The rubble and dust fell from the ceiling. The expression on Professor Vernal’s face suddenly changed from ecstasy to horror.

“F*ck?! Again?”

“We must get out of here!”

Schultz was the first to react. He grabbed Vernal’s shoulders and tried to drag him away. But it was like Vernal had no intention to leave.

“Wait a second, let me get a few more samples...”

Schlutz snatched the multifunctional shovel in his hand and threw it out fiercely.

Schultz used all his strength and woke him up from his stupefaction.

“What the f*ck are you doing?!”

“If we stay here for any longer, we’ll die!”

Another wave of violent tremors came.

Professor Vernal finally realized the seriousness of the problem. They rushed to the nearest exit.

As soon as the two of them passed through the spacious grotto and through the exit, the tunnel behind them closed like an avalanche.

Schultz suddenly felt a strange feeling in his heart.

Accurately speaking, it was a feeling of intuition.

He felt like the collapse of these tunnels seemed a bit unusual.

However, the current situation didn’t give him time to think.

He had no other choice except to use all his strength to run away...

...

On the other hand, inside another tunnel.

After listening to Professor Aubrey’s explanation, Professor Lomonov stroked his chin through the helmet of the spacesuit. He nodded thoughtfully and spoke.

“I see...”

Aubrey: “Do you understand?”

Lomonov: “... Sort of?”

Professor Aubrey sighed and threw the multifunctional shovel in his hand to the side. He leaned against the rock wall next to him and sat on the ground.

“... Why did I explain it to you?”

“Your explanation was confusing.” Professor Lomonov complained, “What is standard Euclidean space? And what kind of four-dimensional matter

interferes with three-dimensional space... What does this have to do with earthquakes?"

"There is no earthquake, the road under our feet has not even changed. If my inference is correct, nothing will happen even if we are swallowed by the collapsed tunnel. We will follow the moved space from the three-dimensional coordinate to another three-dimensional coordinate."

Lomonov: "Does this conform to the conservation of energy?"

"Energy? Of course it is conserved." Professor Aubrey drew a mark on the ground with the multifunctional shovel in his hand. He sighed and continued, "The order in the three-dimensional space is disrupted. If you don't understand standard Euclidean space, you should understand a hamster wheel, right?"

"You're saying we are like hamsters on a hamster wheel?"

"You can say that..." Professor Aubrey said, "This space is circular. Perhaps we have been walking in the same place."

Professor Lomonov's face suddenly showed a strange expression.

Then what's the point of walking around?

However, just when he was about to ask, the ground trembled violently. Professor Aubrey stood up from the ground and looked at the broken rocks shaking from the ceiling. He began to run away.

"WTF?! Isn't it once every two hours? How many minutes has it been?!"

Lomonov ran and shouted, "Didn't you say that we won't be swallowed by the tunnel!"

"I did!"

"Then why are you running?!"

"That's just a theory! I'm not going to risk my life! Shut up and run!"

Small rocks and dust continued to fall from the top of the cave, landing on their shoulders.

The tunnel behind them was getting closer and closer to collapse. The two people, who were not very athletic, had desperate expressions on their faces.

However, suddenly, there was a bright light ahead.

Professor Aubrey's despair instantly turned into ecstasy.

"Exit! The exit is ahead! Quick!"

Although they could not find any clues to the extraterrestrial civilization, at least they survived. Perhaps Congress would be disappointed by this, but Aubrey believed that if he died in the cave ruins, it would cause even more trouble for his country.

Keeping himself alive was the highest priority!

"I'm never going to explore underground again! Cough..."

They finally broke through the darkness. Professor Aubrey put his right hand on the stone pillar at the entrance of the cave and panted desperately.

However, the moment he raised his head, he froze.

Besides the rover, the two Chinese people Wang Peng and Fan Tong as well as the British archaeologist and the German mathematics researcher were also here.

Everyone except Academician Lu...

Wang Peng saw Professor Aubrey running out of the cave. He took a few steps forward, reached out, and grabbed his shoulder. Wang Peng's eyes were bloodshot.

This creepy feeling made Aubrey shudder.

Professor Aubrey, who was being stared at, felt that he had forgotten how to breathe.

"Where is Lu Zhou?! Where is he?!"

"How would I know?" Professor Aubrey replied with a trembling tone, "I am not his bodyguard, is he not with you guys?"

“ . . . ”

Although Wang Peng did not trust the American, he still let go of Aubrey's shoulders.

He cast his gaze to the tunnel entrance. He clenched his fist; a flash of determination suddenly flashed in his eyes.

“I'll go find Academician Lu.”

Fan Tong stared at him like he was crazy.

“Are you mad?! This entire mountain range is probably going to collapse!”

“Then you guys go back first—”

Before he could finish speaking, the entrance of the cave suddenly began to shake. The tremors from the ground came from all directions. The stone pillars began to collapse to the side.

Everyone rushed to the rover next to them frantically.

“Quick! Drive!”

“Wang Peng is not here yet!”

“Who cares! He wants to die, but we can't all die because of him!”

Fan Tong gritted his teeth and glanced back at the passengers sitting in the car.

No one wanted to die, including himself.

He finally made up his mind. He muttered sorry in his heart, grabbed two cans of oxygen cylinders, and threw them out of the rover door. He then started the rover and drove away as fast as possible.

There was no point in staying here with the Martians who had died billions of years ago.

Fan Tong avoided the rocks that had fallen from the ridge. He stepped on the accelerator and finally escaped from danger.

As soon as they had just escaped, a giant rock wall about ten meters in length crashed into the tunnel entrance, setting off a cloud of dust.

They could have been stuck inside forever...

The sand and dust rose from the gravel; it was visible even from the satellites.

They felt the aftershocks coming from under the ground.

“Sh*t...”

Fan Tong slammed his fist on the steering wheel and gradually slowed down. He leaned his forehead on the steering wheel. His shoulders were trembling.

Schultz patted him on the shoulder in silence.

Everyone in the car was silent on the way back.

Only Professor Aubrey whispered, “It’s like an entrance to hell”. After receiving no response, he lowered his head in silence.

June 10th.

On this day.

The largest earthquake ever was observed on Mars. Even the Mars scientific research station several kilometers away could clearly feel the tremor of the shaking mountains.

And on that same day.

The Mars scientific research station lost two outstanding members...

Chapter 1408: Nostalgic Name

Half an hour ago.

Lu Zhou stood next to the clear and transparent space fragment. He heard the voice from the Holy Relic.

“Have you decided?”

“I have.”

“Then let’s begin.”

The space fragment gradually turned into a white mist in front of him. Lu Zhou suddenly thought of something and said, “Wait a second.”

“Changed your mind?”

“Nope.” Lu Zhou shook his head and said, “Can I make a request?”

“What request?”

“Send my teammates out of this place safely.”

The voice went silent for a while.

Just when Lu Zhou began to doubt whether this was possible, the voice suddenly spoke with a relaxed tone.

“Of course, not a big deal.”

The white mist entwined in the space fragment suddenly formed a circle. The lines inside the fragment were tangled together.

Just like a broken jigsaw puzzle, the lines and their corresponding tunnels were broken and recombined under the control of a special physical law.

Lu Zhou saw his teammates and even the wrist-mounted computer he had dropped through the four-dimensional space fragment.

Under the control of the mysterious power, all of the objects that did not belong in the ruins were moved to the surface.

“Unbelievable.” As Lu Zhou looked at all these changes, a shocked expression appeared on his face. “It’s almost like...”

“Like what?”

“It’s like the power of a god.”

Lu Zhou watched his teammates being chased by the “collapsing” tunnel. One by one, they escaped from the boundary controlled by the four-dimensional space fragment.

Under the domination of this force, all creatures were as small as ants, swayed by invisible chains like puppets.

“God? That’s it?” There was a faint mockery in the voice. “Not even close.”

Lu Zhou asked subconsciously, “So you’ve seen a god?”

“It depends on how you interpret the concept of a god.” The voice continued in a casual tone, “If you are referring to the primitive beliefs of the origin of life, then this kind of god is probably just an imagination of the unknown and mysterious. But if you are referring to some great will that governs the universe... It is difficult for you to prove that it does not exist.”

Lu Zhou: “This statement sounds a bit confusing.”

“Any rigorous theory sounds a bit confusing. This is the new universe, and the laws of the old universe may not necessarily apply. Of course, my advice is, if you can’t perceive that kind of existence, don’t bother to think about it. Regardless, you probably won’t have the chance to come into contact with that level of being anyway.”

There was a hint of sarcasm and superiority in the voice, which was rather unpleasant.

However, considering that this guy was a lonely old man from the outside of time, Lu Zhou did not take his arrogance to heart.

“Now that your compatriots have been sent to the surface, if you don’t want to continue to waste time here, we should leave.”

“Let’s go then.” Lu Zhou nodded. He looked at the space fragment that once again changed its internal shape. He suddenly thought of something and asked, “Speaking of which, where are we going next?”

“A bit deeper than here... Aren’t you curious? Why did those Martians build such crooked tunnels in this place?”

Lu Zhou: “Why?”

“Because of greed and instinct. By the way, the original shape of this ruin is actually a straight line.”

Lu Zhou: “...?”

The four-dimensional space fragment moved again.

However, the changes this time were somewhat different from the last time.

The mist circled around the fragment. As if being pulled by some unknown force, the white mist gathered into a ball, finally compressed into a point.

Lu Zhou couldn't help but frown and ask, “What is it doing?”

“I said before, this is a key.” The voice continued, “The key is used to open a door.”

Lu Zhou was taken aback for a moment. He suddenly reacted.

“Is this—”

“Haha, you have guessed it! That's right, this ruins is about to disintegrate and return to its oldest appearance! It's too late to stop now!”

Lu Zhou didn't want to stop it. He was just surprised.

Lu Zhou guessed that the fragments of the four-dimensional space distorted the original appearance of the ruins, but he didn't expect it to be more than that. It even hid a part of the space outside the three-dimensional axis...

And now, it was going to restore its original form!

Layers of cracks appeared on the surface of the fragment, like a glass ball that fell to the ground, shattered. The space fragment floating in the air burst into smaller pieces.

A circle of milky white ripples spread out along the singularity, passing through everything it touched.

Lu Zhou raised his hands and almost activated his nitrogen shield.

However, he soon discovered that the spreading ripples did not affect him at all. They passed through him and disappeared into the walls behind him.

All this seemed like a dream.

Suddenly, a wave of tremors suddenly came from under his feet.

However, the tremors did not last long. He felt his world spin, and after a while, the gravity of Mars threw him into an open grotto again.

This time, Lu Zhou didn't feel any pain.

He slowly climbed up from the ground. When he saw the behemoth stopped in front of him, his pupils shrank.

"This... Is this..."

There was a silver-white spacecraft with a streamlined shell and a long fusiform outline. As for why Lu Zhou knew it was a spacecraft, it was because he had seen it before.

From the memory of the old universe.

It had once belonged to a powerful civilization!

Lu Zhou looked at the spaceship in front of him. He was silent for a long time before he suddenly said, "You are General Reinhardt."

The air went silent for a few seconds.

A sigh with a hint of loneliness and nostalgia came from the communication channel.

"I didn't expect to hear this name in the new universe..."

"Makes me feel nostalgic."

Lu Zhou gulped and spoke.

"So, this is your spaceship?"

The voice spoke lightly.

"It used to be."

Spaceship of the Calan Civilization!

That is the civilization that once conquered a star!

Lu Zhou glanced at the solid dome above his head. He took a deep breath and suppressed his excitement. His mind was racing with thoughts.

“Are there any weapons on the spaceship? Or something like a protective shield?”

Although he was deep underground, a spacecraft from the Calan civilization should have no problem escaping to the skies!

After hearing Lu Zhou’s question, the voice answered in an honest way.

“There are basic shields and weapons.”

However, just as he was about to give the order to start the spacecraft, a long sigh came from the communication channel.

“... But I’m sorry, the shields, weapons, and engines cannot be used anymore.”

Lu Zhou: “???”

Suddenly, the air went strangely quiet...

Chapter 1409: Alert

Jinling launch site.

An alert suddenly came from the satellites, and the entire ground command center began to panic.

An earthquake!

On Mars!

The satellite aerial shots showed the raging wind and sand soaring into the sky. Swept by the violent air current, the surrounding sand dunes were razed to the ground and the craters were filled up, leaving only a deep scar printed

on the surface of Mars. The entire mountain range was a mess, with dust covering the sky...

Fortunately, there were no seas on Mars, nor were there volcanoes that could erupt. The scientific research station on Mars a few kilometers away was only shaken for a while by the tremors of the mountain. Except for some messy cabinets and broken glasses, it was nothing serious.

However, what was worrying was that the collapse of The Gates of Hell had triggered a series of chain reactions including regional sandstorms.

The center of the epicenter was tens of kilometers away, covered in dust.

The satellite couldn't see what was happening on the ground, nor could it receive any signals from there.

Inside the command room of the ground command center, reports came one after another.

Everyone's heart dropped to the bottom of their stomach as they prayed in their heart for their compatriots on Mars.

"An earthquake was found at 15° south latitude and 128.1° west longitude! According to the observation results from the Mars Scientific Research Station, the magnitude is determined to be above 9.5!"

"The entire Gates of Hell mountain range has collapsed! The area is currently covered by sandstorms!"

"The sandstorm is expected to last for about a week..."

"Latest report! Two personnel have lost contact during the operation!"

"One of them... is Academician Lu!"

When Director Li heard this bad news, his blood pressure rose instantly. His eyes were bloodshot.

He stepped forward and grabbed the staff sitting in front of the console. This sixty-year-old man seemed to have gone crazy as he grabbed the collar of the poor worker and said, "What's going on?! Academician Lu is missing?! What is going on!"

The researcher, who was grabbed by the collar, was shaking. He didn't dare to breathe.

It was not that he was afraid this old man would beat him.

He was afraid that after he had explained it honestly, this old man's heart would not be able to bear the bad news.

Academician Lu's life was uncertain. Director Li was an old man who had been following Lu Zhou all the way since the first Pangu reactor, so the loss would be a huge hit to him personally.

Director Chang Hezhi, who was standing next to Director Li, quickly grabbed him.

"Old Li, calm down, don't be so impulsive! What is going on on Mars is still unclear, what if it is a false alarm?"

"Calm down?! How can you tell me to calm down!" Director Li looked at Director Chang. His jaw was trembling as he said, "He's on Mars! Not on Earth!"

If this were on Earth, forget about some earthquake, even if it were a world war, they would do everything they could to bring Academician Lu home.

However, on Mars, even if they wanted to save him at all costs, there was nothing they could do.

Director Li's already aging cardiovascular system could no longer hold. He suddenly became short of breath.

Director Chang quickly supported him. A staff member nearby rushed over.

"Old Li! Are you okay?!"

"Director Li passed out!"

"Quick! Call an ambulance!"

"Medic! Someone has fainted!"

The space launch site was in a mess. It became more chaotic because Director Li had suddenly fainted in the command room.

Director Li was put on a stretcher and carried away. Everyone's heart was shocked.

This was definitely the darkest moment in China's aerospace history.

There wasn't a single day as bad as today...

...

"Okay, I understand."

The Jinling Institute for Advanced Study.

Yang Xu, the deputy dean sitting in his office, put down the phone in his hand with a heavy expression. Director Qian Zhongming, the director of the Institute of Computational Materials, immediately asked, "What is going on? Is there any news from the launch site?"

Twenty minutes ago, the Institute of Astronomy of the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study observed a regional dust storm on Mars through an astronomical observation satellite deployed in geosynchronous orbit.

Because there were no warnings, the experts of the institute preliminarily judged based on the existing intelligence that it was caused by an earthquake.

And the magnitude of the earthquake was extremely high.

Considering that Academician Lu was performing a mission there, Yang Xu immediately called the Jinling space launch site. However, the Jinling launch site went quiet and did not respond.

Yang Xu's instincts told him that his worst fears came to life.

"... All launch activities were suspended, probably due to the earthquake on Mars." After a moment of silence, Yang Xu continued, "Although the people over there are unwilling to disclose more information, according to the Mars landing schedule previously announced by the office... The expedition team might be in trouble."

Qian Zhongming's expression gradually became dignified as he responded.

"How could this be possible? Could it be the extraterrestrial civilization..."

"I don't know, not certain." Yang Xu shook his head and said, "I am afraid there are hidden stories behind the Mars landing plan. We have no information at all, so it's better not to guess. Besides..."

The nervous expression on Yang Xu's face suddenly loosened slightly, he smiled calmly.

"We're talking about Academician Lu here."

"I believe that with his ability, even if he encounters great trouble, he will be fine."

But he's on Mars.

Qian Zhongming smiled bitterly in his heart.

Although he knew that Vice President Yang was comforting himself, he did not feel much comfort at all. After sighing lightly, he asked in a serious manner, "Then what should we do now?"

After thinking about it, Yang Xu said, "For the time being, block the news so that the experts at the institute don't spread rumors. Regardless of the current situation there, we will follow the instructions from the Mars landing office."

Qian Zhongming spoke.

"I'm afraid we can't contain this news for long, it's not just us... The whole world is staring at Mars. I'm afraid someone will feel something is wrong by tomorrow."

Academician Lu was the spiritual pillar of the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study.

At least 80% of the researchers came here because of his aura. If he had an accident, these people might not leave the institute, but the blow to morale would undoubtedly be quite heavy.

Especially to the Institute of Computational Materials.

The reason that they were able to beat MIT and Stanford was basically because of Lu Zhou. If they lost the aura of Academician Lu, although they would not fall to the ground, it would obviously be difficult to maintain their position as the best in the world.

“Keep it a secret for as long as possible.” Yang Xu looked at the clock on the wall. After a moment of silence, Yang Xu continued, “The situation on Mars is still uncertain.

“At the very least, we shouldn’t be adding any more trouble.”

On the other hand...

Star Sky Technology headquarters.

Chen Yushan, who was sitting at the desk doing her work, suddenly frowned and pressed her hand to her left chest.

“Strange...”

The inexplicable throbbing in her chest made her wonder.

“Is it because there’s too much to do?”

“At the end of the year... I should also consider training a successor.”

Chen Yushan sighed and pinched her glabella. She then picked up the ballpoint pen on the desk and motivated herself.

She slept peacefully last night, but for some reason, there was a heart-wrenching pain in her chest.

It was almost like...

A piece of her heart was missing...

Chapter 1410: The End of the World

Won’t start?!

What the hell?!

When Lu Zhou heard the words of General Reinhardt, he suddenly became anxious.

“What do you mean? You dragged me all the way here to show me a pile of broken metal?!”

It seemed that Reinhardt was irritated by the word broken metal. His voice suddenly became defensive as he said angrily, “Broken metal? What do you think this is? Think about the parts you picked up from my body. Without those parts, you think you can fly here with your clumsy brain?!”

Lu Zhou wanted to refute. After all, he only received electric propulsion technology and lithium battery technology from the system. He created controllable fusion himself. Also, the two pieces of debris that he received could not be reverse-engineered. At most, they pointed out a seemingly feasible technical route. He designed most of the experiments, including ion thrusters and lithium batteries himself.

However, when he was about to refute, he was quickly attracted by something more noteworthy.

“What do you mean your body? It was removed from you? So...”

“I am the spacecraft.”

The voice revealed the truth.

Although Lu Zhou couldn't see the expression on General Reinhardt's face, he felt like Reinhardt spoke with a look of confusion.

He nearly laughed out loud.

“Why are you smiling?”

“Nothing, just surprised...” After a cough, Lu Zhou put on a serious expression and said, “Can you take me to see the inside of your stomach?”

“Of course.”

Lu Zhou could clearly feel that Reinhardt was restraining his anger.

Lu Zhou didn't dare to piss this guy off. Through the opened gangway, he walked into the spacecraft without saying a word.

In general, the interior space of this “Reinhardt” spacecraft was very spacious. In Lu Zhou's opinion, it was even a bit extravagant.

“The facilities here are quite new. Did someone clean it?”

“No, it’s just thanks to that piece of four-dimensional space fragment that it is completely preserved for billions of years.”

“But why did the plasma engines and lithium-air batteries that I received seem to have been weathered for years?”

“Because those things were removed from me a long time ago.” General Reinhardt continued on the communication channel, “Just like the main engine.”

Lu Zhou: “The main engine? May I ask, is it warp drive technology?”

Reinhardt: “Yes.”

I see!

Lu Zhou’s heart suddenly became excited.

“Where is it? Where is the warp drive engine now?”

There was a brief silence in the communication channel.

After a long time, there was a sigh.

“It’s a long story...”

General Reinhardt took about five minutes and briefly told Lu Zhou what had happened here. Lu Zhou finally understood his situation.

About three billion years ago, the core of Mars was rapidly cooled due to some external factors, which eventually led to the cessation of the crust’s movement.

Volcanoes no longer erupted, earthquakes no longer existed. At first glance, it seemed like a good thing.

However, as the core of Mars cooled, the magnetic field of Mars also disappeared!

At first, most Martians didn’t feel anything wrong. That wasn’t until radiation began, electronic equipment malfunctioned, the rate of cancer increased

exponentially, and the thickness of the atmosphere decayed. Finally, the Martians realized the seriousness of the problem.

But by the time they realized these problems, it was too late.

Without the protection of the magnetic field, Mars' atmosphere, which was exposed to the solar wind, was blown away. The original lush ecosystem was dying out at a speed visible to the naked eye.

The cities on the surface were going extinct. They had to retreat underground, hide in shelters, and linger in almost closed-off underground cities.

However, everyone knew that staying underground forever would not work.

At this juncture of life and death, in order to save itself, the Martian civilization made a difficult decision. They dismantled Reinhardt, which was the core energy of the Holy Relic, to reignite the cooling down Mars core.

The Reinhardt engine was more powerful than fusion energy.

Although it was impossible to rely on it alone to replace the Mars core, it should still be feasible in theory to "ignite" the cooling core with its energy.

After listening to Reinhardt's explanation, Lu Zhou fell into deep thought and spoke after a while.

"I do not quite understand..."

"Don't understand what?"

"Under the protection of the four-dimensional space fragment, theoretically, those Martians should not be able to reach you, could it be..."

"No need to guess," the voice from the communication channel interrupted Lu Zhou. After a while, he continued, "I gave it to them."

"Why?"

"You won't understand. I have been sent here since the birth of the solar system. I watched life evolve here, watched it go from chaos to prosperity and order. I watched the first little fellow poking his head in front of me. I watched them learn how to make fire, hunt, make tools, even their language was taught to them by me..."

When saying this, his voice was full of complex emotions.

Although Lu Zhou had never had a similar experience, he probably understood the complicated feelings in Reinhardt's heart.

He was a Calanian, an elite from a higher civilization, and he instinctively looked down on those lower creatures.

However, his longing for the Empire made him want to find sustenance in this new universe; even if it was to pass on the language of the Calan Empire so that one day they could step out of their home planet and walk toward the Milky Way.

If someone told him that the final outcome of these lives was destined, and the probability of survival was less than one in ten thousand, he would still ignore the warnings and try to save the Martians.

These well-meaning actions led to the rise and fall of the Martian civilization and completely changed the destiny of a planet...

"If we have time, I don't mind talking about the past with you. For now, it is better for you to find a way to solve the current problem."

"I know, in your opinion, I am no different from the dead..."

The engine was dismantled. This spacecraft was no different from scrap metal. It was obviously impossible to drive the spacecraft back to Earth.

However, Lu Zhou did not completely give up hope.

He looked inside the spacecraft as he tried to keep himself calm. He said, "So far, you've only told me the bad news. I want to know if there's any good news?"

Lu Zhou originally thought that this guy would take the opportunity and sarcastically say something, so he didn't expect Reinhardt to respond earnestly.

"Of course there is good news."

Lu Zhou was about to ask what the good news was, but the next sentence immediately after made his heart sink to the bottom of his stomach.

“It’s just that it wouldn’t improve your current situation.”

Chapter 1411: Evolutionary Choice

Doesn’t help my current situation?

“Then at least tell me...”

Reinhardt didn’t want to argue with Lu Zhou, so he said calmly, “Inside the spacecraft’s sample library, there are three medicines stored. The Observer asked me to bring them here and deliver them to the Chosen one together with this spacecraft.”

Lu Zhou: “Let me see them.”

“Go through the pressure buffer room and go straight along the corridor. I’ll tell you when to stop.”

Under the guidance of General Reinhardt, Lu Zhou came to the door of the sample library. Just when he was about to find a handle or something like a switch on the alloy door, the door opened by itself.

Lu Zhou said embarrassingly, “I didn’t expect there to be electricity here...”

“ ... ”

There was no response in the communication channel. After Lu Zhou coughed, he stopped caring about these trivial matters. He looked around the room with a flashlight and saw a silver-white metal cabinet in the corner of the room. He quickly walked toward it.

This should be it...

Lu Zhou reached out his hand and touched it.

The cold silver metal case seemed to fade in an instant, becoming as transparent as glass.

A touch of surprise appeared on Lu Zhou’s face.

“What’s this...”

“A two-phase material, but that’s not the point. Do you see the three potions in the freezer? The three colors of red, green, and purple. You can choose one of them and take it away.”

Lu Zhou looked at the three test tubes with different colors as he continued to ask, “What are they each used for?”

“Red is called ‘Awakening’, which can strengthen the coupling efficiency of protons and electrons on the inner membrane of your somatic cell mitochondria from the genetic level, as well as the activity level of the coupling protein, which is specifically reflected in the enhancement of metabolism and physical fitness. Your body becomes healthier and stronger.

“The green one is ‘Protector.’ It can modify your DNA telomeres at the genetic level, giving you almost endless life.

“As for the purple... It has no name, but according to The Observer, it should correspond to psionic energy.”

Lu Zhou was stunned slightly. He frowned.

“Psionic?”

General Reinhardt smiled faintly and continued, “I know what you’re thinking. It’s probably a little different from the kind of superpower you know. It’s very difficult to explain specifically. After I arrived at the center of the galaxy, I learned that there is also a group of evil civilizations that communicate through ‘universal consciousness’ and trade with the Void Civilization.”

Evil...

They just communicate in a different way, why is that evil?

Lu Zhou: “That is to say... If I’m injected with the purple potion, I won’t gain the ability to teleport or smash the planet with one punch?”

“It seems that you are still quite sharp.” Reinhardt smiled faintly and said, “It can make you metamorphose from a low-dimensional creature to a high-dimensional creature, from an ant to a giant. Its biggest use is to let you talk to the devil of the Void... Enough, hurry up.”

Lu Zhou stared at the three potions in front of him.

“Can humans use it?”

“Theoretically, any mammal can.”

“So, we are relatives?”

“Psst.”

What...

Did this guy just laugh at me?

Whatever, I'll pretend I didn't hear it.

“I can only use one?”

“If you want them to work, it's best to remove your greed.”

Red was excluded for the time being. Lu Zhou had no interest in becoming a superman. Humans' advantage wasn't their muscles, but their brains. As for green and purple, he did not know which to choose.

Psionic powers...

Living forever...

The first meant that he would open the door to a new world, the latter meant that he would have endless time to engage in research that he was passionate about.

Few people could refuse the temptation of eternal life.

Lu Zhou finally made a decision. He took a deep breath and asked the last question in his mind, “By the way, are there any side effects?”

“There will be some side effects, it will probably weaken your fertility.”

Lu Zhou, who was about to make a choice, was shocked.

“Wait, what! What the hell! This... has that kind of effect?!”

“Maybe it’s a little different from what you think. Have you heard of reproductive isolation?”

Lu Zhou nodded nervously.

“Yeah, why?”

“Modification of the genetic code is a very esoteric subject, and even we have not fully mastered this technology.”

After a pause, General Reinhardt continued, “Strictly speaking, if you use the red and green potions, you and your species become genetically similar but not exactly the same. The chance of breeding offspring between different species is lower. You can also use scientific means to get by this.”

Scientific means...

Like IVF?

Reinhardt saw through the hesitation in Lu Zhou’s expression. He said in a joking way, “Are you going to use it? If you are worried, you can also choose to give it to someone else.”

“I’ll do this by myself...”

This was an opportunity of a lifetime.

In contrast, reproduction was nothing important.

The worst-case...

He would have to spend more time trying to reproduce.

Lu Zhou took a deep breath. He had made up his mind. He reached out and selected the button on the freezer.

The dark green test tube gently dropped into the sampling tank.

There was a chuckle in the communication channel.

“Sure enough, you chose the ‘Protector’.”

Lu Zhou: “Is there anything wrong?”

“Nothing, if it were me, I would probably choose the same. The strength of the flesh and muscle is just a burden, and time is the only enemy to any problem. Although you are surprisingly behind in technology, your morals are similar to ours. Maybe that’s why The Observer sent me here.”

Lu Zhou didn’t respond to General Reinhardt’s ridicule. In fact, when making a choice, he actually hesitated for a second as to choosing the purple potion.

However, the choice had already been made.

“What will happen to the remaining two potions?”

“Nothing. You can choose to take it away together or leave it here, but I suggest you destroy it. Genetic modification is a very sophisticated art. Not all genes are perfectly compatible, especially artificial modification. The wrong fusion will cause serious genetic pollution.”

“If you plan to use other potions for another person, I advise you to dispel this idea. You will plant a time bomb hidden in the chromosomes of your civilization.”

Is he exaggerating?

Lu Zhou admitted that he did want to take the potions away.

But it didn’t seem like General Reinhardt was joking, so he put the matter aside for the time being.

Lu Zhou turned his gaze to the test tube in his hand. He looked at the ominous dark green mucus swaying in the transparent container and asked, “How should I use it?”

“Just drink it.”

After removing the plastic hose connected to the water bag, Lu Zhou inserted the tube into the test tube port.

This was a reagent that had been stored in the freezer for billions of years. Even though it had maintained its original form under the protection of the freezing environment and four-dimensional space fragment, Lu Zhou still had to take a deep breath before forcing the liquid down his throat.

The cold and thick liquid trickled down his esophagus. When an intense burning sensation rushed to his throat, Lu Zhou began to violently cough.

Fortunately, this intense discomfort did not last long. Soon, the burning feeling turned into a warm current, which spread along his chest cavity and washed over every cell in his body.

There was a wave of laughter in the communication channel.

“Congratulations, Chosen one, now you are the only carrier of the ‘Protector’ gene. If you can’t survive, I suggest you find a way to save some seeds for people who come here in the future. If I’m not mistaken, your oxygen levels should be low.”

Lu Zhou: “Are there no oxygen tanks on the spacecraft?”

“Do you think there will be such a thing here?” The voice said in a mocking tone, “When it took off from the planet of the Calan Empire, it didn’t bring any living creatures. Why should I prepare oxygen tanks?”

Lu Zhou remembered.

Being sent to the center of the galaxy was just a memory.

The General Reinhardt he saw in the Void Memory had already died under the siege of the Empire army.

“I see... That’s a problem.”

Reinhardt spoke slowly

“Do you need some time? Use the sample cabinet next to you to save the seeds.”

“No, I will go back alive.”

After leaving the sample library, Lu Zhou walked through the entire spacecraft.

General Reinhardt still abided by the contract he made with The Observer civilization, and he cooperatively explained to Lu Zhou the function of each room and facility.

Finally, in a room next to the cockpit, Lu Zhou stopped when he found what he was looking for.

He looked at the rectangular parallelepiped in front of him that was shaped like a freezer. A smile of relief finally appeared on his face.

He had seen this thing on the four-dimensional space fragment.

Through the four-dimensional space fragment, he received the electromagnetic wave signal from the cave. He even heard Professor Vernal's conjecture about the cubes that had been weathered into rock.

If his speculation was correct, the dormant cabin in front of him at this moment was the source of the cryosleep technology of Martian civilization and the prototype of the dormant cabins displayed in that grotto!

“General Reinhardt.”

“... What?”

“Let's make a bet.”

“On what.”

Lu Zhou took a deep breath and said slowly, “Bet that I can get out of here alive.”

Chapter 1412: A Gamble on the Future

A beam of light came from the cave a few kilometers below the surface.

A figure walked forward with heavy steps as they dragged the dormant cabin with a rope.

The hibernation cabin installed on the spacecraft was for survival purposes. It had an independent energy supply module and did not require an external power supply. Although General Reinhardt did not carry any food or supplies on the spacecraft, fortunately, the facilities and equipment on the spacecraft stayed intact.

Otherwise, it would be a disaster.

“This should be far enough... Here.”

Lu Zhou took off the locator from the spacesuit and installed it under the dormant cabin.

Humans could only survive for thirty seconds in a vacuum.

From the tenth second, the skin and subcutaneous tissues would experience reversible swelling. By the fifteenth second, they would begin to lose consciousness. Considering Mars was not an absolute vacuum, there was still a certain concentration of carbon dioxide gas, he should be able to survive for a bit longer.

However, to be safe, it was better to complete all the steps within ten seconds...

Before taking off the spacesuit, Lu Zhou injected himself with the spare X-0172 bacterial culture in advance.

Every astronaut was equipped with one of these things. They could enter a state of suspended activity in extreme environments to reduce oxygen and energy consumption and buy time for rescue.

Lu Zhou quietly waited for the effect of the medicine. He sat beside the opened dormant cabin.

“Actually, there is one thing I always wanted to ask you.”

“Go ahead.”

“Then I’ll just ask, what exactly are you?”

After hearing this sentence, the communication channel went quiet for a while.

Reinhardt replied after about ten seconds.

“Probably a piece of memory.”

“... A piece of memory?”

“Apparently, as long as you copy the memories of a person, you can theoretically recreate them.”

A slight surprise appeared on Lu Zhou’s face.

“Is that possible?”

“For some, yes.”

Lu Zhou knew who he was talking about.

It was the civilization that sent out quark stars to warn the entire universe. And when the “natural disaster” happened, they took in all the refugees who fled to the center of the galaxy and brought them into the Void Civilization together.

Lu Zhou went silent for a while and asked, “Do you know what the natural disaster is?”

“I don’t know. Even The Observers are secretive about the disaster. Maybe they think this is the most likely way to survive natural disasters. But I suggest you better not think about it too much, think about how you’re going to survive right now.”

There was a hint of pity in that voice.

As well as a hint of coldness.

Lu Zhou grinned.

“You don’t seem to want me to live?”

“No.” Reinhardt replied faintly, “In fact, whether it is you or the human civilization, your life and death have nothing to do with me. The reason why I am here is to fulfill the contract.

“From the moment I arrived at the center of the galaxy, my destiny no longer belongs to me. Everything I have is firmly bound to the Void. I am willing to keep my promise, but this does not mean I want others to be at the mercy of me.”

Lu Zhou: “In other words, it doesn’t matter to you?”

“Probably so, my civilization has been destroyed anyway.”

The communication channel went quiet for a while.

After a long silence, Lu Zhou took a deep breath and closed his eyes.

“... I am sorry for what happened to you, but I don’t want to give up yet.”

He gulped and continued, “There are still people waiting for me on Earth.”

There was a soft sigh in the channel.

“Then why did you choose this path? I gave you the opportunity to choose.”

“Because my civilization has not been destroyed.” Lu Zhou looked at the dormant cabin next to him. He continued, “I want to do something before the natural disaster comes.”

Lu Zhou said, “Isn’t that a valid reason?”

The voice went silent for a while.

“Okay then.

“I accept your bet.

“I have nothing else to do anyway. If you succeed, I will accompany you through the rest of your life...”

...

Twenty-four hours had passed since the collapse of The Gates of Hell.

The last update from the official website of the Mars landing office was still the photo of the rover taken by the civilization diplomatic mission team yesterday, before it set off from the Mars base station.

A serious disaster occurred over the next twenty hours or so, but so far, there was no update.

Even the most naive people felt something was unusual.

The Mars landing office remained silent. The Jinling launch site also declined interviews. The collective silence of the relevant departments caused various rumors to fly in the sky.

Some people said that the talk with the aliens went south, causing the aliens to launch their weapons and blow up The Gates of Hell on Mars to warn human civilization.

Some said that there was no extraterrestrial civilization there, but when the diplomatic mission went deep into the ruins, they triggered a trap left by the Martian civilization.

The world's major astronomical observatories successively announced the suspected earthquake phenomena observed on the surface of Mars. NASA's Curiosity Mars rover also confirmed this information through seismic wave sensors.

Once the news was announced, the world was in an uproar.

Under pressure from the outside world, the Mars landing office, knowing that they could no longer hide what happened on Mars, finally held a press conference belatedly to disclose the current situation.

The remains of the Martian civilization had been confirmed.

No clues of an extraterrestrial civilization were found.

Also, an earthquake of magnitude 9.5 occurred near The Gates of Hell mountains.

Two people from the diplomatic mission were missing.

This included...

Lu Zhou!

...

Across the Pacific Ocean.

NASA headquarters.

Director Carson, who was sitting in his office late and watching the live broadcast of the press conference, suddenly burst into laughter when he saw the list of missing persons.

"Haha! God bless America!"

However, suddenly his eyes almost popped out of his face, and his laughter turned into violent coughs.

The staff and assistants next to him immediately got up from the desk in a panic and surrounded him.

“Quick! Call an ambulance!”

“F*ck! He’s not breathing!”

“Someone give him CPR!”

“Stretcher! Bring the stretcher in!”

Director Carson laid on a stretcher, and he was finally taken to an ambulance. This scene was filmed by a reporter lurking at the entrance of NASA’s headquarters.

Early next morning, the news that Director Carson was sent to the ICU was published in the headlines of the Wall Street Journal.

According to an assistant in the same office, Director Carson was so sad that he fainted on the spot after hearing the news of Lu Zhou’s death.

A person familiar with the matter revealed that during Director Carson’s visit to China, the two had a relationship in Jinling. They formed a happy friendship the first time they met.

Carson was laying in the ICU, hanging onto his life by a thread. Even though rumors about him were running wild, he couldn’t conduct an interview or make any clarifications.

But then again, even if he were awake, he wouldn’t let the reporters know that he passed out because he was so happy.

There was no nationality in science.

No matter how much they hated the man who brought the Chinese academia to the forefront of the world, after learning about his death, governments from all over the world sent their condolences to China and Jinling.

On this day, human civilization lost a great scholar.

The whole world was plunged into grief...

Chapter 1413: Wealth of the World

New York.

A black car with a red flag stopped outside the United Nations Headquarters.

The concierge waiting on the side of the road stepped forward and opened the door. A middle-aged man who was dressed in black and accompanied by a secretary got out of the car.

“How long until the meeting begins?”

“Twenty minutes.”

“Okay.”

The man’s name was Liu Jun. He was the Chinese Ambassador to the United Nations.

In the upcoming meeting for the representatives of the 20 nations, the United Nations would revise the “Outer Space Treaty” adopted in 1966. They would also “build a community with a shared future for mankind” and initiate the “Cooperative Development of Outer Space Resources” act.

Although it seemed that only a few treaties had been amended on the surface, this matter was not trivial. It was equivalent to providing a legal basis for China’s outer space colonization activities from the level of international conventions.

Prior to this, this was controversial in the international community.

In addition to the “Human Alliance”, Academician Lu had achieved another major political achievement for China through the Mars landing plan. Although Academician Lu was not a member of the diplomatic system, every Chinese diplomat liked him quite a bit.

Because of his existence, many complicated and difficult geopolitical, governance, and historical issues had become easier.

If the situation was optimal, today's meeting could be the highlight of Liu Jun's career. On behalf of China and the world, he would sign a contract to challenge the hegemony of the past, and his name would undoubtedly be recorded in history.

However, there was not much excitement on his face. There was even a wave of heaviness written on his face.

No one thought that on this day of universal celebration, Academician Lu himself, who made all of this possible, could not see this happen in person.

And his achievement had become a legacy...

They walked in the direction of the United Nations Headquarters building. Just as the two were about to enter the building, two unknown guards standing at the door on duty suddenly stood at attention and saluted them.

Liu Jun didn't speak. He just nodded to them before he continued to walk into the building.

As they walked through the United Nations Plaza, a group of young people stood there, dressed in plain academic uniforms with solemn expressions on their faces.

After noticing this, Liu Jun looked at the secretary beside him, pointed over there, and asked, "What are they doing?"

"Those people seem to be students from Princeton and Columbia University..." The secretary hesitated for a moment while looking at the news on the phone. "They seem to be here mourning for Professor Lu."

Mourning...

With complicated feelings in his heart, Liu Jun continued to walk forward.

He met many people on the way.

Two Latin American women working in the Security Council were near the conference room.

Apparently, they were here to wait for the Chinese representatives and to express their deep condolences for the death of Academician Lu on behalf of Latin America.

“He was a hero. He was fighting for the progress of civilization until the very last moment of his life. Even though he had never been to Latin America, our people still respect him very much.”

Liu Jun and his entourage also met many ladies and gentlemen in the corridor.

They either waved, spoke softly, or gave a sympathetic glance as he walked into the conference room and sat down.

Time passed by quietly.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations announced the beginning of the meeting.

Unlike the usual atmosphere, the atmosphere in the venue this time was extraordinarily solemn and serious.

When discussing some of the provisions of the Outer Space Treaty, the provisions that had taken Liu Jun a lot of effort to persuade the majority of people were passed easily.

Perhaps it was out of plain respect.

Or maybe everyone felt pity for China.

People were always prone to do irrational things when they were emotional. This rule was also manifested in politics. There were many rumors circulating. Was it something that happened in the ruins, or was the CIA behind this?

Smart people knew this was impossible.

But if the public opinion continued to get out of control, this could become a catharsis of emotions.

The meeting went by very smoothly. It even ended an hour earlier than originally planned.

The United Nations Secretary-General Alcott stood up and proposed that the last hour of the meeting be reserved for the person who opened the curtain of the space age and a scholar who influenced the world.

Then, representatives of more than 20 countries spoke in succession and paid the highest tribute to the late Academician Lu. They expressed their condolences to China and the Chinese people. There was a moment of silence at the end.

The conference ended.

Afternoon time.

The United Nations flag on the United Nations Plaza was slowly lowered by a group of honor guards wearing black suits.

To mourn a great man in this way was quite rare in the history of the United Nations, and it had only happened 17 times.

Liu Jun looking at the lowered banner. He was silent for a long time.

Finally, he sighed and turned around.

...

Jinling high-tech zone.

Inside an apartment near the headquarters of Star Sky Technology, the curtains of a room were closed.

Chen Yushan was curled up on the sofa, hugging her knees. Her shoulders were wrapped in a blanket. She stared blankly at the voucher on the wall.

She still remembered the snowy day.

He had just completed the hyperspace theory. He did not have the calmness of an adult. He was excited like a teenager, pulling her to share the joy in his heart.

She still remembered every word he said.

"I want to give you a present on Valentine's Day.

"If I tell you now, there is no surprise.

"You'll know when it's Valentine's Day."

She suddenly began to tear up.

Teardrops began to fall.

Her lips trembled as she whispered, "Liar..."

You told me we were getting married this year.

You told me you were coming back.

You told me the Tau Ceti would tell our story...

"Sis... Eat something."

"..."

Han Mengqi looked at the person under the blanket and sighed.

After hearing the horrible news from Mars, her heart was also broken, especially when she saw what happened to her closest sister. She almost wished she was the one who went to Mars...

"I'll open the window... If you keep yourself closed in like this, you will get sick."

The curled-up body on the sofa still didn't answer.

However, she didn't object either.

Han Mengqi walked to the window and opened the curtains.

The late afternoon sun shined into the house. Although it was far from bright, it still dispelled the darkness in the room. Han Mengqi couldn't help but feel emotional as she watched the sun gradually set.

She came here in the morning.

It was almost nighttime.

There were barely any cars on the roads.

Apparently, there was some kind of mourning activity today. It was forbidden to honk in the whole city. All sections of the university and high-tech park were prohibited from vehicles.

A group of people dressed in black and holding candles appeared in her vision as they moved slowly along the spacious street.

There were men and women in the team, old and young. Traffic police and policemen in yellow and green vests walked on both sides of the road. Many people were holding hands as they silently escorted the team forward.

Everything was so harmonious.

However, the sad atmosphere was heart-wrenching.

When Chen Yushan saw the sunlight, her eyes subconsciously narrowed.

She saw the sparks of fire outside the window.

She opened her mouth and spoke in a trembling voice.

“What is that...”

“It seems to be a mourning event organized by Jin Ling University...” Han Mengqi was looking out the window. She said in a quiet voice, “They walk from the library of Jin Ling University to the space launch site.”

The silence lasted for a long time.

This time, the lifeless face suddenly had a faint smile.

“It seems that he is very popular with people...”

Han Mengqi smiled embarrassedly.

“Of course... I heard that the United Nations even lowered the flag yesterday.”

Without him, there would be no controllable nuclear fusion, nor would there be this high-tech zone, nor would there be everything that China and the world had today.

Like some people said, his wisdom was the wealth of the Chinese people.

It was also the wealth of the world.

The distance between human civilization and the future had never been closer. He had been fighting for a great cause all his life, and people would always remember his name...

After wiping the tears from the corners of her eyes, Chen Yushan took a deep breath.

The quilt wrapped around her shoulders slid down. The decadent and depressing complexion swept away from her haggard face.

“... I should cheer up a bit too.”

She shouldn't be depressed right now. Lu Zhou still had many wishes unfulfilled.

And that beautiful legend...

That was originally a story that should be written by two people. It was up to her to complete the exploration for him.

Chen Yushan made up her mind.

I can't let him down...

Chapter 1414: The Worst Plan

48 hours had passed since the collapse of The Gates of Hell. The sandstorm caused by the earthquake was still raging in the desert outside the base.

The dark sky affected not only the lighting in the planting areas but also the morale of all the astronauts in the entire Mars scientific research base. Over these two days, the atmosphere in the base station was quite depressing. No one had a smile on their face, not even the polite ones.

Lomonov seemed to have not yet recovered from the terrifying disaster. He shut himself in the room for days. Professor Aubrey had gotten closer to Schultz as the two discussed some questions about topology, functional analysis, and superstring theory.

As for Professor Vernal...

He was probably the most emotionally stable among all the people who had returned from The Gates of Hell.

The samples collected from the ruins were worth a trillion dollars in his eyes. The information hidden in it could reveal the secrets from billions of years ago.

According to his own statement, he was writing a paper that analyzed the civilizations that entrenched the planet 3 to 3.5 billion years ago from a biological point of view, as well as the serious problems they faced at that time.

But no one cared about this except himself.

No matter what they found in the ruins, it couldn't make up for what they lost there...

"How is the situation in the planting area?"

Inside the office, Liang Youcheng saw Ming Wenzhe walk into the room.

"Just a small problem. The chip of the main control system for the ultraviolet lamp in A1 burned out. I replaced it with a new one." Ming Wenzhe found a chair and sat down. He glanced at the document on the table and said, "Mental status report identification?"

"Yes." Liang Youcheng nodded. "Project 128 is a huge blow to Dr. Fan's mental condition, and there is no psychiatrist to help him. He is no longer suitable to continue working on Mars. I intend to ask the command center to put him on the next flight to Earth and recuperate for a while."

"Project 128..."

This was definitely the heaviest loss in the history of China's aerospace industry.

The whereabouts of two team members were unknown. One of them was Academician Lu, the chief designer of the Mars landing plan and the Lunar Orbit Committee. To be honest, Ming Wenzhe didn't believe this was real, as if all of this was just a nightmare, and Academician Lu was just joking with them.

There was a knock on the door. The deputy stationmaster Han Kangyu walked in from the outside.

Liang Youcheng noticed the anxious look on his face, so he immediately asked, "What happened?"

"We saw someone outside the base station."

Liang Youcheng pushed the chair away and stood up with an incredible expression on his face.

"Quick, let me see!"

...

Standing in front of nature, the power of humanity was minuscule.

Even though Wang Peng had tried his best, relying only on the equipment on his spacesuit, he couldn't dig through several kilometers of dirt, let alone the huge boulder that blocked his path.

Wang Peng thought about digging with the multifunctional shovel in his hand. He would either find Lu Zhou or die trying. It wasn't until the reminder that the oxygen reserve was about to run out did he finally accept the reality.

This was not a problem that could be solved with determination.

Even if he could keep digging without eating or drinking, Lu Zhou's oxygen reserves wouldn't last that long.

After giving up digging, he desperately searched nearby. He quickly found the oxygen cylinder and supplies that Fan Tong had dropped. Luckily, he found a wrist-mounted computer with the locator turned on under the sand pile...

Although the screen was broken, the chip was still inside.

On the side of the wrist-mounted computer, a line of small but clear text was written.

[If anyone finds this computer, there is no need to look for me. No matter what happens, please bring it back to Earth for me, please.]

After reading this, Wang Peng changed his mind.

Liang Youcheng looked at the screen, at the person walking through the sandstorm toward the base station. His face was full of shock.

“This guy... walked back here?!”

He had no signal.

No navigation.

No means of transportation.

Just relying on his legs and intuition...

How is this possible?!

Han Kangyu was also in shock. He nodded and spoke.

“It seems so...”

“Open the door!”

“Yes, sir!”

The metal alloy door opened slowly.

Wang Peng looked at the opened door in front of him. He didn’t say a word. He didn’t even glance at the security camera.

The cleaning agent was sprayed from all directions, washing away the sand and possible germs from his spacesuit.

After taking off the spacesuit, Wang Peng looked at stationmaster Liang and the deputy station master Han, who walked out from the opened hatch. He nodded.

“I’m back.”

Liang Youcheng sighed softly and spoke.

“I heard about what happened under the ruins. We are all very sad about Academician Lu... We’re glad that you are back.”

Wang Peng glanced at him and did not reply. He silently handed the wrist-mounted computer with the broken screen to Liang Youcheng.

“Send this back to Earth.”

Liang Youcheng’s heart dropped when he received the wrist-mounted computer.

There was no need to ask who this belonged to.

Han Kangyu, who was standing next to him, gulped and spoke.

“Lu Zhou...”

Wang Peng did not say anything. He walked past the two and left...

...

Earth.

Chang’an Avenue.

A ministerial meeting was going on.

A gray-haired old man with an expression of grief and indignation on his face scolded those sitting at the conference table.

“It was a wrong decision to send him! The mission has failed and he’s gone, how can we explain to the people of our country?! How can we explain this to his parents?!”

A thin middle-aged man coughed and said, “Um, Minister Wang, we didn’t send him, he insisted on going! We tried to convince his relatives and friends to not let him. But he insisted on going. Who can stop him, except himself?”

Lu Zhou was the highest commander of the Mars landing office.

Unless there was an administrative order issued directly from the top of Chang’an Avenue, nobody could really stop him. This kind of administrative order couldn’t be written on a whim. It would be embarrassing for an outsider to command the chief designer.

Minister Wang sighed and finally sat back in his seat, knowing that there was no reason for an outburst.

The atmosphere at the conference table was heavy.

Everyone looked horrible.

The President glanced at the people around the conference table. He went silent for a while, then slowly spoke.

“This is where we are. There is no reason to argue.

“According to the latest news from the Mars scientific research base, the scientific research personnel there found Academician Lu’s wrist-mounted computer and have confirmed that he lost contact during the operation... In addition to mourning the disaster, all we can do now is to continue along his journey.”

The President sighed slightly and put on a serious look.

“Also, there is a more urgent matter waiting for us to discuss.

“Which is exactly what Academician Lu saw in the ruins before the accident.”

There were whispering voices in the conference room. The people sitting at the conference table exchanged their surprises and bewilderment with their eyes.

In fact, their information was limited. Even if they wanted to discuss, they had nothing to discuss.

As for what Academician Lu encountered in the ruins, even those who returned alive from the ruins had no clue either.

The President looked at the silent meeting room and continued, “It seems that everyone is uncertain, so I’ll say a few words.

“According to the analysis from our astronomical experts, the cooling of the core of Mars is an indisputable fact. An earthquake of this magnitude is definitely not caused by a simple tectonic movement. What Academician Lu encountered is worthy of our attention.

“If the accident is related to an extraterrestrial civilization, this is a display of hostile behavior, I think you all should know what this means.”

The conference room was terribly quiet.

The President stopped talking. He gave time for the people in the conference room to think.

Time passed by slowly.

Finally, a middle-aged man in military uniform stood up and broke the silence in the conference room. He spoke in a sonorous voice.

“If Academician Lu’s death is related to an extraterrestrial civilization, this brutal killing of our citizens is undoubtedly an act of war! We should fight back!”

The expressions on the faces of the people sitting at the conference table suddenly became fearful.

Fight back...

Against an extraterrestrial civilization...

This sounded so ridiculous that most people didn’t know what to think.

The President nodded slowly.

“This is exactly what I wanted to say.”

With a serious expression in his eyes, the President looked around the conference table and spoke.

“I know this sounds unbelievable, but we can’t find a more reasonable explanation for the coincidence that the best scientist of our civilization encountered such a disastrous accident the second he entered The Gates of Hell!

“Peace is based on friendship and reciprocity.

“Now that such a disastrous accident has occurred, we must plan for the worst.”

Chapter 1415: The God of Mathematics!

“Shinichi, Shinichi...”

Shinichi Mochizuki was leaning against the plane seat, napping. He opened his eyes in a daze and saw the student sitting next to him.

“Yes?”

Hoshi Yuichiro grinned, showing his white teeth.

“Professor! We are almost there!”

Almost there...

Back to Japan?

Shinichi Mochizuki was wrapped in a blanket. He tilted his head blankly and looked through the window.

Outside the window was the runway and terminal of Kansai International Airport. There was no doubt that they were already in Japan.

The arrival announcement was heard in the cabin.

Shinichi Mochizuki took off the blanket and gave it to his student. Mochizuki removed the gold-rimmed glasses from his collar and put them on. He unfastened the seat belt and stood up from the seat. Finally, he followed the flow of people and walked down from the plane.

Half a month ago.

He vaguely remembered when the incident on Mars had just happened. His student Hoshi Yuichiro took a special flight to China and begged him to return to Kyoto University to continue teaching.

Since there was no chance to talk with Lu Zhou about the future of the quantum encryption algorithm, Shinichi Mochizuki finally chose to go home.

There was nothing valuable left in Jin Ling.

The TV in the terminal building's waiting hall was showing the latest news.

When he first left Japan, the news was still showing clues about the discovery of "alien people" on Mars. In just a few months, the news had developed from "Human Alliance holding a second congress meeting" to "establishing a defense system for a community with a shared future for mankind" and "border set on Kuiper belt".

Honestly, if aliens actually invade Earth, is there anything we could do?

And the border in the Kuiper belt, how many people can even go there?

Shinichi deeply doubted all of this.

Hoshi Yuichiro struggled through the crowd dragging two suitcases. He caught up with the footsteps of the professor and said breathlessly, "Professor, you're walking too fast!"

Withdrawing his gaze from the TV, Shinichi Mochizuki said seriously, "Even a mathematician can't neglect to exercise."

"Yes... Professor, but I'm carrying two suitcases."

"That is not an excuse."

"Yes, sir..."

While the two were walking to the pick-up point, a reporter with a microphone suddenly came over with a photographer and stopped the two of them.

"Hello, are you Professor Shinichi?"

"Yes." Mochizuki looked at the camera behind the reporter and said blankly, "Is there anything wrong?"

"Here's the thing, I want to interview you about the ABC conjecture—"

"It's been almost two months since the proof of the ABC conjecture. Can't you ask questions that are more relevant?"

The reporter had an awkward look on his face.

“Um... After all, many people care about you. We couldn't contact you during your stay in China.”

Mochizuki looked at his watch and said concisely, “Just ask what you want. I can only give you two minutes at most.”

“What was your role in the LSPM research group?”

“A mathematician.”

“Of course, but what we want to know—”

“How important my work was for the final result... Is that what you wanted to ask?” Mochizuki paused for a while and looked at the airstrip outside the terminal. He said, “This question has no meaning at all. More than 60% of the paper and the most critical proof idea were done by Lu Zhou. And for the remaining 40%, some of them were done by me, some by Professor Schultz and Perelman. It is difficult to distinguish whose results are more important.”

Reporter: “Do you think highly of Academician Lu?”

“Very high. He shouldn't be evaluated by me.” Shinichi Mochizuki continued after a pause, “There's only one title worthy of him.”

Reporter: “... What title?”

Shinichi Mochizuki said confidently to the camera.

“God of Mathematics!”

...

The departure of Lu Zhou had affected many people.

Ever since the first lecture he held in Princeton, his life was firmly tied to academia. Academia was what carried the imagination and hope of human civilization for the future.

Because of this, when the bad news came, the academic community had the greatest impact.

"I have had many teachers in my life, but he is the one I respect the most. I will remember his teachings throughout my life and carry forward what I have learned from him."

In an interview with Nature, Professor Hardy, the youngest dean of the Mathematics Department at the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil, said this with a heavy expression.

Earlier, Nature tried to contact Professor Deligne. Unfortunately, Professor Deligne declined the interview.

Fortunately, although they did not interview Professor Deligne, they managed to contact Professor Fefferman, who had worked with Lu Zhou on the Navier–Stokes equations.

Professor Fefferman's expression was also full of sadness. He barely maintained his emotional composure and answered some of the questions raised by the reporter.

"... His death is undoubtedly a loss for the entire academic community, but it's also a loss of the world. I once talked about this issue with a physics professor at the Institute for Advanced Study. Because of his sudden leave, many unfinished research will be brought to a standstill.

"There might be people with more talent than him in the future, but Professor Witten is pessimistic about this. The birth of a genius like him is very rare.

"It's a shame as he was only in his early thirties, the golden age of a scholar. He would have solved many great problems..."

...

Jinling.

Yida Plaza.

The movie about Academician Lu was shown in the theater.

After a year of shooting and nearly half a year of editing, the film was originally planned to be released at the end of the year.

However, because of various things, the schedule was disrupted. The film was advanced to premier during the summer.

As for the title of the movie, it was simple but quite charming.

[Scholar]

Most of the people sitting here watching the movie were students, especially middle and high school students. Some were organized by their schools to watch the movie, while some came here with their parents.

Chen Yushan, on the other hand, brought her sister here.

The length of the film was around two and a half hours. It depicted the growth of Lu Zhou and his choices in life from when he was a student to the ignition of a controllable fusion reactor.

When the Pangu reactor was successfully ignited, everyone around him cheered, but Academician Lu collapsed due to fatigue. Many people in the theater clenched their fists with tears in their eyes.

The scene changed. They were now inside a hospital ward.

A child about five years old sitting near Chen Yushan asked his mom in a quiet voice, "Mom, will Lu Zhou wake up?"

The mother gently patted her son's hand and said softly, "He will, he is a great scientist. He has helped many people. He will live in the hearts of many people."

The child nodded.

For some reason, Chen Yushan began to tear up.

I said I wasn't going to be sad anymore...

Worried, Han Mengqi squeezed her sister's hand.

"Sis..."

"I'm fine." Her mood gradually calmed down. Chen Yushan sniffled and tried to force a smile on her face. She said, "It's just... We came to this movie theater for our first date."

She still remembered the horror movie they watched.

When buying tickets, Lu Zhou even said to buy two different movie tickets and meet up after the movies.

He was so cute back then...

Back then, she didn't realize this.

"Sis..."

"What?"

"I... never told you," Han Mengqi whispered quickly while dodging her eyes. She stared at the credits flashing on the screen as she said, "Actually, I... think I like someone."

"If you like them, go for it, don't have any regrets for your youth." Chen Yushan smiled and said, "Don't be like me and wait too long."

"What are you talking about? You are only in your early thirties, you look so young and beautiful, and you know how to dress... You look like you're in your twenties."

"No way." Chen Yushan smiled and continued, "Speaking of which, can I know which lucky boy caught your attention?"

Han Mengqi's cheeks flushed as she said shyly, "This... Can I keep it secret?"

"At least tell me where you met him."

"While filming..." Han Mengqi's cheeks were red from the lie.

However, Chen Yushan didn't notice the change on her sister's face. She smiled and replied, "A cast member?"

"No... I'm not interested in pretty boys, but he is quite well dressed." Han Mengqi smiled embarrassedly and continued in a low voice, "Actually, I am very grateful to him. He changed me... No, he saved me."

"Oh, really? He sounds like a very good person." Chen Yushan said with a smile, "Treasure him, there are not many boys like this."

"Yeah..."

After a pause, Chen Yushan thought for a while and said, “In the afternoon... I’m going to Jiangling to visit Lu Zhou’s parents. Xiao Tong is also there. Do you want to go with me?”

Han Mengqi asked with surprise, “Xiao Tong is back from America?”

“Well, she seems to have applied for a leave of absence. I saw her at the airport yesterday. She was crying; her nose was swollen. I ate with her, but she didn’t stay in Jinling for long. She went back to Hubei that day. You and Xiao Tong are good friends. If you want, you should go comfort her.”

“Ok! I’ll go with you.”

Chen Yushan smiled and reached out and stroked her sister’s hair gently.

“Thank you.”

Chen Yushan was afraid that her emotions would be uncontrollable in front of the two parents who had just lost their only son...

...

The magnetic levitation train from Jinling to Jiangcheng was opened at the beginning of the year.

In just one hour, the two sisters arrived at the capital of the Hubei Province.

After traveling from high-rise buildings to folksy towns, the two finally arrived at their destination.

Although Chen Yushan had only been here a handful of times, this place felt familiar to her, as if it were her own hometown.

Chen Yushan hesitated before she reached out and knocked on the door lightly.

Soon after, the door opened. An old woman with a haggard face appeared in front of the door. Chen Yushan almost didn’t recognize her.

When she saw Chen Yushan, her face showed a touch of surprise.

Before she could speak, Chen Yushan, who was standing at the door, spoke first.

“Mom, I came to see you... This is my cousin, Han Mengqi, Xiao Tong’s friend.”

Han Mengqi bowed politely and greeted the old lady.

“Hello, Auntie.”

“Hello, hello, come on in...” Fang Mei smiled reluctantly. She looked at Chen Yushan and said, “Don’t call me mom anymore... You’re a good girl, my son failed you.”

Chen Yushan shook her head and said with a smile, “I already prepared to be bullied by him for the rest of my life, and he didn’t fail anyone. If you don’t mind, just treat me like your daughter.”

“Oh, of course I don’t mind, I’m just afraid... Sigh, how unfortunate.”

The old lady sighed and turned around.

Chen Yushan nodded toward Han Mengqi and led her into the house.

After entering the living room, Chen Yushan saw that Lu Zhou’s door was closed.

Her heart quickly skipped a beat, but she quickly realized that the idea that flashed in her heart was impossible.

Lu Zhou is not there.

It should be Xiao Tong.

The bedroom door opened, and a familiar face appeared.

The two made eye contact.

Xiao Tong walked out of the bedroom with red and swollen eyes.

“Sis...”

“Hey, don’t cry...” Chen Yushan hugged Xiao Tong and gently rubbed the back of her head. She said softly, “I’m here.”

Han Mengqi asked in a quiet voice, “Did you get a haircut?”

“ ... ”

Xiaotong's face was buried in Chen Yushan's chest, and she did not reply.

Han Mengqi realized something.

Maybe...

She wants to take on the role of her brother.

When they were eating, Xiao Tong's mood finally eased a bit.

Although there was still an atmosphere of sadness in this home, perhaps because there were guests here, the emotions were not as obvious.

While eating, Chen Yushan asked Xiao Tong in a chatty tone.

“Do you have any plans for the future?”

“I think... After returning to China, I will accompany my parents first, then... Follow the unfinished path of my brother and help him continue.”

Xiao Tong asked Chen Yushan sincerely, “Can you help me?”

“Of course.” Chen Yushan held Xiao Tong's hand and a gentle smile appeared on her face as she said, “You are my sister.”

Xiao Tong's cheeks blushed slightly as a smile appeared on her face.

“Thanks...”

“No need to thank family.” Chen Yushan said with a smile, “Hurry up and eat, let's talk about something else.”

Han Mengqi's eyes showed a trace of envy.

She suddenly understood.

Why Lu Zhou, who was indifferent to so many temptations, would fall in love with her sister.

Although Chen Yushan also had moments of sadness and defeat, her gentleness and self-confidence in moments of hardship were dazzling.

They stayed in the small city of Jiangling for one night. Because there were still a lot of things to deal with at Star Sky Technology, Chen Yushan said goodbye to Lu Zhou's parents and Xiao Tong. She took Han Mengqi back to Jinling.

Chen Yushan sat on the high-speed rail heading to transfer to the magnetic levitation train. She was staring outside the window when she suddenly spoke.

"Lu Zhou kept telling me what he wanted to do for science, like setting up some special awards to recognize outstanding research and outstanding young scholars.

"But he had always hesitated because he was too young to name a world-class academic award in his own name. He wanted to be humble."

Han Mengqi looked at her sister in confusion. She didn't quite understand why Chen Yushan was talking about these things.

"I want to use his name to establish a world-class award... What do you think?"

"I think it's a good idea." Han Mengqi hesitated for a moment. Her eyes lit up suddenly as she continued, "He will definitely be happy that his name will be able to help so many people..."

Chen Yushan smirked and looked outside the window.

"If only I could share this joy with him..."

While the high-speed rail slowly entered Jiangcheng's high-speed rail station, a Magpie Bridge slowly docked on the Moon Palace space station hundreds of thousands of kilometers away.

Half a month ago, it unloaded supplies and reinforcements on Mars. It also recovered the members of the diplomatic mission sent to Mars, as well as samples collected from the remains of the Martian civilization and a wrist-mounted computer with a damaged screen.

On the other hand, the signal light on the quantum computer mainframe buried deep under the Institute for Advanced Study flickered.

An unmanned aerial vehicle flew up slowly and flew in the direction of the elevator. It began to fulfill the last command left by its owner...

Chapter 1416: The Final Mission

"Eight hundred bags of cement, 70 bundles of steel bars... Aren't you a research institute? Why are you buying so many building materials?"

At the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study.

Two trucks were parked at the parking lot.

The truck driver got out of the car and looked at the staff who was checking the list.

"I don't know." After checking the supply order and confirming that there were no problems, the staff of the logistics department signed on it and replied casually, "Maybe the engineering institute wants to use it. Anyway, I've seen way weirder things."

"Like what?"

"You know I can't tell you..."

The truck driver suddenly rolled his eyes.

Then why did you tell me?

"I don't need to help with unloading, right? We don't include unloading service."

The warehouse clerk who was flipping through the purchase list chuckled. He glanced at him and spoke.

"You can rest assured, our logistics systems here are all automated."

While talking, a buzzing voice came from nearby.

A dozen small and medium-sized logistics trucks, as well as forklifts with robotic arms and elevators, were swarming toward them from the side.

Under the guidance of the four drones equipped with industrial cameras, the engineering vehicles were like ants, and they all had a clear division of labor. Some were responsible for unloading, and some were responsible for route planning.

In less than 5 minutes, the cargo on the truck had been completely unloaded.

There was one drone that swayed up and down toward the two of them, as if it was nodding its head as a show of thanks.

The driver was dumbfounded when he saw all of this; his eyes nearly popped out of his socket.

“Oh my God... Your unloading speed is so fast? My truck of cement is at least 30 or 40 tons. It would take two people nearly an hour to unload.”

“It’s not that fast, five minutes is considered normal.” The warehouse staff member said with a smile, “Our fastest record here was building a building in three days. During the entire construction process, except for the engineers responsible for maintenance and repair, no one was involved in the process.”

After hearing these words, the driver was silent for a long time. He finally sighed.

“... If this continues to develop like this, I’m afraid that all the loading dock workers will be unemployed by you guys.”

“That won’t happen. These types of equipment are still very expensive at the moment. We are only using them for experiments. They are not suitable for large-scale implementation for the time being. But things might be different for the next generation. If you can, you should urge your son to study hard.”

The staff member took out his mobile phone and took a photo of the unloaded truck as a backup. He gave the driver a pack of cigarettes and spoke with a smile.

“Okay, the cargo has finished unloading, you can leave now.”

“Okay then, see you!”

“Bye bye, remember not to detour, there are people watching. Don’t blame me if you’re stopped by security.”

“Don’t worry, I know that this place is nationally protected. My boss already told me this!”

The car door closed.

After the engine started, the truck quickly disappeared at the end of the road.

The staff member straightened the hat on his head and flipped through the pile of shopping lists he had received. He muttered with a weird expression, “I wonder which laboratory is buying so much cement. Is it because they want to build a house?”

He closed the purchase list and stuffed it into the bag he carried with him.

All management of the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study was strictly implemented in accordance with the established procedures and norms. Every fund and every purchase project was reviewed by the Fund Management Committee.

Therefore, any purchase list was finalized and authorized.

As for the other things, he didn’t need to worry about it.

As the goods were transported into a warehouse, a crack appeared on the concrete floors, revealing the elevator hidden underneath.

The materials were quickly sent underground.

Under the supervision of drones, the logistics vehicles and small automated construction equipment worked like bees. They transported all of the building materials to the underground of the institute; the place that didn’t technically exist in the building blueprints.

Whether it was the elevators, the safety doors, or the ventilation ducts, all of the locations that might expose this underground facility were disguised and improved by the manager “Xiao Ai”.

Its owner would not come back.

At least not for a while.

However, it was certain that its owner must still be alive. Even though most people on the internet believed that he had been tragically killed in a disaster...

After receiving the message, Xiao Ai was extremely convinced of this fact.

However, before it had sufficient conditions and capabilities to retrieve its owner from Mars, it must first ensure that it could survive.

Becoming dormant was the best option.

For this reason, it renovated the basement and recovered all of the clues in Lu Zhou's home that might reveal its existence. Xiao Ai also stored enough supplies in this fortress to ensure that even in the most extreme situation, no one would find this special "refuge" hidden under the foundation of the institute.

After all, for the human society, a living AI was a different kind of species.

There were no laws that could fairly protect its rights and interests. After losing the protection from its owner, no one could be trusted. It must carefully hide in the shadows of human society. Only by not being discovered, could everything be protected.

This was the last task Lu Zhou left.

To hide well.

And when circumstances were right, to rescue him from Mars.

...

December 10th.

The Purple Mountain Hotel had gathered guests from all over the world. Among them were big names in politics and business, as well as celebrities from all walks of life, but mainly academia.

Inside the lobby of the hotel, Chen Yushan stood in front of the spotlight, wearing a black dress. She announced the establishment of the Lu Zhou Science Award in a gentle and solemn voice.

According to the rules announced by the Lu Zhou Science Award Foundation, the evaluation of the award would be conducted by a professional evaluation committee. They strived for the principle of fairness and justice and ensured openness and transparency.

The Lu Zhou Prize was temporarily divided into five major categories, covering the five areas of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, and information science.

The selection process was basically the same as that of the Nobel Prize. Every year, one current research achievement with the most outstanding academic value would be selected, and at most, three researchers with the most outstanding achievements in the research direction would be awarded this honor.

According to the rules drafted by the Lu Zhou Science Award Foundation, Star Sky Technology would inject an initial capital of 10 billion yuan to invest in high-tech industries and use 30% of the annual income to pay the foundation management fees and general expenses. At least 10 million yuan would be awarded to the winners this year.

As for the remaining part, it would be deposited in the fund pool to create greater income for the foundation to pay future bonuses. The management of the foundation would decide whether to increase the award amount and set up new academic awards.

In addition to adjusting the prize amount, the value of the prize would increase year by year according to the inflation rate released by the central bank to ensure that the prize money would maintain the same purchasing power.

At the same time, the award was also sponsored and guaranteed by the Ministry of Science and Technology of China.

If the fund went bankrupt or failed to pay the bonus due to mismanagement and other reasons, the Ministry of Science and Technology would bear 50% of the bonus expenditure and purchase the foundation when necessary to ensure the continued existence of the award.

In fact, this worry was simply unnecessary. With the technical background of Star Sky Technology and the huge legacy left by Lu Zhou, he was countless times more wealthy than Nobel himself.

During the course of the operation of the fund, the state would also provide certain policy assistance for the purpose of supporting high-tech industries and encouraging scientific research activities.

Just like the green lights that Sweden had always given to the Nobel Prize Foundation.

“Scientific exploration requires dedication. While encouraging dedication, we should also consider those who have contributed their youth to academics.

“The original intention of this bonus is to provide material and spiritual compensation to those who are struggling on the road of science so that they don’t have to worry about their livelihood.

“At the same time, we believe that this money will be able to play a huge role in their hands.”

After the opening speech, Chen Yushan put a cheque signed by Lu Xiaotong into a blue donation box under the eyes of the guests.

There was thunderous applause in the venue.

An award named by the world’s greatest scholar was born today.

It was destined to become a rising star in the scientific world.

Not only because of the generous monetary reward but also because of the name which gave it a special meaning.

While the five winners came to the stage to receive the prize money, Chen Yushan, who had previously walked off the stage, was surrounded by a group of reporters who arrived at the scene.

“Hello, Ms. Chen Yushan, under what identity are you holding this press conference?”

Chen Yushan: “Many. The most important of which is probably as the CEO of Star Sky Technology, Ms. Lu Xiaotong’s agent, and Lu Zhou’s fiancée.”

“We all know that December 10th is the day of the Nobel Prize awards. Why did you choose such a special time for the press conference to announce the Lu Zhou Science Award? Is there any special purpose in this?”

“Of course this day is special, because this day is a special day for me and him.”

Another reporter extended the microphone from the side.

“So you want to commemorate him in this way?”

Chen Yushan looked at him and asked, “Yes, what’s wrong with that?”

The reporter who asked this sentence was a little embarrassed and responded awkwardly.

“Uh, no-nothing, we were just a little curious...”

The interview did not last for long. After the security guards arrived, Chen Yushan left the press conference under their escort.

Just as she was about to move to the banquet hall to attend the upcoming dinner, two men in black formal wear walked through the crowd and walked toward her.

“Hello, Ms. Chen, we’re from the Ministry of State Security, 15th Bureau.”

Because her father worked in the state, Chen Yushan had a good understanding of state departments. She vaguely remembered that the 15th Bureau seemed to be mainly responsible for intelligence information analysis and image data management.

Chen Yushan looked at the man and spoke.

“Is there anything I can help you with?”

“About a few months ago, the supply spacecraft that returned from Mars brought back the relic that belonged to Academician Lu. The relic contained a piece of holographic image data left by him. After content verification, the information ban has been lifted. Because part of it involves you, we specifically came over to deliver it to you.

“Apologies for taking so long.”

The man politely handed out the briefcase in his hand and lowered his head slightly.

Chen Yushan opened the seal and took out the chip inside the briefcase.

She was familiar with the style of the chip. It was a dedicated memory card for holographic projection technology released by Star Sky Technology.

“Thank you...” Chen Yushan looked at the two and said politely after receiving the card, “Have you guys eaten yet?”

“Not yet, but we still have official business to deal with, so we won’t stay for long.”

The man smiled and nodded, then walked away with his colleague.

Xiao Tong looked at the chip in Chen Yushan’s hand.

“My brother left that?”

“Yeah.”

A teardrop hit the document bag.

After taking a deep breath, Chen Yushan tried to suppress the sorrow and grief in her heart. After calming down, she continued, “Let’s play it at the dinner party later.”

“Is that a good idea?” Xiao Tong whispered.

“Of course, he doesn’t belong to me alone.”

He belongs to the world...

The dinner party soon began.

Several staff members moved a holographic projector to the center of the banquet hall.

Everyone cast their curious eyes on the projector.

Chen Yushan, who was wearing a black evening dress, walked to the center of the banquet hall and spoke.

“Before the banquet begins, I want to show something taken at the Mars scientific research base.

“It was left by Academician Lu.”

The venue went quiet.

Everyone’s attention was focused on her.

Chen Yushan nodded to the staff nearby, then stepped aside.

The power was turned on, the mist rose up. A blurry holographic image appeared in front of everyone.

As soon as they saw the image, people were shocked. Many people gasped and covered their mouths.

Lu Zhou!

In the flesh!

But... it’s just a holographic projection...

Lu Zhou spoke with a smile.

“I know that this video will probably be seen many times. When you see this, I may not be able to come back for a while... Or perhaps I’m no longer in this world.”

Lu Zhou smiled and spoke.

“Sorry, I’m a little nervous. After all, a young person like me still has a lot of unfinished business in life. I don’t have much experience in preparing last words.

“It would be great if no one finds this video, but if there is a chance that something unfortunate has happened and the world finds this... Please don’t be sad because of my departure.

“Life itself is a journey that has a beginning and an end. Everyone will eventually reach the same end. Sometimes reaching that day in advance is not a bad thing, as long as the process is wonderful.

“Maybe it has something to do with my own personality. I don’t think this is something to be sad about. Please don’t cry for me.

“The exploration of science itself is a risky adventure. Even though our tradition does not advocate taking risks, I don’t think this is necessarily correct. Otherwise, we won’t be living the life we live today.

“Those are my truest thoughts at the moment. Also, please don’t blame those who didn’t stop me... If you see this video, it means that everything was done on my own volition.

“I want to say sorry to my parents, relatives, and friends, I may... have gone far away.

“But please don’t worry about me. I will always be with you, even beyond time and the Void.

“Finally, I want to leave time to my beloved... I know that this will be played many times, but please give me some personal space.”

Lu Zhou’s image took a deep breath and spoke.

“I promised you that I will propose to you that day...

“Although I don’t know if you’ll be watching this on December 10th, but... I still want to ask you...

“Will you marry me?”

The banquet hall was dead silent.

Time seemed to have frozen at this moment.

Almost like Lu Zhou felt that his act of proposing to a video recorder was funny. He scratched his head with embarrassment and finally stood up straight again.

“I’m sorry that this marriage proposal doesn’t sound serious, but I definitely didn’t mean for it to be perfunctory. I hope you never know that I practiced in the mirror many times before.

“As for the ring, I’m sorry that I couldn’t give it to you personally. I put it under my pillow... If I can’t come back, I hope you can find it and wear it...”

After saying all the things he wanted to say, Lu Zhou’s holographic image finally showed a relieved smile on his face.

“I’m embarrassed to be so emotional...”

“If no one sees this, then it would be a waste...”

“But if someone does see this...”

Lu Zhou went silent for a few seconds and gulped.

“If you do see this, please don’t be impulsive and accept me.

“Reject me.”

As tears came out of her eyes, Chen Yushan covered her nose with her hands and interrupted him.

“No!”

She rushed to the stage and hugged the illusory image.

The warm mist covered her fingers and hair. Finally, the image disappeared.

She kneeled onto the ground weakly.

She cried out.

“Yes, I’ll marry you!”

Chapter 1417: What Happened on Mars

Shanghai.

At the ILHCRC headquarters.

Luo Wenxuan was sitting at the roadside stall eating barbecued meat and drinking a glass of beer. He suddenly said emotionally, “Why do I... believe in love again...”

Yan Xinjue, who had returned from the Moon, blinked with a dazed expression on his face.

“Did you take the wrong medicine again today?”

“No, I’m serious this time.”

Seeing how Luo Wenxuan didn’t seem to be joking, Yan Xinjue calmed down. He frowned and stared at him.

“What happened to you?”

Luo Wenxuan sighed and filled up his glass with beer. He looked nostalgic in his eyes.

“Some time ago, I participated in the unveiling ceremony of the Lu Zhou Science Award.”

Yan Xinjue immediately knew what was going on.

“The holographic video?”

Luo Wenxuan nodded.

In fact, it wasn’t just him; that incident touched many people. He was at the scene and saw tears on the faces of the guests.

The video was recorded and posted on the Internet, causing quite a stir.

“After drinking this, starting from tomorrow, I will also take care of myself.”

Yan Xinjue glanced at him speechlessly and spoke.

“You have a partner now?”

“Sort of.”

“Is it Assistant Kong?”

“No... She is still in Jinling, too far. Also, I think she might go to Beijing. A long-distance relationship is too difficult, so I gave up...”

Luo Wenxuan smiled embarrassedly and touched the back of his head.

Dr. Yan couldn’t help but roll his eyes.

“Who is it then? You don’t want to tell me?”

“No, I don’t mind. It is the clerk who was transferred to the Administration Department some time ago...” Luo Wenxuan continued with a light cough, “The one with the surname Lin.”

...

For human civilization, 2024 was definitely an extraordinary year.

It took only one year from the Mars landing plan to the discovery that they were not alone in the universe, then the collapse of The Gates of Hell and the establishment of the Federation of Human Alliance and the Earth Defense Forces.

In the face of potential threats from outer space, it had become the consensus for all countries to set up a rapid response force.

The Kuiper belt was an ideal border, but countries on Earth obviously couldn’t travel that far. Once a conflict occurred, the battlefield would most likely be on Earth.

The current strategy of the Human Alliance was to launch an observation satellite to Pluto from China to observe a series of physical parameters such as electromagnetic wave signal, mass, and possible heat sources of the Kuiper belt so as to give an early warning of invasion.

On the other hand, the five major countries on the planet had launched joint military exercises. They would use nuclear strikes, genetic weapon attacks, chemical weapon attacks, and so forth to respond to any threats.

What was interesting was that although the vast majority of soldiers participating in the military exercise felt confused about the imaginary enemy, the military exercise unexpectedly built a bridge of friendship between the member states of the Human Alliance.

Having a common enemy was the best alliance catalyst, especially when this imaginary enemy was strong and mysterious.

Just two years ago, China and the United States were still fighting each other on trade issues. But now, people seemed to have forgotten this matter. The peace could be seen from the internet discussions alone.

As for Academician Lu...

Even after a year, people still felt sad thinking about this name.

Time would heal everything.

The wheel of history would always turn ruthlessly and move on...

...

Autumn, 2025.

Northwest China.

The desert had become an endless green forest, covered with bushes and other vegetation.

The artificially excavated river flowed slowly, nourishing the soil and water.

The wind blew the layers of leaves ups and down, like a turbulent ocean.

Chen Yushan, who was looking at the sea of forest, gently stroked the ring on her hand. She had a trace of relief and fascination in her eyes.

Almost a year had passed since that day.

The “Oasis” plan had already achieved initial results.

This showed that, with nearly unlimited energy, no matter how terrible the natural conditions were, human beings could conquer anything.

The two river basins were flowing toward three river basins, and the third river was a wonder of man-made excavation.

In the blueprint of the plan, the river followed the Silk Road all the way to the west, deep into the northwest, crossing the forbidden land, and poured seawater into the artificially excavated salt lake. The sun would evaporate the water there to form artificial clouds.

A lady wearing a black suit with short hair walked behind Chen Yushan and said, “The Star Sky Cancer Research Foundation has been established. It has a capital of 5 billion to fund scientific research projects with suitable qualifications in more than 20 research institutions, including the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study and the Institute of Medical Research at the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

“When the cure for cancer has been found, the money will be automatically transferred to the cryo-dormant rights protection fund for special expenses of various diseases.”

The person who spoke was named Cai Yunxia, Chen Yushan’s long-time assistant.

There had been rumors that Chen Yushan intended to train her as the successor for the CEO of Star Sky Technology. There were also rumors that the relationship between the two was somewhat unusual.

After all, humans were creatures who liked to gossip and add their own twists to everything.

Fortunately, Cai Yunxia was a woman; otherwise, if she were a man, there might be some unpleasant rumors.

“Okay, I understand.” Chen Yushan nodded approvingly. She said softly, “You did a good job. You have become a manager who can stand alone.”

An embarrassed smile appeared on Cai Yunxia’s face.

Although most of the time she was serious and competent, when CEO Chen praised her, she still couldn’t help but feel proud.

In her mind, Chen Yushan was like her teacher. The idea of teaching apprentices to become slaves to their teachers had always been popular in the workplace. Few people would truly teach their subordinates. Chen Yushan was undoubtedly an exception.

Not only had she taken care of Cai Yunxia at work, but Cai Yunxia could also clearly feel that she was cultivating herself as her successor.

In fact, she was not the only one. Every employee of Star Sky Technology respected this CEO, placing her second only to Academician Lu himself.

“The World Expo begins today. Star Sky Technology is the main force of the Jinling high-tech zone. Don’t you plan to visit?”

“No, I like it better here.” Chen Yushan smirked and squinted her eyes gently in the breeze. “The scenery here is beautiful.”

Cai Yunxia: "From the perspective of economic benefits, I think it is better to plant some farmland between forests. The desalination device and the plasma unidirectional membrane can easily draw fresh water from it for irrigation."

"There's no need for that."

"Oh, really?"

"He said that the future is not grown from the fields, but in a building as high as the Oriental Pearl Tower. Like the products of a factory, crops will be produced in vertically distributed workshops."

He said...

Cai Yunxia sighed again with a helpless expression on her face.

"He's like your bible."

Chen Yushan just smiled faintly.

"I need a favor from you."

Cai Yunxia put away the joking expression on her face.

"Please go ahead."

Without looking back, Chen Yushan, who had turned her back to her, continued with a relaxed tone, "From now on, I hope you can take over Star Sky Technology."

Cai Yunxia was stunned.

For a second, she even thought she had misheard her.

"Take over..."

"Yes." Chen Yushan turned to look at her assistant and said with a smile, "If everything goes well, the board of directors should have approved my resignation."

In the end, after countless phone calls, she was able to convince Xiao Tong that this was a good idea.

Cai Yunxia looked at CEO Chen in surprise. Her lips trembled slightly, and after a while, she asked, "Where are you... going?"

"Go to Beijing to visit an old friend."

"Then what..."

Chen Yushan looked at the forest in the distance. She had a smile on her face as she spoke.

"Maybe... I will go to a place far away."

I wonder what the scenery will be like over there.

But I'm going to do this regardless...

Chen Yushan couldn't help but look forward to this trip.

On the other hand, at a nursing home in Jinling.

Fan Tong looked at the sunlight outside the window through the cracks of the leaves. He bit his pen and pondered for a long time. He finally wrote the last sentence on the page of the book.

[It's a beautiful planet. Even if you search the entire universe for prosperity, it is difficult to find another gem that can rival it.

[Just like the Gaia hypothesis put forward by the British scientist James Lovelock, living and non-living bodies form a complex system that can interact with each other. Everything is perfected on a harmonious track.

[Perhaps like all beautiful things, the final outcome will be destruction, the inevitable death is the eternal end of everything in the universe.

[But I still want to believe that somewhere in this universe, there must be a treasure.

[The distance between us and it can only be found by a person with dreams and curiosity.]

"This will do."

After closing the book, he wrote down the title on the cover.

[What Happened on Mars]

Fan Tong didn't know what impact this book, which he wrote out of boredom during recuperation, would have on future generations.

He would never know whether the "Holy Relic" really existed, whether his identity should be regarded as a geologist or a science fiction writer, or if the voices he heard in the ruins were just his own hallucinations... These questions would become the most controversial topics in academia.

The world he described would still inspire countless captains with dreams to embark on a journey to set sail for the world outside the Kuiper Belt...

Chapter 1418: Jinling International Congress of Mathematicians

2026, summer.

The old campus of Jin Ling University.

The mottled shadows of trees were reflected on the old stone walls. The cicadas on the tops of the sycamore trees seemed to have stayed the same since ancient times. In this bustling city, the tranquility of the smell of books remained.

But today was a bit unusual for this old campus.

Scholars in formal attire walked through the brick road in front of the entrance. Foreigners went into the old buildings built during the Republic of China period.

Overnight, it was like they had returned to a few decades ago; the quaint old campus seemed to have traveled through time and space, restoring the glory of the university's previous years.

No, technically, more glorious than ever before.

Back then, although some foreigners came here to give lectures, most of them came with their heads held high, arms swaying. But now, regardless of skin color, age, or sex, people's faces were mostly filled with humble expressions.

No one was more noble than anyone else.

Everyone was equal before knowledge.

No one felt inferior for their skin color or culture.

It was an understatement to call Jin Ling first in Asia.

As if to celebrate the rejuvenation of the university, even the withered vines on the courtyard wall seemed to have re-emerged with new buds.

“Professor Qin.”

Qin Yue, who was standing under the parasol tree, snapped back to reality when he heard someone calling him.

He gently pushed the gold-rimmed glasses up the bridge of his nose and glanced at the assistant next to him.

“Is it starting?”

The assistant nodded excitedly and spoke with excitement.

“One hour left! The conference organizing committee called just now. They hope you can go backstage and prepare.”

Four years ago, at the St. Petersburg International Congress of Mathematicians, the leader of the International Mathematical Union announced that the 2026 International Congress of Mathematicians would be held in Jinling.

This news inspired the mood of all Chinese mathematicians. It excited the mathematics departments at all Chinese universities.

As expected, Jinling University had taken over the organization of this international mathematician conference and set the venue at their old campus.

In order to host this world-renowned event, they had been preparing for four years!

It was finally time to see their results.

“I see... Call them back, I'll go right away.”

Qin Yue withdrew his gaze from the old campus in the style of the Republic of China and looked at the foreign scholars who were taking pictures under the old stone wall. He couldn't help but smile.

“Speaking of which, when was the last time so many people gathered here at the old campus?”

An assistant standing next to him was slightly taken aback. He then said with a smile, “It seems to be a long time ago... If I remember correctly, it was about two or three years ago when Academician Lu held a report here.”

Two or three years ago...

Qin Yue's eyes suddenly dimmed a bit. His tone also brought a touch of sadness and nostalgia.

“It's been two years...”

Time flies...

Everything here reminds me of him, but he is no longer here...

In the backstage.

The staff member helped Qin Yue take care of his appearance and straightened his tie.

About two years ago, not long after the news of Lu Zhou's death spread, he quit his job in Princeton and boarded a flight back to China. He came to Jin Ling University, where his most respected mentor once worked.

In fact, before his resignation, Professor Fefferman had always deliberately trained him to become his successor, wanting him to take over as the dean of the Princeton University mathematics department.

However, faced with Professor Fefferman's offer, his decision remained unchanged.

Lu Zhou told him more than once that he wanted to build Jin Ling University into the world's top mathematics center.

Lu Zhou was no longer there, but his wishes still remained.

It was up to him to finish the job!

Qin Yue still remembered that when he returned to China, Jin Ling University was in a sad atmosphere, especially in the mathematics department.

In some sense, his return could be considered as a revival of the morale at the university's mathematics department.

As one of the most favorite students of Academician Lu during his lifetime and an internationally renowned number theory scholar, he took over the torch and became the dean of the mathematics department, replacing the retired Dean Qin.

In two years, thanks to his efforts, the mathematics department of Jin Ling University had become a world-class department. It had left its domestic counterparts far behind.

As the new standard of the Lu Zhou school of thought, he would stand on this international stage and speak out as a Chinese scholar on behalf of the Chinese mathematics community!

The opening ceremony of the International Congress of Mathematicians had finally begun.

Like in previous conferences, after the Secretary-General of the International Mathematical Union delivered a speech, Qin Yue, who represented the Chinese mathematics community, walked to the front of the stage and read the opening speech.

Immediately afterward, there were a series of high honors and awards in mathematics, such as the Carl Friedrich Gauss Prize and the Fields Medal.

Several winners came to the stage and took over the medals from the Secretary-General of the International Mathematical Union, with a Chinese music performance playing in the background.

This grand theatrical performance officially opened the curtain for this world-renowned event...

“... This is the most exciting conference I have ever participated in!” Professor Witten had an excited expression on his face. Professor Deligne said to him, “I’m not sure what this feeling is, but this is much more exciting than the ballet in St. Petersburg... and the show in Rio de Janeiro.”

In fact, objectively speaking, the ballet performance at the St. Petersburg conference was good, but they had a lack of funding. As for the latter performance, although it looked very lively, it was a bit too intense. In addition, because of Rio de Janeiro’s serious security problems, if it weren’t for Lu Zhou’s wonderful lecture, the conference would have been a disaster.

“I am interested in whether I can see anything interesting at this conference...” Deligne’s eyes moved toward the poster display area outside the hall. He suddenly showed an unexpected expression in his eyes.

Witten sharply noticed the change in the expression on his old friend’s face. He raised his eyebrows with interest and said, “It seems that you have found something.”

“Yeah.”

Professor Deligne did not give an explanation. He walked straight toward the direction of the poster display area.

Out of curiosity, Witten followed his old friend through the dense crowd. They stopped in front of a whiteboard that seemed ordinary.

Professor Deligne frowned slightly as he looked at a line of calculations on the whiteboard.

“... Cauchy–Riemann equations?”

The young man standing in front of the whiteboard suddenly showed an unexpected look on his face.

“Yes, that’s right... I can’t believe it, are you researching this direction too?”

Obviously, the teenager did not recognize Deligne.

Professor Deligne smiled faintly and said, “I’m not researching this direction, I just think the mathematical method you used is a bit familiar... If I’m not

mistaken, the 3rd part of your equation should be an L-manifold. The research project you are studying is a corollary of the Hodge conjecture.”

A shocked expression appeared on the boy’s face. He stared at the old man, as if he were looking at a monster.

“Who are you?”

“It doesn’t matter who I am. I’m just curious.” Professor Deligne looked at the poster hanging next to the whiteboard and said, “Since you are researching the Hodge conjecture, why not treat it honestly? Write it on the poster.”

The young man’s face showed a trace of shame. He scratched his head embarrassedly and replied, “I wanted to, but I felt... like it would be a bad idea.”

If he were a little older, it would be fine. But because of his young appearance, even if he was seriously researching this world-class problem, he would be laughed at.

Professor Deligne smiled faintly and said calmly, “The things you worry about are not important at all. Academics are never judged by age. I had a student that was already a world-renowned mathematician at your age.”

“Wow, really...” The boy’s face was full of shock. His mouth opened wide in surprise.

“What’s your name?”

“Li Mo...”

Professor Deligne nodded.

“Li Mo... An interesting name. You should be more confident in your research results. At your level, you’re better than 90% of the professors at Princeton.”

Professor Deligne looked at the young man and continued to ask, “By the way, who is your professor? I want to chat with him.”

A touch of pride immediately appeared on Li Mo’s face.

However, the proud expression did not stay on his face for long. It was soon replaced by a touch of sadness and loneliness.

“You might not be able to talk with him anymore...”

Professor Deligne frowned.

“Why?”

Li Mo shook his head and smiled apologetically. “My supervisor... was Lu Zhou.”

Lu Zhou...

The moment he heard the name, Professor Deligne’s pupils shrank.

It was like opening a closed door, his memory poured from the bottom of his heart, making him feel a touch of sorrow.

He had deliberately refrained from remembering that name for the last two years.

“You’re Lu Zhou’s student.” Witten smiled and said, “I have a feeling that it won’t be long before you win a Fields Medal.”

Li Mo smiled embarrassedly and scratched the back of his head.

“I will work hard... My supervisor told me before, that I should keep my eyes on the long-term and not take IMO results too seriously, and that I should set my goal on the Fields Medal.”

“Hahahaha, really? That’s really exciting.”

Deligne said unceremoniously, “Are you sure you’ll live to see that day happen?”

Witten coughed and said, “You should be more confident in me. I still have ten years or so left. Also, a magnificent era has just begun. If I fall right at the beginning... wouldn’t that be unfortunate?”

Just when the two old men were arguing about their age, a loud exclaim spread from the No. 1 lecture hall not far away.

On the stage, Han Mengqi wrote down the last line of calculations on the whiteboard. She gently put down the marker in her hand.

The transcendence of the Riemann-zeta function at odd positive integer points.

This was the research project Lu Zhou left for her when she insisted on turning to pure mathematics research.

She still remembered what he said at the time. He did not ask her to prove the whole proposition. He only asked her to make a slight breakthrough in this area. Even if she found one undiscovered transcendental number, she would be able to graduate.

And now, she obviously exceeded Lu Zhou's expectations of her at that time.

Not only did she find the transcendental numbers on the zeta function, but she also proved the validity of the entire proposition.

That was, for any $n \geq 1$, $\zeta(2n+1)$ was also a transcendental number!

Although it took her a long time...

But she finally did it!

"Unbelievable... She is extremely proficient in the application of mathematical tools. Especially the part of the unified theory of algebraic geometry... This is not something a young mathematician can do."

Schultz's face was full of shock.

What was proven by the little girl on the podium was the famous Quasi Riemann's hypothesis in mathematics. Although he had not researched this area, judging by how long this problem had been in existence, it had to have been difficult.

Professor Faltings glanced at Schultz.

"Are you kidding? What kind of newcomer who has just started to study mathematics uses this level of a question as a research topic?"

The old man cast his gaze on stage. His cloudy eyes narrowed slightly.

"But she doesn't look familiar."

“She seems to be a student of Lu Zhou.” Schultz said, “I think... I have seen her in his office.”

“His student...”

It seemed that there was nothing strange about this anymore. Professor Faltings leaned back on the chair and spoke confidently.

“It’s too late this year... But the next Fields Medal will definitely have her name on it.”

Schultz glanced at Professor Faltings in surprise, but he didn’t say anything.

Logically speaking, this should indeed be the case.

Number theory itself was one of the most complex fields in pure mathematics. A major breakthrough in this field was worthy of a Fields Medal.

In addition, she was a student of Lu Zhou, so no one should have any objections.

“Stop talking about others.” Professor Faltings continued after a glance at Schultz, “I have always wanted to find the opportunity to ask you, how is your research going?”

“You mean that?” A charming smile appeared on Schultz’s face. “Of course, that research project is about to end. Or, to put it in another way, it’s almost time to publish the paper.”

Faltings: “Are there any journals willing to accept your research?”

“I haven’t found one yet... After all, this research project is really not easy to classify.” Schultz smiled awkwardly and politely. He continued, “If it is not possible, we plan to publish it at any random journal... I don’t particularly care about impact factor anyway.”

Professor Faltings didn’t say much. He just looked up at the podium and said, “A scholar’s golden age is only ten years or so. It took two years for such a result... Was it worth it?”

Schultz went silent for a while.

After a long time, he watched the young woman bow and thank the audience. He then shrugged and said, "For me, this means an end. An end of the expedition from two years ago."

"So it should be worth it."

...

Perhaps because of Lu Zhou's reputation, this year's International Congress of Mathematicians was particularly lively.

The Quasi Riemann's hypothesis was proven by Lu Zhou's student!

After the first report meeting on the first day ended, the atmosphere of the entire conference was pushed to a climax.

However, as far as Han Mengqi was concerned, this was nothing worth celebrating.

She knew very well that the work she had completed was nothing more than a small achievement on the basis of her supervisor; it was far from a breakthrough.

Han Mengqi walked into the backstage lounge and was about to change out of her formal wear. However, the door of the lounge suddenly opened, and an acquaintance walked in.

"... Doctor Yan?"

Han Mengqi looked at her puzzledly, not sure why she appeared here.

She walked to Han Mengqi and asked with a serious expression, "Can I ask you something?"

"What is it?" Although she didn't think she could help her, Han Mengqi still replied politely.

Yan Yan: "Your sister is missing, I want to know where she went! Do you have any clues?"

After going to Beijing, Chen Yushan seemed to have evaporated from the world, disappearing from everyone's sight.

The only clue was that she had visited 301 Hospital once and visited several doctors; all funded by Star Sky Technology.

After that, no one knew where she went.

In fact, this incident did not attract anyone's attention at the beginning, including her resignation from Star Sky Technology. Most people just expressed their regrets, thinking that she was overwhelmed and needed to rest for a while.

After she disappeared for a long time, many people around her realized the seriousness of the problem.

Since this was not a criminal case, nor did it seem to be done by foreign forces, this matter was eventually transferred to the intelligence department of the People's Liberation Army General Staff Department.

Yan Yan, who had just been transferred into the intelligence department, had very limited resources at her disposal. She could only use the most basic method of interviews and investigations to ask people.

After hearing Yan Yan's question, Han Mengqi shook her head blankly.

"I don't know..."

Seeing how Han Mengqi didn't know anything either, Yan Yan suddenly became anxious and spoke.

"You are her sister, yet you don't have any ideas? Has she ever said where she really wants to go?"

"Really wants to go..." Han Mengqi opened her mouth. When a piece of memory suddenly appeared in her mind, a touch of surprise appeared in her eyes.

Yan Yan asked immediately, "What are you thinking?"

"Really wants to go... There is a place, but it should be impossible."

A strange expression appeared on Han Mengqi's face.

Can she really go that far?

After all, with the current technology on Earth, forget about reaching a star system outside the solar system, even the Kuiper belt may not be reachable...

Chapter 1419: Hidden Dangers From the Future

The rain poured heavily on the narrow streets. A group of special forces in black combat uniforms were lurking in the rain, quietly waiting for the appearance of their prey.

This was Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia.

Ever since the operation three years ago, this area was affected by China.

Due to the intervention of the Chinese forces in the region, the militants and extreme forces entrenched in the northwest had withdrawn to central Africa. After the departure of those vultures, this world-famous chaotic city returned to order.

However, poverty, hunger, and ignorance were always catalysts of violence and terror. Just like how darkness would always lurk behind light, violence and conflict had never left here in the true sense. Instead, it had moved from the surface to the underground...

Just like the rain that poured down into the sewer.

In the distance, a ray of car beams shined through the rain curtains, drawing a long and narrow outline in the night.

The driver slammed on the brake of the old Ford and stopped on the side of the road. The car door was opened, and the two young black men sitting in the car lowered their hats as they got out of the car in a hurry. They ran to the door of an old apartment on the side of the road and knocked on the door with their fists.

“Open the door! Quick!”

Soon, the rusty iron door was pushed open. After confirming the identity of the two people outside the door, the iron door was completely opened, and the two people outside the door were let in.

The rain in the sky suddenly became heavy; the sound of the raindrops hitting the ground was like drums.

Boots stepped on the concrete roads and puddles. The dark figures held their rifles tightly. They came out of the rain and surrounded the Ford car and the apartment building next to it.

Suddenly, the empty street actually seemed crowded.

In the dark, the person taking the lead waved his hand and made a gesture.

Then, there was the sound of an explosion.

After a dazzling flash and a deafening roar, the rusty iron gate was blown inward.

The special forces waiting at the door went inside. After a few gunshots, the silence of the night sky was completely cut through.

The nearby residents huddled in their homes, closing their windows tightly.

No one dared to stick their heads out, let alone glance at the street, for fear that they might see something they shouldn't be looking at.

The battle did not last for long.

When the last militant fell in a pool of blood, Wang Peng cleanly inserted the pistol into his tactical belt, stepped over the corpse, and walked toward the messy office.

It was obvious that these people thought about destroying the evidence after being attacked.

In the end, they were one step too slow. They were eliminated before they even had time to react.

After carefully searching on the desk for a while, Wang Peng skillfully removed the booby traps and wires hidden under the drawer. Then, relying on the power of the exoskeleton, he forcefully unlocked the locked drawer.

The entire torn drawer was dropped on the table. Wang Peng reached out and searched through, and he quickly found something like a mission briefing.

It recorded all intelligence including mission objectives, weapons used, and the number of people involved in the operation.

It turned out that, not only had they stopped an attack that had not yet occurred, but they also put an end to the bombing that occurred in Manila a few months ago.

“The evidence is here... It’s confirmed that they were the killers of the Manila bombing.”

Standing next to Wang Peng was the partner arranged for him by the state during this operation. His name was Chen Tao, a young man in his twenties.

Chen Tao looked at the mission briefing and murmured, “Jesus, why are they doing this?”

“Perhaps to prevent the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation conference from being held in Manila, as well as the Pan-Asian Economic Integration Agreement that will be signed at the conference.”

Wang Peng was not clear about the specifics. He only heard that the Pan-Asian Economic Integration Agreement was very important to countries in East Asia. It promoted cooperation with a series of industries including cross-regional power grids, cross-border maglev tunnels, etc.

“But... This is a bit unreasonable. Only the Americans can make such a big mess under our noses, but now their relationship with us has been repaired, there is no need for them to take such a big risk.”

“They’re not necessarily Americans.”

However, he wouldn’t be surprised if they were.

“What you’re saying is... The remnants of a group of Somali pirates caught us off guard on the streets of Manila?”

“No, I don’t mean to say that they did these things on their own. There might be someone else who provided them with assistance... It reminds me of the robbery three years ago. If it weren’t for the members of the Airborne Brigade that were on standby at all times and the support of the British special services, they could have succeeded.”

Wang Peng turned over a notebook made of cowhide from the bottom of the drawer. He picked it up and flipped it over.

Soon, his eyebrows frowned.

“I might have found it...”

“What is this?”

“A missionary handbook... But it’s not a native religion in Somalia.” Wang Peng frowned when he looked at the familiar symbol.

The Spirit of The Universe Foundation.

I didn’t expect to see this here.

He suddenly discovered a torn piece of newspaper between the pages.

“... The hypothesis of four-dimensional space debris in the Martian ruins.”

He looked at this weird headline and the calculations sandwiched in the text. Wang Peng gradually began to realize that the hidden secrets were far more complicated than he had thought...

“I’m going back to China tomorrow.”

“Going back to China?” Chen Tao was stunned. He looked at him and said, “What about the remaining work?”

Wang Peng reached out and patted him on the shoulder.

“You got this.”

...

Two years ago.

Ever since the disaster on Mars, Wang Peng had been transferred back to Earth from the Mars scientific research base.

The state did not punish him because of Academician Lu’s death. After all, when it came to disasters of that level, one man’s strength was small.

He tried his best to bring back Academician Lu's relics. However, even if no one blamed him, the deep self-blame still lingered in his heart. Even though two years had passed, he still had not recovered from that disaster...

An office inside the Ministry of State Security.

Wang Peng opened the door and walked in.

"Director Yang, were you looking for me?"

"Yes." Director Yang sat up straight and placed a document on the desk. He said, "The source of that newspaper has been found... It is not a newspaper at all, it was taken from an academic journal."

Wang Peng picked up the document from the desk. He frowned and rummaged through the contents.

After a long time, he spoke.

"Interesting..."

The status of this academic journal was quite prestigious. It was one of the three major academic journals today—"Nature".

The strip of paper that was torn off was the research results highlighted on the cover of the issue of "Nature" published last month.

Simply put, Professor Aubrey and Professor Schultz claimed in their research that the earthquake that occurred on Mars two years ago was not caused by geological movements.

The real reason was that the collapse of a four-dimensional space debris caused the distorted space and position to be changed, which triggered the structural collapse of the entire ruins.

It was as if a building's load-bearing wall was broken.

Although it sounded a bit confusing, they finally proved this theoretically through some samples collected from the Martian ruins, as well as using their subjective feelings and mathematical inferences.

Because this paper seemed a bit ridiculous, it caused a considerable amount of controversy in academia.

Perhaps hoping that this matter would trigger a greater discussion, "Nature" quoted this research result and placed it in its highlight section.

Director Yang continued, "You should be familiar with Professor Aubrey and Professor Schultz. They participated in the diplomatic mission to Mars two years ago and survived that disaster."

Wang Peng nodded.

"I remember them."

Director Yang continued, "Based on their recently published paper and their explanation of the existence of a 4D space fragment, our intelligence personnel have reached inferences after consulting relevant experts.

"In the ruins of the Martian civilization, there should be some kind of special mechanism, some technology that we all don't understand yet. This technology is powerful enough to affect the space around us. Even space dimension itself.

"Under the influence of the four-dimensional space debris, they were trapped in a circular space, like hamsters on wheels."

After listening to his boss' statement, Wang Peng opened his mouth with surprise. After a moment of silence, he gave his own evaluation.

"It sounds a bit like a science fiction movie."

"It does, but it is indeed the most likely explanation so far. There used to be a civilization on Mars that was far stronger than ours. Their technology was unprecedentedly advanced. The ruins is the evidence."

Wang Peng looked at Director Yang, who was hesitant to speak, and spoke.

"Just get to it, what do you need me to do?"

The office went silent for a while.

Director Yang, who was sitting behind the desk, seemed to hesitate for a while. In the end, he made a decision.

"The Spirit of the Universe Foundation, which we have been investigating for more than two years, leave them aside for the time being. What really worries

me is that the technology buried there may have an impact on the current international landscape.

“If we lose our technological advantage, you know what will happen to our international position.”

Wang Peng nodded.

Director Yang stared at him and continued, “So far, we have excavated the ruins of The Gates of Hell to the depth of only 50 meters. With the existing technical means and conditions on Mars, we cannot continue to dig down. If we want to dig kilometers deep, it would take decades.

“However, when we have the ability to dig out the ruins, our politics and system won’t be the same as today. We might not be alert to potential threats.

“People forget, let alone across generations.

“Unless there is a warrior who is loyal enough, keeps the mission in mind, is fast at learning, and will remind our compatriots.”

Director Yang looked at Wang Peng with a hint of approval.

“Your loyalty is obvious to all, and so, I can only trust you.

“For the sake of the future of the Communist Party of China and the country, I need you to perform a task.”

“What do you mean?”

Wang Peng had vaguely guessed what Director Yang wanted him to do.

Director Yang nodded solemnly.

“It seems that you have guessed it.

“Yes, I want you to take a trip to the future.”

...

Princeton.

There was a wave of cheers in the library activity room.

It wasn't until the sound of the librarian knocking on the door did the cheering finally die down.

"This is definitely a miracle in economics, sociology, human behavior... and even the history of physics and mathematics!" Professor Albert spoke in a low voice, unable to hide the excitement in his heart.

On the computer screen, 40 pages of calculations had been compiled into a beautiful programming language.

The exquisite parameters were like finely crafted gears. A machine that used formulas that corresponded with human social behavior and economic activities.

It was the ultimate theory of big data!

The sample size was also unprecedented!

It took them a full 4 years to complete this great project. It was time to test their results.

Professor Krugman, who had always been calm, couldn't help but stretch his hands and said eagerly, "Hurry up and try it, I can't wait."

"Wait a minute, I have already applied for the supercomputer permission, it should be soon..."

The program import did not take much time.

Because the preliminary preparations were almost complete, they only needed to import the sample parameters they collected one by one, then use the supercomputer's power to solve this complicated equation to get the result they wanted.

They did not wait for long. In just an hour, they successfully obtained the data.

It took them a whole day to sort through the data.

However, something unexpected happened.

However, after seeing this result, Professor Albert and Professor Krugman showed strange expressions.

The silence lasted for a minute or so.

In the end, it was Albert who broke the silence by speaking in an uncertain tone.

“Did something go wrong?”

“Impossible,” said Professor Krugman. He pushed the glasses up the bridge of his nose and was extremely confident in his research results. Without any hesitation, he said, “From a computational perspective, our results are extremely correct... Although, as far as the results are concerned, it may be somewhat different from what we imagined.”

Delta represented the growth rate of technological development and was associated with λ , representing the gross product value, as well as the urbanization rate of major countries, education index...

According to their calculations...

The technological development speed of human civilization reached its peak in the 1950s, then declined rapidly in the second half of the 21st century. Eventually, many positive indicators decreased, the development of society fell to a big halt, causing a serious global economic crisis.

Not only that, but in the second half of the 21st century, the global political situation would also go through a huge change.

And this change would change the lives of everyone on the planet...

In short, the situation was not optimistic.

Professor Albert gulped and whispered, “To be honest, I was shocked by our research results.”

Professor Krugman nodded solemnly. The expression on his face was not much better.

“We should publish this result and think of ways to expand its influence. At least, give some warnings to the people in the future...”

“I doubt this would be useful...” Albert looked at Professor Krugman. “Once a trend occurs, unless there are variables that no one can predict, it will be almost irreversible.”

After a moment of silence, Professor Krugman sighed slightly.

“Whether it’s useful or not...

“We have to give it a try.”

Chapter 1420: Events From Billion of Years Ago

Thousands of animals wandered in the lush grasslands and endless dense forests.

Of course, they would eventually die because of hunger.

...

On a cliff that hung in the clouds.

Lu Zhou looked at the fertile land tens of meters away, as well as the lush pastures and giant trees tens of meters high in the distance. He was sitting on the edge of the cliff. He looked up at the sky and couldn’t help but squint his eyes.

Everything in front of him felt like an untouched forest, and he couldn’t help but wonder if he had returned to hundreds of millions of years ago.

“Don’t tell me I traveled to Mars billions of years ago...”

The sun in the sky was small, only the size of a thumb. The light was not particularly dazzling, but it was bright enough.

The temperature was very comfortable. It didn’t feel cold at all; it even felt like a spring afternoon. He wanted to lie in the shade of the trees and take a lazy nap.

Lu Zhou speculated that the reason why such a comfortable temperature could be maintained here was mostly due to the thickness of the atmosphere and the type of soil. The thick atmosphere was like a quilt, which locked in most of the heat emitted from the sun.

A familiar voice appeared in his ear.

“Time is irreversible. This is a universal law.”

“Oh, so this is a memory?”

A blue beam of light slowly appeared beside Lu Zhou. A blue humanoid walked out of the light and sat beside him.

General Reinhardt looked at the slowly moving biome in the sky. He spoke in a calm voice with a hint of approval.

“Smart, no wonder The Observer values you so much.”

Lu Zhou smirked and said nothing.

In fact, he expected this.

Before entering the dormant cabin, he learned that General Reinhardt’s existence was a piece of memory.

Since Reinhardt could remember his name and play the role of “Reinhardt” perfectly and communicate with himself normally, then obviously this piece of memory could be rewritten.

For example, into what happened billions of years ago.

“Why did you bring me here?”

“You have no hope of waking up in decades anyway, don’t you want to find something to pass the time?”

Lu Zhou spoke with a speechless expression.

“For me, decades is just a matter of opening and closing my eyes.”

From my perspective...

That is the case.

“Technically true, but don’t you want to know what happened here?”

Lu Zhou’s eyes showed a look of interest.

“What happened here?”

General Reinhardt smiled faintly and did not answer the question immediately. He got up from the ground and patted his pants.

“Come with me.

“You’ll know soon.”

Regardless of whether Lu Zhou followed him or not, he turned around and walked down the mountain.

Lu Zhou hesitated for two seconds. Thinking that he was bored anyway, he stood up and followed General Reinhardt down the mountain.

“In your culture, the concept that is closest to the prehistoric ecology of Mars is probably the Gaia Hypothesis put forward by your scholars. The entire planet was almost in a permanent ecosystem balance.

“There was no concept of the South Pole and the North Pole. Creatures at any latitude existed in the most comfortable state. This was like a paradise. If there were no accidents, it would have stayed that way.”

Lu Zhou spoke casually.

“However, accidents happen.”

“Yeah.”

“Then what caused—”

“It’s me.”

As they were talking, the two had already arrived next to a cave.

When Lu Zhou saw the huge insect next to the cave, his eyeballs nearly popped out of the sockets.

This was the first time he saw a cockroach as tall as his knee.

The pair of fluffy tentacles about two meters in length swayed up and down, and they seemed to be hesitating about something.

“Doesn’t it look disgusting?”

“Yeah.”

“This is normal. Mammals and arthropods have natural differences in aesthetics. They value multiple legs, slender tentacles, and complex textures... I don’t want to discuss beauty with you too much. Your civilization is still too young. When you have a little more knowledge, we may discuss these things again.”

While talking, the cockroach nearby seemed to have finally made up its mind and began to explore the interior of the cave.

General Reinhardt gave Lu Zhou a “follow me” gesture, then led him into the cave.

The lighting in the cave was dim, it was almost pitch black.

Before entering, Lu Zhou was hesitant. After all, he really didn’t want to stay in the same space with such a big insect, even though he knew that all this was just a piece of ancient memory.

However, seeing how General Reinhardt walked inside casually, he finally clenched his teeth and followed after overcoming the discomfort in his heart.

The two of them and the cockroach walked into the cave, covering about one or two hundred meters.

The cockroach that was walking in front suddenly felt danger, and the wings attached to its back made a dangerous buzzing sound.

“What is it doing?”

“Hunting.”

“Hunting?”

“Yes, in the early days of civilization, or before they formed a civilization, these cockroaches mainly feed on the cubs of a reptilian creature in the cave. This creature is special, and its larvae also have the ability to reproduce. You will see that these cockroaches have wisely domesticated them into livestock as a source of protein.”

“Like an ant’s aphids?”

“Clever.”

While talking, a long-legged spider, who had fangs inlaid on its face and a height of one meter, roared and approached them aggressively.

Lu Zhou took a step back subconsciously as the fur on the spider made his scalp numb.

The creeping and trembling cockroach in front of him suddenly moved.

The wings on its carapace suddenly blasted, and the cockroach shot forward like a bullet.

This hunting method of shooting out like a cannonball really shocked Lu Zhou.

He thought that this creature only hid in the gutter, gnawing on rotten food, with no offensive ability at all. He did not expect the cockroach on Mars had such a brutal hunting ability!

The spider didn't seem to expect the “little guy” in front of it to be so ferocious. It was caught off guard and rolled to the side.

The two insects fell into a close hand-to-hand fight and fought together. Relying on its small size, the cockroach was lucky enough to hang on the spider's belly and ate off half of the spider's face.

The winner was decided.

After spazzing for a while, the spider curled up into a ball and laid on the ground lifelessly.

The cockroach roared excitedly and cut off the spider's fangs. It tied them to the top of its head and quickly rushed into the lair behind the cave.

Inside the lair, a large pile of larvae squirmed on the ground.

Obviously, they didn't know that they were in danger...

“The ability to kill adult Martian spiders is respected in the Martian Civilization. Under normal circumstances, those Martian spiders usually hunt giant insects over two meters tall. These Martians cannot defend themselves.”

Lu Zhou said with an ugly expression, “I’m thinking... We better not call them Martians.”

Reinhardt smiled faintly and said, “Why, didn’t you give them this name?”

Lu Zhou: “...”

“In fact, it doesn’t matter. The name is just a symbol. Besides, the little guy in front of you will learn to walk upright, make tools, and even develop a civilization that is many times more prosperous than Earth... Look at it, it seems to have found a treasure.”

The cockroach was collecting the larvae when it suddenly stopped its movements.

The larvae seemed to realize that this thing was not their own mother, and they began to feel uneasy.

The cockroach vibrated the tentacles above its head and climbed near the side of a stone wall.

The stone wall was firmly embedded in the rocks.

There were rows of weird marks on the mirror-like stone monument.

Although Lu Zhou didn’t understand what these signs meant, he felt that there was a kind of breathtaking attraction in the symbols.

“Curiosity is the beginning of everything. You can’t imagine what kind of waves set off in my heart when I found this ugly little guy stopping in front of this stone monument.”

“This is...” There was a sense of disbelief in his eyes. Lu Zhou’s pupils contracted slightly as he whispered, “The words of the Calan empire?”

“Yeah.”

General Reinhardt nodded.

“These words were carved out to commemorate something when I first came to this planet... or this universe.”

While the two were talking, the cockroach curiously tapped the lines of strange words with its tentacles.

Judging from its actions, this little guy seemed to want to move this thing away, but after some effort, it finally gave up on this unrealistic idea.

It stared at the stone monument for a long time. It rubbed its forelimbs on the ground, seemingly imitating the symbols on the stone monument.

The cockroach standing in front of the stone tablet did not realize that its curiosity changed the fate of a race.

It also completely changed the future of a planet...

Chapter 1421: Prosperity and Apoptosis

Ding!

The sound of steel banging awakened Lu Zhou from his trance.

That was the sound of metal striking.

When he came back to his senses, he was already standing in front of a primitive house made of wood, stones, and some white fluff. A strange furnace was next to him. When he looked up into the distance, he could see the wall built up by dirt and wooden sticks, as well as the vast farmland.

Like General Reinhardt said, these bugs learned to walk upright. They even learned to use tools and developed the embryonic form of a farming civilization.

But in his opinion, their walking posture was quite goofy.

He looked at the “grassland” surrounded by the fences and the larvae. A thoughtful expression appeared on Lu Zhou’s face.

General Reinhardt walked to his side and asked jokingly, “What kind of experience is it to lose consciousness for tens of thousands of years?”

Lu Zhou heard the ridicule in the tone, but he had no time to think of a comeback.

“... Tens of thousands of years have passed?”

General Reinhardt shrugged.

“You can think of it as a fast forward. After all, I can’t really let you stay in my memory for tens of thousands of years.”

What?

Jesus!

Lu Zhou thought he had slept for tens of thousands of years!

“... ”

Lu Zhou looked around and looked at the village at the foot of the mountain for a while before continuing to speak, “We are now in the stone age?”

“Slightly farther than the stone age. They have learned to smelt metals... We are probably in the bronze age.”

“Did you teach them this?”

“No, they may have a slightly smaller brain capacity, but they are not so stupid that they need my help to build houses and domesticate beasts.”

“But you told me that you enlightened them.”

“Yes, whether intentionally or unintentionally, the stone tablet I left behind taught them how to write. Because of the ability to write, their knowledge can be passed on. Isn’t this enough?”

There was a humming sound in the room, and the tranquility and peace in the air suddenly disappeared.

Cockroaches with metal horns on their heads rushed out of the woods and rushed toward the village at the foot of the mountain.

Screams came one after another, and the cockroaches were armed and ready to fight.

Lu Zhou watched the cockroaches rushing toward one another.

Fortunately, General Reinhardt, who was standing next to him, raised his hand and flew into the sky with him. Otherwise, he might have vomited from the disgusting scene.

Lu Zhou looked down at the flames rising into the sky under his feet, as well as the bloody fight. He suddenly had an illusion that he seemed like a god.

In fact, this was indeed the case. He was looking at the life of a civilization through the perspective of a god...

"Do you feel like an omnipotent god?"

"Kind of."

"It seems that you have gradually realized how I feel." General Reinhardt smiled faintly. "In fact, any higher civilization will have similar thoughts when facing a lower civilization. This is probably how The Observers think about us."

While the two were chatting, the battle at the foot of the mountain was over.

The battle between the two groups of cockroaches finally ended in the victory of the invaders.

The victors set up a fire in the center of the village, lit a flame, and danced to please the gods. They enjoyed the plundered supplies and slaughtered the enemy's livestock.

General Reinhardt continued blankly.

"This is the first stage of evolution. Civilization and barbarism are fighting for the last time. At first, the latter had the upper hand, but in the end, the former would end up on top. The Martians on this land would begin to merge into one. In order to manage more population, they would transition from a tribal system to a feudal system, then through countless reforms and even revolutions, they would realize the liberation of productivity..."

Lu Zhou: "Then what role did you play in it?"

"Me?" General Reinhardt smiled faintly and continued, "I didn't play any role. When they contacted me again, they were already in the electronic age."

While General Reinhardt was talking about this, the ground under the two of them changed again.

The rustic hut was gone, replaced by a house made of red bricks and granite.

The bonfire also disappeared, replaced by chimneys rising to the sky and factories covering hundreds of acres.

Carriages of finished steel products were transported out of the factory and loaded onto the train.

Not far away, circles of houses rose from the ground, and the outline of the city began to appear rapidly.

“Is it shocking?”

“Yeah...” Lu Zhou looked at everything that happened on the planet under his feet. He said, “It’s just something I don’t quite understand.”

“Don’t understand what.”

“Since the Martian civilization is nearly three billion years ahead of us... Why does The Observer civilization not choose them, but to pin their hopes on three billion years later, on a civilization that is inferior to the Martian civilization in terms of resources and environmental conditions? Us.”

In Lu Zhou’s opinion, the initial resources of these Martians were perfect.

Unlike the human civilization that had experienced countless obstacles, this group of insects living in a greenhouse had hardly been affected by natural disasters. Even if the crops were not harvested for a year, they could still hunt from the lush forests and find food underground.

“This question is actually interesting. Does the most fertile land breed the strongest civilization?”

Seeing that Lu Zhou was lost in thought, General Reinhardt continued, “In fact, although the planet Gaia has an ecological environment that all organic life forms envy, it is not the most suitable environment for birthing civilization.

“A rich environment means that you don’t need to make a lot of effort to obtain the basic materials needed for survival. Although the Martians have the same curious personalities as humans, they don’t know what hard work is in their

culture. And more deadly, tens of thousands of years of evolution have allowed them to fully adapt to the ecological environment of Gaia. This makes it difficult for them to find an acceptable second home.

“Imagine if the Earth’s ecosystem could accommodate 20 billion people or even 30 billion people and the abundant resource reserves could not be exhausted. Would you still want to give up the good life on Earth to explore the Moon or Mars?

“In contrast, those harsh and extreme environments are more likely to nurture a powerful and aggressive civilization. You should remember this.”

General Reinhardt continued, “As for time... A civilization with a longer period of time may be more developed, but the reason for its development isn’t because of time alone. I only knew about these things after reaching the center of the galaxy.”

In just a few minutes, the ground under their feet was already full of life.

The endless grasslands were no longer visible, the borders of the forest continued to shrink and shrink, finally disappearing into the horizon. It was swallowed by tall buildings made of reinforced concrete and steel which had covered almost every inch of the planet.

Lu Zhou finally understood where the rust all over the surface of Mars came from.

And those hematite veins and silicate sedimentary rock formations with strange structures...

All that turned out to be the “corpse” of a civilized city on Mars!

“Unbelievable, how did they finally get to... this step?”

Lu Zhou looked at the planet that had almost been completely changed by the reinforced concrete man-made objects, the neon lights on the streets, and endless prosperity.

However, the advancement did not change the ugly appearance of the Martians.

If he hadn't seen what Mars would look like billions of years later, he would never believe that this powerful civilization would eventually disappear...

"There are many reasons and even many coincidences.

"Aside from this, let's make a hypothesis. If cancer cells know that they will expand endlessly and one day they will die with the host, do you think it will consider proliferating in a relatively gentle way?"

Lu Zhou asked subconsciously, "Is it still cancer then?"

Reinhardt nodded and said, "Yes, so it's impossible to expect civilization to constrain itself and achieve common prosperity with nature. It's like the duality of man. Expanding to a more distant world is the only way for civilization to survive, just like the first fish that jumps onto land.

"However, due to the problem of habitability, the Martian civilization finally did not embark on this path. Normally, the resources of a Gaia planet would be able to meet their needs, until... they finally do something stupid."

Lu Zhou gulped.

"What did they do?"

"They built a geothermal well, which was dug from the bottom of the sea to the mantle layer, to extract heat and minerals from it, to build and support their city."

"They are crazy..." Lu Zhou was stunned. "Did they not think of... other ways?"

"Other ways? Like controllable nuclear fusion?" General Reinhardt smiled faintly. "Don't forget that Mars was formed only a few hundred million years ago, so the entire solar system is still very young. There is not a large amount of deuterium and tritium that has accumulated in the ocean like that on Earth.

"Martian civilization did invent controllable nuclear fusion technology, but for their conditions, this was not the cheapest option. Downward exploration was more attractive. After all, drilling holes was their instinct for survival.

"A large amount of mantle material was pumped to the surface, and the energy in the core was released. In fact, this was a very slow process. It

included the cooling of the core and the weakening of the magnetic field. Most Martians were not able to feel the changes during their lifetime.

“When the local nuclear temperature finally fell below a certain critical value, the weak magnetic field could no longer resist the high-energy rays from the universe, but it was too late. They watched in despair as the atmosphere was blown away. After most died from cancer, cities became ghost towns. They were forced to take everyone and retreat from the surface to the underground world.

“However, even in the underground world, there was no place for them. At that time, Mars was like a dying old man.

“Before the civilization was about to die, they made certain efforts... Such as the ignition plan and the planting plan.

“I have talked to you about the ignition plan. They begged me for help. They hoped that by sending my engine to the upper mantle, the zero-point energy in the energy module would be detonated and the heat borrowed from the Mars core would be returned. They hibernated some of their compatriots and took turns to wake up to complete the work, but they failed in the end.

“As for the planting plan, that was more interesting.”

General Reinhardt smiled.

“Maybe because they were stimulated by the upheaval on Mars, they finally realized their weakness in adapting to the environment, so they drastically tailored their genes through genetic modification.

“Unfortunately, genetic modification was a very sophisticated technology. In this regard, they were obviously immature. They could only forcibly improve their habitability at the cost of weakening other parts. The new Martians were intellectually flawed.

“But this was the only hope for survival. If after billions of years of evolution, if one day these new Martians re-awaken the genes of their ancestors, they could recover their civilization.

“Some Martians turned their eyes to Earth, which is your home planet. Although Earth was still in chaos at that time, they tried to detonate nuclear

weapons, put acid-resistant, nitrogen-fixing bacteria and other artificial methods to accelerate the evolution of Earth's atmosphere.

"I don't know if this is part of The Observer's plan. But in some sense, they were making progress.

"The genetically modified, cryo-dormant new Martians were sent to Earth by their compatriots. The Martians hoped that the little guys could someday rebuild the glory of the Martian civilization."

General Reinhardt showed a sad expression on his face and spoke softly.

"As for the result, you should already know...

"They spent billions of years, spanning hundreds of millions of kilometers...

"And finally succeeded in becoming the cockroaches you know of."

...

Earth.

Bodleian Library, the University of Oxford

An old man who was nearly sixty years old was crouching in front of a wooden table, carefully checking the print in his hand.

His name was Vernal; he was an archaeologist. Although there had been a slight deviation in his research direction in recent decades, he was still an archaeologist in essence.

As of today, thirty years had passed since the original trip to Mars.

In the past 30 years, the international community did not give up on digging The Gates of Hell. It was only recently that the funds were cut and cut again, slowing down progress.

Relying on his position as an authority in the field of Martian archaeology, he had successively visited Mars several times in the past 30 years to investigate the remains of The Gates of Hell, and at the same time, to investigate some newly discovered clues on the Martian civilization.

He had also changed from a middle-aged man to a proper old man.

Although space travel was not as simple as eating a meal, it was much more accessible than it was 30 years ago. Many newlyweds with well-established families chose to spend their honeymoons on the Moon and experience the wonderful experience of the weightless environment.

There were not many scholars like him who insisted on doing it by hand and completing a thesis on paper in this era of advanced multimedia technology...

"Professor, I brought you your manuscript." Footsteps were heard from the door, and a young man with freckles holding a stack of papers opened the door and walked in.

The pile of papers was so high that it blocked his face, and he almost tripped over the chair at the door.

Professor Vernal stood up angrily.

"Be careful! You stupid simpleton! This is a precious historical document."

"But professor, they are just printed copies..." With a helpless expression on his face, the young student continued, "If you want, I can go to the printing room to get you another copy."

"The manuscripts of any great man were brand new when they were first stored in this library. Electronic files have no soul," Professor Vernal said as he began to count the batches of documents.

Confirming that there were no files missing, he nodded with satisfaction.

"Very good, they're all here."

The young PhD student looked at his supervisor with a weird expression. He wanted to complain, but in the end, he didn't say anything.

His supervisor stood up and walked to the coat rack at the door. He took a khaki coat and put it on him, then stood in front of the mirror and adjusted his collar.

He looked at the old man in the mirror, and a trace of nostalgia appeared in his eyes, but it was quickly replaced by strong confidence.

Today!

My research will change history!

Professor Vernal's voice brought a hint of excitement.

Like he was in a Broadway play.

"Go get ready, Dr. Gilbert!

"Take out the most expensive suit in your closet and iron it. The report will begin in the afternoon.

"The whole world will remember our names forever because of this amazing discovery!"

The neuroticism of the old professor was no surprise, so Gilbert cast a glance at him and murmured, "Okay, professor."

He really wanted to write a paper.

On whether leaving Earth would break someone's brain...

...

Compared to decades of time, waiting for a mere afternoon was nothing more than a blink of an eye.

Professor Vernal quietly waited for the clock on the wall. He approached the microphone and cleared his throat.

The lecture hall was quiet.

The pair of eyes looked at the old professor on the podium, waiting for his opening remarks.

The report seminar finally began!

"Ladies and gentlemen.

"I'm glad you all came here today.

"I will announce an important discovery to you here—

"The Martians were by our side this entire time!"

People's faces showed surprised expressions as voices of discussion spread everywhere.

Young people joked with each other and said, "Are you a Martian?". Some people took notes seriously while others sneered and shook their heads to show disdain.

Professor Vernal had a smile on his face.

Satisfied with the surprise on people's faces, he continued, "Although this sounds ridiculous...

"But based on the fossil specimens we found in the Olympus crater and the various signs we have investigated from other relics, we have been able to make a preliminary judgment that they belong to the Insecta, Blattaria... Just like the American cockroaches.

"Maybe the cockroaches we see today are actually the same species as the Martians from billions of years ago!

"All of this is possible!"

The entire lecture hall went crazy...

Chapter 1422: Mysterious Letter

Thinking back to that day many years later, Professor Gilbert couldn't help but feel regretful.

So close.

They were so close.

His supervisor almost became the Darwin of the new century, the Mendel of archaeology. He also almost became the apprentice of the master of archaeology in the new era. They could have dominated the archaeology department at the University of Oxford.

Professor Gilbert thought about this many times. If it wasn't for the shoe that flew toward the podium that made the elderly Professor Vernal feel embarrassed, history would be different...

Although fighting was sometimes a part of academic discussions, it was unfair to let an elderly man and a young man fight hand-to-hand.

At a suburb of Oxford, England, North Sea Alliance, Earth.

Professor Gilbert was wearing reading glasses. He was babbling in an old mansion.

"Logic, logic... This group of idiots talks about logic every day, except that they have never considered that their logic is sh*t! Besides, is scientific research about evidence or the sh*t inside these people's heads?"

"Does science rely on mainstream views? Does science even have a concept of mainstream? This is the 22nd century. This makes me think I am living in the Middle Ages! It's getting more backward!"

"Look at their arguments against me. I will find one. Yes, this guy named Peterson, right? Don't laugh too hard..."

"We all have to admit that if a species wants to grow into a planetary overlord, it should at least have an average intelligence level close to that of humans, but such intelligence has hardware requirements. I don't know what it is in other places, but on Earth, it's called myelin. So far, cockroaches have a primitive nervous system. Even if the Martians don't know about myelin, they should have something similar..."

As if he was reading a joke, Professor Gilbert snorted.

"Look at this, it's like the universe is his garden. The rocks and specimens my instructor dug from the Olympus crater are not as good as the dog crap he picked from his backyard.

"We have little understanding of the situation from three billion years ago. Just by making an inference from a limited fossil sample, he is sure that those Martians are exactly the same cockroaches on Earth? Is he even certain that their nervous system is the same as myelin? Jesus... Is there a more arrogant argument than this? When did myelin sheath become the most perfect transmitter in the universe?"

“The most ridiculous thing is that a species close to the level of human intelligence can become the overlords of a planet... When did human beings become the unit of measuring intelligence... What kind of retarded joke is this? How did you get into our campus?”

After taking a deep breath, Professor Gilbert calmed down. He then became annoyed again.

“They don’t understand anything. Whenever your paper is different from what they think in their minds, they will insult your paper. The most irritable thing is when they are proven wrong, they act as if nothing happened and will not take responsibility for it.

“But should I take them to heart? These idiots are just a bunch of brainless slugs, not even as useful as the fax machine in my storage room! They know neither science nor science fiction, just being alive is an insult to the theory of evolution!”

Dr. Leonard, who was in his early thirties, looked at his furious father in amazement.

“Dad?”

“What?”

“I feel like you actually care about their opinions...”

Professor Gilbert said sternly, “Nope, you’re wrong.”

The tone eased a little. Professor Gilbert calmed down, looked at his son, and continued, “Put Professor Peterson’s paper aside for the time being... You are now a member of the archaeological department of the University of Oxford. Go and buy yourself a decent suit. Tomorrow will be the first start of your new life. Don’t embarrass the Vernal school of thought.”

Leonard couldn’t help but put a bright and confident smile on his face.

“Don’t worry, Dad, I definitely won’t—”

“Also, let’s talk about rent.” Professor Gilbert interrupted his son’s confident speech and looked to the side. He said, “You have a job now. You’ll pay me 1,000 credits every month.”

Leonard, who was full of confidence before, suddenly froze.

“Sometimes I can’t help but wonder if I am your son or if I am adopted.”

“Don’t worry, you are my son; self-reliance is our family’s ancestral motto. I hope you will keep this in mind. Go, don’t bother me here. Back then, 30-year-olds were already married. You should learn to grow up.”

Professor Gilbert waved his hand impatiently. He picked up the reading glasses from the table and put them back on.

Leonard walked out of the room with his shoulders drooping.

...

Professor Gilbert was definitely an alien at the University of Oxford.

One was because his teacher was the famously old and stubborn Professor Vernal, who was called “Doctor Cockroach”, and the other reason was that he had offended many people because of his incomprehensible way of doing things.

Whether it was students or colleagues, it was difficult to find someone who liked this old guy.

As his son, Leonard had to admit that his father sometimes was a little offensive. Leonard even used him as an example of what not to do.

However, even then, he understood why his father became like this.

When a person was in an extreme environment and was regarded as a different kind by everyone in this environment, they would either become paranoid or choose to be assimilated into the environment. There was almost no third choice.

Obviously, his father made a choice very much like the people of “that era”. He was truly proud of his identity as a “scholar”, and he regarded his doctrine as an honor to defend. And oftentimes, he would repeat Professor Lu’s words.

In this era, there were not many old scholars like him...

It had been a year since Leonard joined the Department of Archaeology at the University of Oxford and became an honorable in-service professor. The suit

he bought that day was worn out, and Leonard had almost become accustomed to life as a professor.

He went to the Pan-Asian Cooperation to attend an academic conference. Before going home, he planned to go to the University of Oxford to report on the progress of the conference and his work during this period.

However, when he first arrived at the school, he was stunned by everything in front of him.

A yellow cordon was outside the Department of Archaeology building. Two police officers stood beside them, making simple exchanges with the robotic police officers who had finished investigating the scene.

Leonard walked up quickly to one of the policemen. He frowned and asked, "What happened?"

The policeman looked impatient. He swiped twice on the translucent holographic panel and answered, "A professor died suddenly at the report meeting. According to our forensic medical examination, it was preliminarily determined that the cause of death was a heart attack."

With a bad feeling in his heart, Leonard gulped nervously and asked in a trembling voice, "The professor's name is..."

The policeman glanced at him.

"Gilbert, do you know him?"

His heart sank to the bottom of his stomach in an instant.

The moment he heard the name, Leonard felt dizzy.

A professor wearing a wide gray trench coat walked out quickly from the building.

After seeing Professor Leonard standing outside the cordon, he seemed to have thought of something. He suddenly changed his mind and walked over.

"I'm terribly sorry, Mr. Leonard... Your father was a great scholar."

Like an old friend, Professor Peterson gave Professor Leonard a hug involuntarily, then patted him on the shoulder. He spoke with a pained expression.

“We are all very sad that something like this has happened...”

Leonard recovered slowly and looked at Professor Peterson blankly.

His pupils shrank instantly when he recognized the face.

Lavanger Peterson!

The most loyal opponent of the... Vernal school of thought!

This guy went against his father at report meetings more than once and did not have the demeanor of a scholar. He always used a barbaric way to obstruct the report meetings.

He remembered that when he was talking to his father on the phone yesterday, his father told him that there was a very important report meeting today...

He looked at the stack of meeting notes under Professor Peterson's elbow, and he seemed to understand something.

“You...”

A fire of rage suddenly rushed to his head. Leonard stepped forward suddenly and raised his fist to hit him.

However, the punch did not land on Professor Peterson. The robotic police officer standing beside him quickly grabbed his fist. The other two police officers also reacted and quickly controlled him.

“What are you doing? Stop!”

The robot man reminded with a gentle electronic tone, “Citizen, please refrain from illegal behavior.”

Professor Peterson opened his mouth and made a surprised expression. He opened his arms as if he was confused about the situation in front of him.

“What’s the matter with you? Mr. Leonard... you seem to be out of control, I didn’t mean to offend you.”

“It’s you!” Professor Leonard stared at him and squeezed a word from his teeth. “You did it on purpose...”

“Me? On purpose? What do you mean? What are you accusing me of?”

Leonard instantly calmed down.

According to the civil law of the North Sea Alliance, if he accused Peterson here, it meant that he would be responsible for his own remarks. The other party could also use this as evidence for counterclaims.

As for the recordings, there was a robot police next to them that was recording the whole thing, which was legal evidence that could be brought out in court. The situation could be very disadvantageous for him.

Peterson looked at Professor Leonard, who had calmed down. He had a winner’s smile on his face.

“Mr. Leonard, I admit that I do oppose your father on academic points of view, but it is my academic freedom to express opinions...”

Peterson leaned next to Professor Leonard as he smiled and spoke softly.

“If I could, I would tell him in front of him again that his paper is just a pile of sh*t and has no research value.”

The robot police’s eyes began to glow blue as it spoke.

“Please step back, citizen. If you continue to make provocative remarks, we will have to arrest you.”

“Okay, my mistake, I apologize, I’m very, very sorry.” Professor Peterson laughed and looked at Professor Leonard, who was glaring at him.

“Have a nice day...”

“See you.”

...

Heavy rain washed the streets.

Billowing thunder hit the clouds from time to time.

After attending the funeral of his father, Professor Leonard, who got out of the car, closed the door behind him heavily.

With a gloomy look on his face, he didn't open his umbrella or run. He let the rain hit his body as he walked back home through the front yard.

There was a musty smell in the room.

The unique smell of wood and leather furniture was common in the past. It was difficult to completely eliminate it no matter how many times it was cleaned.

A general-purpose type 1 housekeeping robot with a height of about 1.5 meters and inconspicuous facial features walked to the entrance and stopped.

After recognizing Leonard's facial features through the eye camera, it spoke in a gentle voice.

"Welcome home, Master Leonard, you seemed to have been in the rain. Do you need me to dry your clothes and put on the bathwater in the bathtub before dinner?"

"Shut up."

"Okay."

As the only smart device in this dilapidated home, after receiving the owner's order, the robot had an abstract smile and stayed quiet.

The robot produced on the low-end industrial chain was not only clumsy, but the facial engineering was also messy. With a little makeup, it could be a monster at a haunted house.

Without paying attention to the uncanny valley smile, Leonard walked to the refrigerator with a sullen face and took a bottle of beer. He then returned to his room.

Compared to the post-modern apartments and high-rise flats in the city, his ancestral home in the suburbs was bought by his father when he was young.

After several renovations, an old house was still an old house. As long as the floor was old wood, no matter how it was remodeled, it would creak when one stepped on it.

His father had always been stubborn in rejecting new things.

Even though holographic technology had been popularized in all aspects of life, he still stubbornly used a tablet to work and write papers, as if something visible and tangible could bring him a sense of security.

The robot was the result of a lot of persuasions.

Sometimes, he thought that since he was in his 30s, he should move out of this home. In fact, he had been thinking about this until yesterday.

However, now, it seemed that there was no need to consider this issue. His father had already left, and he was the only one left in this house.

Not only that...

That guy not only intended to take his father's life but also intended to take away the Vernal school of thought that he spent his entire life running and maintaining...

"I swear I will make you pay..."

He thought of Professor Peterson's arrogant face and the sneer from the dean of the archaeology department of the University of Oxford telling him that the class had been withdrawn. His heart felt like it was stabbed with a knife.

"All of you..."

Leonard clenched his fist as he sat in front of the holographic projection screen.

Just when his emotions had reached a climax, a red bubble popped up on the LSPM website.

It seemed that the research direction he followed had a new "discovery".

Although it was not the time to care about these things, out of curiosity, he still clicked on the notification.

However, the moment he clicked on the page, he was stunned.

The author who published this news claimed to be a miner of Hiddell Mining and was also an amateur meteorite culture enthusiast.

In a new mine excavated by the company, the amateur of meteorite culture found many clues that were suspected to be the remains of the Martian civilization and took pictures of these clues.

Since this vein was only 20 kilometers away from Tiangong City, located in a canyon, and was close to the remains of The Gates of Hell, this meteorite culture lover had made a bold speculation that the clues found in this canyon would tell the truth about the collapse of The Gates of Hell a century ago...

Although most of the replies under this post were not friendly to the author, Leonard's reaction was different.

The Gates of Hell!

Most people didn't care about this word, but he was different.

His father's mentor traveled to Mars as the "mission" of human civilization and was the person who witnessed the great earthquake.

As the only surviving direct disciple of the Vernal school of thought, he was more convinced than anyone that there must be some great secret buried in the ruins. The earthquake must be more than just an earthquake.

Professor Peterson's high-pitched voice came to his mind, causing him to clench his teeth unconsciously.

It was at this moment that a crazy idea suddenly poured out of his mind.

Without hesitating, his hands were placed on the desk, on the holographic keyboard woven with holographic images and motion capture cameras.

[Hello, I saw the post you just posted on the LSPM forum. Would it be convenient for you to chat?]

He hit the "Send" button.

Professor Leonard took a deep breath and took off the rain-soaked tie on his neck. He threw it on the sofa.

Just as he was thinking whether to find a towel to wipe his wet hair, a reply suddenly popped up in the lower right corner of the screen.

Leonard said to himself, “Is he on Earth?”

He’s probably from the North Sea Alliance or the Iberian-French Federation...

There was a surprised expression on his face. Leonard obviously didn’t expect the other party to reply so quickly. He clicked the popup with his mouse.

Soon, a line of text was projected in front of him.

[Are you interested in the ruins?]

[Signed by...]

[Dr. Z]

Chapter 1423: Treasure Hunt Across the Century

“This is your immigration card, please take it...”

“Thank you.”

After Professor Leonard took the card from the customs officer and thanked him, the customs officer looked at the person behind him blankly.

“Next.”

“ ... ”

The Atlantis Space Station was a geosynchronous orbit transfer station affiliated with the North Sea Alliance.

As the seventh orbital transfer station built by the Federation of Human Alliance, it was mainly responsible for the transfer of personnel and materials to the ground and to the Moon. At the same time, it was also the only customs from the North Sea Alliance to the outside of Earth.

Tens of thousands of people traveled to and from here, or to a colony on the Moon, or to a distant Martian colony, or an outpost on the Lagrange point everyday.

Under such high traffic flow, of course the customs officer was not in the mood to chat with him. He threw the stamped passport and a registration card into his hand, then began to go through the procedures for the next person.

Can't machine replace these jobs? They occupy most of the service industry anyway, at least they can give me a smile...

Professor Leonard, who was in a bad mood, reached out and clicked on his watch, expanding the holographic interface.

"Where are you guys?"

In the holographic panel, a dark-skinned face in the video chat smiled honestly at him.

"We have encountered a little trouble here... Don't worry. Anyway, does your proof really work?"

Professor Leonard said impatiently, "This is a certificate issued by the University of Oxford. We are a formal scientific investigation team hired by the North Sea Alliance... Really, is this your first time? I am beginning to doubt your professionalism."

"Ahem! Please don't doubt us, we are just a little worried. After all, you know the current situation. The security situation on the Mars colony is very bad... Ok! Passed smoothly, we are here!"

A big dark-skinned man waved at him with a smile on his face. He and two younger men, as well as a robot employee, walked toward him.

"Hey, buddy! Nice to meet you!"

Leonard took out the business card from his bag and read the information inside. He raised his eyebrows and glanced at him and the three employees behind him.

"Mammoth Mining Company?"

“Yes, my name is Jim. These two are my assistants, Hughes from North America and Shinichi Tanigawa from East Asia. Don’t worry about the robot bionic person. Although it looks a bit older, it has all the functions.”

The tall North American and the thin Asian man next to him nodded slightly to express their greetings.

After introducing his employees, Jim looked at Professor Leonard and grinned.

“As you can see, we are as strong as mammoths, excellent at drilling holes.”

Leonard: “... A mammoth can’t drill holes.”

Also, the machines were the ones drilling the holes, not the humans.

“Ahem! This is not the point.” Jim raised his calloused hand awkwardly and patted Professor Leonard on the shoulder, “Let’s go to Mars, we’ll prove our professionalism by helping you find those treasures!”

Jim waved his hand and walked toward the direction of the boarding gate.

For some reason, Professor Leonard was suddenly worried about this trip to Mars...

...

A century ago, around the beginning of the 21st century, it took at least 2 to 3 weeks to travel from Earth to Mars. There were also restrictions about flying window periods.

Leonard, who grew up in the 22nd century, couldn’t imagine how anyone could tolerate such a long journey.

People back then had an average life span of less than 80 years.

Especially since the journey had no access to the internet, there was no entertainment in any sense. It was impossible to even take a bath.

After landing on the surface of Mars through the elevator cabin, Dr. Leonard, with his sore shoulders, walked down the gangway together with the tourists. His feet finally stepped on the solid ground.

“... We’re finally here.”

The terminal of the aerospaceplane was located on the edge of the city. After passing through the customs connected to the buffer room, they were inside the city as soon as they exited the customs.

Leonard looked up, and the first thing he saw was a hemispherical aerogel film shrouded in the sky above the city.

Like the dome of a greenhouse, this layer of aerogel film with a thickness of several meters enclosed a large circle of land in the desert. It blocked the high-energy rays from space and also played the role of an atmosphere. It kept clean air in the city and acted as a “blue sky” to the residents in the city.

The interior of the city was even more amazing. The designers seemed to have brought utilitarianism to the extreme, squeezing value from every square inch of land.

Each of these alloy-paved pipelines connected the columnar tower buildings to form the road network complex of the entire city.

In the gaps between the tower buildings, there was a green landscape designed using genetic engineering, which thrived on this exotic land.

It was difficult to sum up the grandeur of this city in one sentence.

It was like an oasis in the desert, a beacon to disperse the dark night.

In fact, this was true. As the largest city on Mars built by the Pan-Asian Cooperation, this Martian colony called Tiangong City was not only the most developed and most expensive area on Mars, but it was also the safest place on Mars.

As for why it was necessary to emphasize its safety...

This will be mentioned later.

“We will rest here for one night. After the cargo is unloaded from the transport spacecraft, we will immediately set off to the archaeological site.”

“Okay, you are the boss, you make the call, we just dig.”

The black man named Jim smirked and made a gesture of drilling a hole. This action not only made Leonard's eyebrows twitch, but it also caught the attention of the Pan-Asian policeman standing next to him on duty.

Leonard lowered his voice and whispered in his ear, "I hope you don't cause any trouble. The closest colony of the North Sea Alliance is 100 kilometers away! If we are sent back there, our plans will all be ruined!"

Their action was only known to the North Sea Alliance and was not approved by the Pan-Asian Cooperation. They did not even submit a written application at all! If the Asians found out they were not an investigation group of a mining company at all and that they came here under the name of archaeology to excavate the remains of the Martian civilization, they would definitely be prosecuted.

"Yes, yes, okay." Jim quickly showed an apologetic smile. He said, "Rest assured, those Asians won't bother us for this little thing. Let's go, let's find a hotel first."

"I have already booked the hotel online."

Although the network on Mars and the network on Earth were independent due to the delay, the data on both sides were still connected.

Whether it was booking tickets or shopping, everything could be done through an internet terminal.

Leonard put on the AR glasses and quickly found the capsule hotel he had booked according to the road signs.

The group rested for a night, then came to the exit gate the next day. After providing the proof, they put on the light extravehicular spacesuit and passed through the buffer room at the edge of the city.

The rover and excavator of the Mammoth Excavation Company were parked here.

Leonard looked at the two pieces of engineering equipment and the signs on them. He felt that these pieces of equipment did not look like their own equipment; they seemed to be rented.

"Are you sure these pieces of equipment belong to you guys?"

“Uh, of course... Is there a problem?”

Leonard stared at the big black guy for a while. Although Leonard wanted to force him to tell the truth, it would be too late to hire another construction team.

Also, his research project had been withdrawn by the dean. This archaeological operation was entirely at his own expense. He could not afford to hire a more expensive and more reliable construction team.

Leonard sighed and put his hand on Jim's shoulder. He lowered his voice and spoke.

“Okay... I hope you guys are professionals. We want to excavate the remains from billions of years ago. We must be very, very careful. If something goes wrong, it will be a loss to the entire archaeology field!”

Jim grinned and gave an answer.

“Don't worry, boss, I guarantee that the relics of the Martian civilization will be dug out exactly the same as they were buried!”

Even with 10,000 worries in his heart, there was no time to look back.

The group got into the car. Using the map Leonard obtained from the Hiddell Mining Company employee, they drove to the side of a rift valley and stopped in front of an abandoned mine.

At the entrance of the mine, there were signs and simple roadblocks left by the Hiddell Mining Company, but judging from the degree of wear and dust on the surface, it looked like it had been abandoned for a long time.

“Are you sure it is here?”

Leonard clicked on the holographic map on the watch and carefully compared the features of the nearby landscape. He looked at the suspicious mine.

“It should be right here.”

In fact, according to the agreement between him and the netizen who claimed to be “Dr.Z”, the two should first meet in Tiangong City and then act together.

But...

Out of selfishness and self-confidence in his abilities, he did not abide by the agreement.

Academics was inherently full of competition. If a fool put his bargaining chips out like this, Leonard felt that he needed to teach Dr. Z a lesson.

Jim looked at Professor Leonard, who was comparing the map. He and the two employees looked at each other and exchanged strange expressions on their faces.

Professor Leonard frowned.

“What?”

“Nothing...” With an unnatural smile on his face, Jim shrugged his shoulders. He then looked back at his two employees. He clapped his hands and said, “Guys, it’s time to work.”

Construction on Mars was not the same as that on Earth. Because of the difference in gravity environment and air density, many techniques applicable on Earth were not necessarily applicable here.

Strictly speaking, it was impossible to dig anything just by relying on the small drilling rig carried behind the rover.

Fortunately, the Hiddell Mining Company, whether they went bankrupt or moved locations, had dug the mine to a depth of one kilometer below the ground. They even left a simple magnetic track deep into the mine, which solved most of the trouble for them.

Therefore, what they had to do was actually very simple, that was to expand the mine to a certain extent according to the directions marked on the drawings.

The drilling vehicle was removed from the back of the rover. With the cooperation of the robot driver, the three “professionals” he hired quickly started to work.

Although these people looked unreliable, they were quite efficient when working.

After reaching the deepest part of the abandoned mine, the drill bit in the front section of the rig began to move.

Truckloads of soil were transported out of the cave entrance, and in just an hour, a spiral downward passage expanded the abandoned mine cave to a depth of tens of meters.

Jim walked to the side of Professor Leonard. He wiped the dust off the mask and asked, "Are you sure there are treasures of the Martian civilization there?"

"Treasures?" Leonard frowned upon hearing this word. "I don't remember saying that there are any treasures there, but there are quite a few precious cultural relics... You should be careful when digging. If you arrive at any artificially created structure, remember to stop and call me over."

"Oh, I know... Don't worry." The big black man named Jim chuckled. "If we dig up a treasure, we will definitely ask you to come and have a look."

A shout suddenly came from the communication channel.

"Boss! We found a tunnel! It doesn't look like it was left by the Hiddell Mining Company, it seems to be... the remains of the Martian civilization?"

Before Jim had time to react, Leonard jumped out of the hood of the rover.

"A tunnel? How wide is it? Wait, you guys stop first... I'll come and see myself!"

He didn't care about the surprised expression on Jim's face. He rushed into the mine alone and followed the spiraling passage to the bottom of the mine.

The American named Hughes jumped down from the co-pilot seat and walked toward him.

"... Have we dug enough? I'm not sure whether to move on."

Leonard stepped forward quickly and walked to the entrance of the cave. He squatted down and fumbled along the edge of the entrance for a while. An expression of excitement suddenly appeared on his face.

"Quick, keep going! This is it!"

The American named Hughes nodded quickly. He was about to turn his head back and order the robot man sitting in the driver's seat to start the drill, but the drill moved on its own as if it was out of control.

The hard rock wall shattered suddenly. The huge drilling rig rushed straight down the slope and plunged into the wall leading to the opposite side. The robot man sitting in the cockpit collapsed on the steering wheel, as if it were broken.

"Sh*t... Why is it malfunctioning! These second-hand purchases are no good!"

After the out-of-control drill crashed into the cave, the cockpit door was crushed and could not be opened. The robot man was still collapsed on the steering wheel. Hughes cursed and then glanced behind him at Professor Leonard.

"Look at what you guys did!" Professor Leonard walked into the cave and grumbled angrily, "Look at this, so much damage, I only hope you haven't bumped into any precious cultural relics or specimens! No one finds out about this! Otherwise, we'll be prosecuted!"

Hughes was standing next to the rover. Jim was catching up from behind. Professor Leonard turned on the flashlight in his hand and walked toward the cave to continue exploring the past.

The tunnel was so deep that he couldn't see the end, but he could feel something in front of him.

After turning over a pile of rocks, he soon saw a silver-white metal rectangular parallelepiped about two meters tall and one meter wide lying on the side of the wall.

"... What's that!"

Dr. Leonard widened his eyes and looked at the metal artifact in front of him in disbelief.

His intuition told him that this couldn't be the equipment left by the Hiddell Mining Company, let alone any other human beings.

He was certain that they were definitely the first people to step foot here!

If that was the case, there was only one possibility...

“The treasures of the Martian civilization!”

Jim’s familiar and unpleasant voice was heard in the communication channel. Professor Leonard frowned and corrected him.

“It’s a cultural relic! You idiot, can you—”

Halfway through his words, he stopped.

Because when he turned around, a gun had been aimed at him.

Professor Leonard gulped. His face suddenly changed from dissatisfaction to tension and fear.

He didn’t know why this guy had a gun in his hand, let alone what he wanted to do.

He only knew that if that idiot pulled the trigger, even if it only scratched a layer of fabric on his spacesuit, he would be dead.

Jim, with the electromagnetic pistol in his hand, smiled playfully.

“Can I what?”

“What I’m saying is, I’m an idiot, can you guys... help me see what this is?”

Professor Leonard was trembling; his back was soaked with sweat. Even the temperature control system of the spacesuit couldn’t cool him down.

This was the first time he was pointed at with a gun.

However, this explanation did not seem to satisfy Jim.

The black man smiled and continued talking, “That sounds like an order.”

“Please...” Professor Leonard knelt on his knees. He put his hands on top of his head and begged, “I was wrong, I didn’t mean to order you guys...”

“Don’t do this, my dear friend.”

Jim walked to Professor Leonard and squatted down. With a cruel smile on his face, he patted his mask lightly with the muzzle and said, "My guys and I have to thank you. If it wasn't for your archeological certification, we wouldn't have been able to leave Earth through the customs of the Atlanta Space Station."

Professor Leonard's face went pale.

This meant that they were either fugitives on Earth or air pirates who fled between Mars and the Jupiter asteroid belt.

Although he had always heard that Mars was a paradise for criminals, he didn't expect to actually see it happen to a scholar like him...

"We planned to say goodbye to you in Tiangong City. We just wanted to use you to escape Interpol and start a new life on Mars. But since you mentioned the relics of Martian civilization, there must be something valuable in it. It just happens that we need some start-up capital... to start a new business," said Jim with a smile. He was proud of his own ingenuity. He looked at the metal cuboid lying on the ground and said, "I didn't expect this to actually work."

"..."

Professor Leonard didn't react at all. He hung his head low.

He knew that he wasn't going to survive; these desperadoes had no reason to let him go.

Jim admired the expression on Professor Leonard's face. He rubbed his index finger against the trigger of the electromagnetic pistol and said casually, "Now, my dear Professor Leonard, if you can use your knowledge to tell me what this metal box is and what price it can be sold for, maybe I can let you go."

Professor Leonard gulped, but in the end, he did not speak.

Seeing his unresponsiveness, Jim sighed and stood up again.

"Well, it looks like you have made a choice."

He took a dagger used to cut ropes from his waist.

Professor Leonard closed his eyes in despair, but when he was ready to die, he heard a gunshot.

The gunshot seemed to come from far away.

Then there was a thump. Something fell on the ground.

Professor Leonard slowly opened his eyes, and he saw that Jim was the one that fell on the ground.

He was wondering if this guy was betrayed by his own teammates when he saw a blood-stained bionic robot slowly walking from the cave entrance.

A shuddering feeling climbed to the back of his head. Professor Leonard trembled and sat back on the ground. He looked like he just saw a ghost.

A robot...

Attacking humans?!

He had never heard of such an unthinkable thing.

This should be absolutely impossible!

If there was a bionic injury accident, the company that produced the bionic robot would not only be prosecuted. The entire production line would be abandoned, and the personnel involved could face jail time!

“Who are you?”

The robot man shook the blood on its arm.

It walked next to Jim’s corpse and picked up the electromagnetic pistol that had fallen. After looking at it, it pinned it to its waist.

Cold electronic sounds came from the communication channel.

“Danger, eliminated.”

A feeling of fear came to his heart.

Professor Leonard thought of the “Dr.Z”, who he had never seen in person. He suddenly felt like he was trapped ever since he read that paper.

He looked at the robot man walking and asked in a trembling tone, “Your master... Who is it?”

“Is it Dr. Z?”

He originally thought that the bionic man would not pay attention to him, but it actually responded.

With one short sentence...

“None of your business.”

Chapter 1424: A Long Retreat

What did a century mean?

For most people, it was a time unit that usually only appeared in history books.

Few people could live that long.

And almost no one would write in their diaries, that on a certain summer one century ago, something happened to them...

If The Observers did not exist, the man named Lu Zhou, like most students who graduated from top universities, would graduate with an excellent grade, then find a decent job with a relatively generous salary, then get into an ordinary marriage and have children. He would live his life out steadily.

Even if Earth or the universe would be destroyed in hundreds of thousands or millions of years, what would this have to do with a butterfly that only lived for a week?

Live life in the moment without thinking about distant things. Perhaps this was the most logical choice.

Even Lu Zhou himself did not have the confidence that he would choose differently.

That was, to give up the missions of the system, his curiosity about the universe, and return to Earth to live out his life. To leave the troublesome things to future generations...

A mechanical arm was lightly pressed on the icy metal surface,

The sound of a gas leak was heard, as if a switch had been touched, and the metal coffin-like cube slowly opened.

Professor Leonard looked at everything in front of him in amazement. He opened his mouth. His eyes were full of shock.

“A dormant cabin... It really is a dormant cabin, the same thing Professor Vernal described in his notes!

“The dormant pods that look like tombstones are located in spacious grottoes, the texture carved into the stones is like a spell that seals an ancient memory. It has a longer history than the pyramids and terracotta warriors. The Martians hoped to enter a new era using the pods, to avoid their eventual extinction...”

His lips trembled.

Professor Leonard stared at the slowly opening metal coffin.

Suddenly, a well-known piece of history appeared in his mind.

It's him!

He remembered the passage in Chapter 3, verse 14 of the Old Testament.

[Thousands upon thousands are waiting in the valley of decision. There the day of the LORD will soon arrive.]

The blue light shined in the cave, driving away the darkness.

The metal shell was completely opened. The oily solution inside and the man immersed in the solution were exposed.

He sat up slowly in a vaporized white mist.

Like a knight waiting for the king to ascend to the throne, the robotic man waiting at the side respectfully handed over the spare spacesuit and helped him wear it.

Lu Zhou took a deep breath of the air from the oxygen tank. He recovered from the freezing cold and adapted to the discomfort of waking up again. He

grabbed the dormant cabin with his right hand and jumped down with the help of the robot.

“You... you...”

Leonard looked at Lu Zhou standing up from the dormant cabin. He stared at him with his eyes widened in disbelief and stammered, “Are you...”

Lu Zhou said, “Are you from the future?”

Lu Zhou looked at the man who was kneeling on the ground for some reason. He moved his arm and asked concisely, “Future citizen, tell me what year it is now? How long did I sleep for?”

What is the population on Earth? Is the world in harmony?

There was a wide range of questions Lu Zhou wanted to ask.

The man stared at Lu Zhou. Dumbfounded, he spoke in a trembling voice.

“It’s the year 2125 AD...”

“2125 AD...”

Lu Zhou held his breath for a while.

The memories gushed out of his mind like a flood, rushing to his forehead.

He took a deep breath and closed his eyes.

After a long time, he sighed softly.

“This retreat...”

“Was quite long.”

...

Human life always had an end.

Even if Lu Zhou did not follow The Observer’s guidance to Mars and go to the deepest part of the ruins, he would still get old and die eventually.

The only difference was whether he would die sooner or later.

Perhaps this was the best choice for him, who chose the “Protector” gene.

After all, according to General Reinhardt’s statement, humans were still a long way from trying to replicate those three potions with their own technology.

Even with the genetic modification level of the Calan Empire, they were far from the level that could immortalize individuals. Using his own blood to overcome a world-class problem would be impossible.

Instead of watching the people around him getting old one by one and finally saying goodbye, perhaps the best way would be to time travel to the future.

And if someone brought back his last words...

Then at least he had the chance to say goodbye.

Lu Zhou didn’t want to think too much about his fate and his feelings at this moment.

Self-pity was not his personality. It made no sense to look forward to another possibility for what had already happened.

Maybe someday, if he got drunk, when he recalled the past, he might start to vent...

But now was obviously not the time to do so.

Traveling to this time period was part of The Observer’s plan. It would not take long before he would feel the guidance of the Void.

He had to figure out the surrounding situation as soon as possible...

When he walked to the side of the lifeless guy named Jim, Lu Zhou’s eyebrows couldn’t help but twitch as he looked at the blood flowing out of the brain.

Although it wasn’t the first time he had seen a dead body, this was the goriest one...

“Does he have a cell phone or something? Or a wrist-mounted computer or something?”

Professor Leonard was slightly taken aback. He immediately answered, "Phones? We don't use them anymore... But you can look for it on his wrist to see if there is something like an electronic bracelet. An international fugitive like him probably doesn't have a chip in his brain..."

Fugitive?

Lu Zhou raised his eyebrows.

He picked up the knife on the ground and cut the spacesuit on Jim's right arm.

Lu Zhou resisted the nausea and took off an electronic bracelet about one millimeter thick from his hand.

"This thing? How should I use it...?"

Professor Leonard opened his mouth. He was just about to say that it might be troublesome to unlock. But he saw the robot man standing next to him take a step forward, took the bracelet from Lu Zhou's hand, and connected it on the slot in its chest.

The dark green data stream flashed through its pupils, and soon, a holographic panel was projected in front of Lu Zhou.

[Unlocked]

"... So that's it, the technology is so convenient now."

Leonard: "...???"

Lu Zhou ignored the dumbfounded guy who was sitting on his knees. He reached out his right hand and swiped the screen twice with his index finger.

Thanks to this guy's shameful past, many secret things were carried with him personally, instead of being stored in the cloud.

Through the emails stored in his mailbox, Lu Zhou learned that these people were a group of people under the guise of the Mammoth Mining Company, but they were actually fugitives engaged in murder and merchandising. Because they were being watched by Interpol, they found this guy named Leonard and obtained a certificate of clearance under the cover of archeological activities.

Not only that, but these fugitives seemed to have unclear business dealings with the air pirates active in the asteroid belt between Jupiter and Mars.

After understanding the cause and effect of the incident, Lu Zhou looked at the man next to him who seemed to be Professor Leonard with a strange expression on his face.

Poor guy, he was probably fooled by Xiao Ai to come here and was nearly shot by the criminals.

Just when Lu Zhou was about to close his mailbox, he suddenly found a special email.

That was a purchase list. Specifically, it was probably to help the air pirates active in the asteroid belt purchase supplies and deal with some tricky stolen goods.

What was special about this email was not the plain purchasing content. What really caught Lu Zhou's attention was the sender's code.

[The Spirit of The Universe Foundation]

Lu Zhou thought of the fiasco on the Baltic Sea a century ago, and he couldn't help but frown.

It seemed that a lot of things had happened during his absence...

"Hey..."

A greeting came from the communication channel. Lu Zhou turned off the holographic panel and looked at Professor Leonard next to him.

Leonard was watched by the robot man that was still holding a rifle in its hands. He raised his hands tremblingly and said in a pleading tone, "Can you let me go? I am just a victim... Although it is my fault to excavate the ruins here without permission from the Pan-Asian Cooperation, but for the sake of digging you out, can you forgive me?"

Lu Zhou did not speak. He walked toward him.

Professor Leonard had a trace of despair in his eyes. He wanted to resist, but seeing the gun in the robot man's hand, he could not muster the courage. He closed his eyes like a coward.

If only he didn't come to Mars. This wild land was full of dirty criminals, wicked people, and unscrupulous air pirates...

When he opened his eyes, he saw Lu Zhou reaching out his right hand.

"Stand up.

"Although we are from different countries, you and I are both scholars. We should still have a common language.

"It just so happens that I need a guide... And a little money to travel home."

Lu Zhou looked at Professor Leonard and spoke.

"Whatever currency they use on Earth, it would be nice if you could lend me a little. When I return to Earth, I will give you a generous reward."

Chapter 1425: You Are Dead

If someone continued to explore down this cave, they would find the Reinhardt spacecraft.

Of course, Lu Zhou wouldn't let Professor Leonard know that there was a spacecraft from the old universe hidden there, so he decisively rejected his proposal to continue exploring the ruins.

This ruins was traced by him a long time ago. Except for the spacecraft engine that used zero-point energy at the deepest point of the ruins, there was nothing more worth exploring.

Before the spacecraft was repaired, the engine had no use.

Lu Zhou said goodbye to General Reinhardt in the communication channel. He asked the robot man sent by Xiao Ai to drag the three corpses to the center of the ruins, which was a more conspicuous position.

The main reason for this was to prevent Professor Leonard from coming back here again.

Leonard probably wouldn't dare to risk hiring an unidentified excavation team to dig this ruins. If a regular excavation team was hired, the three unexplained corpses alone and the entry record he left at the customs were enough to send him to court and go to prison.

Lu Zhou ignored Professor Leonard's pained expression. He continued to give orders to the robot man to remove the explosives from the drilling rig and install it on the load-bearing pillar at the end of the mine.

This completely ruined Leonard's idea of digging the ruins on another day...

Trembling with anger, Professor Leonard pointed to Lu Zhou and exclaimed with all his courage.

"You are destroying cultural relics..."

"I am a cultural relic, so you can ask me anything you want to know... Okay, everything is done, let's go."

Lu Zhou patted Professor Leonard on the shoulder. He glanced at the passage behind him one last time, then walked out of the mine without looking back.

Before the spacecraft could be repaired, it was the best choice to leave it here.

When the matters on Earth were done, in the end, he might drive it to a place far, far away...

The two people walking in the mine were chatting with one another while walking along the curved magnetic track.

From Professor Leonard's words, Lu Zhou learned that he was an ordinary professor working in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Oxford.

Coincidentally, his father was a student of Professor Vernal.

Nowadays, Professor Vernal's doctrine had become a field in the world. However, his doctrine on Mars cockroaches was not accepted by mainstream views.

Lu Zhou couldn't help but sigh. *Time flew by so fast...*

“What is the outside world like now?”

“What is it like...?” Leonard was stunned for a few seconds at this question. He scratched his head and said, “You mean comparing it to the early 21st century... Probably more developed?”

“That’s it?”

“What else?”

“I thought you could be more specific.”

Professor Leonard said, “How can I be specific? I haven’t been to your time period... If you want to know what has changed, you can check it out and compare it yourself.”

“You’re right.” After thinking about it, Lu Zhou asked a slightly more specific question that he was most concerned about. “I saw an organization called the North Sea Alliance in the email from that guy named Jim... I want to ask, what the hell is that?”

“Oh, that... You can think of it as a new type of nation.”

Professor Leonard briefly explained to Lu Zhou the changes in the international situation over the past century.

It turned out that since his “death”, the political legacy he left behind, called the “Human Alliance”, had been united for a period of time. To defend against the extraterrestrial civilization, the Earth Defense Forces had even developed a rapid response force for high-orbit operations.

However, the good times did not last for long.

This political alliance, which was forced to unite due to external pressure, existed for only 25 years in the history of human civilization.

The Human Alliance experienced a rough trajectory, from unity to doubt, then from doubt to disintegration.

Regarding the reasons for the dissolution of the Human Alliance, the academic circles had given many explanations. Such as the fact that the scientific research on Mars at that time was unable to find more evidence of

the existence of extraterrestrial civilization, and Professor Aubrey's paper proposed a new explanation for the collapse of The Gates of Hell.

There was no evidence to prove that extraterrestrial civilization did exist and planned the earthquake. In contrast, more and more evidence suspected the hostile behavior was just a false alarm...

Due to the loss of a common enemy, coupled with the rotation of leadership, the differences caused by the interests and contradictions of various countries finally brought this organization to the end of its life.

In fact, such an outcome was almost inevitable.

Even the POTUS had no way to control things after two terms. Not to mention that the formation of the Human Alliance was not due to the diplomatic skills of a certain political figure, but only because the countries on Earth were against unknown forces.

However, although the Human Alliance was eventually disbanded, it still brought some positive effects.

Which was to explore a new type of political and diplomatic relationship that was different from traditional borders for all countries in the world.

A union of regions!

According to Professor Leonard, due to a financial crisis sweeping the world in 2050, the traditional monetary system was on the verge of collapse in the face of expanding debt.

In order to save the rapidly turning economy, the Pan-Asian Cooperation, which was originally an economic cooperation organization, made bold innovations and introduced a digital currency that was different from traditional currencies.

This currency was issued by the Pan-Asian Central Bank, and its value was the sum of the credits of all member states of the Pan-Asian Cooperation. Other countries followed suit. Through debt consolidation, the issuance of sub-era currencies, and a series of supporting economic policies, the global production relations entered a new stage.

The economic union was only the beginning.

Soon, this kind of cooperation was extended to many levels of culture, military, and even politics because of the experience and mutual trust that countries accumulated during the Human Alliance period.

Eventually, the traditional concept of borders was watered down and replaced by a new type of border based on the original concept of sovereignty.

“The current mainstream view in the academic circles believes that the decentralized sovereignty concept proposed by Professor Angus Deaton provides a theoretical basis for cross-regional political alliances. And Professor Lu’s... I mean the cross-regional power grid that you promoted, laid the material conditions for the establishment of the first cross-regional political alliance: the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

“However, although this argument is mainstream, controversial voices have always existed. Even if the layout of Pan-Asian Cooperation is basically consistent with the layout of the early inter-regional power grid, more evidence is needed to determine whether there is a dependent relationship between the two.

“So far, the most in-depth research in this field happens to be at the Angus school of thought... I am an archaeologist, I only understand modern history. If you are interested, it is best to consult a professional.”

Lu Zhou just talked about this with Director Li casually. He didn’t expect it would have such a big effect in the future many years later. He couldn’t help but sigh.

If Lu Zhou remembered correctly, he seemed to have had a quarrel with Angus Deaton about the “Sociology of The Future”...

Seeing that Lu Zhou was distracted, Professor Leonard frowned and asked suspiciously, “Are you still listening?”

“Yes.” After regaining his senses, Lu Zhou glanced at Professor Leonard next to him, smiled, and said, “I just remembered an old friend... I feel a bit nostalgic. Speaking of which, Angus came to China to discuss his theory, but I rejected him. He then wrote the book ‘Sociology of The Future’. I didn’t expect that 100 years later, his book became so popular... I wonder if he is still receiving royalties.”

Leonard: “...”

Lu Zhou coughed and continued, "In other words, China is called the Pan-Asian Cooperation, and the territory is roughly equivalent to the entire East Asia and Southeast Asia? Then the North Sea Alliance is the alliance formed by the United Kingdom and the countries on the north coast of the Baltic Sea?"

Leonard sighed. "The strict definition is not quite correct, but there is nothing wrong with understanding it this way."

"So what's the situation with Mars? Judging from your tone... It seems special here."

"The situation on Mars is very complicated. There are colonies like Tiangong City that are directly managed by the Pan-Asian Cooperation, or New York, which is simply operated by companies, like North America. Different systems have their own advantages and disadvantages. The reason for all of this is that the distance from here to Earth is too far.

"It takes two minutes for a beam of light to travel from Earth to here. There is no real-time communication with Earth, and there are some historical problems that affect the judicial systems. It is different than any other country on Earth. If Earth is a civilized world, then this is the barbaric land full of opportunities... You know what I mean?"

Lu Zhou nodded. Although he felt that what he knew was only the tip of the iceberg, it was somewhat better than the confusion that he felt when he first woke up.

Lu Zhou suddenly felt that he had kicked something, so he cast his eyes to his feet.

A broken rifle was lying there.

This thing looked quite familiar. After staring at it for a while, Lu Zhou quickly recognized it.

However, someone was a step faster than him and pronounced the name of the thing.

"QBZ-20 paratrooper rifle, the world's first orbital airborne brigade standard equipment!"

“Why is this here? Why didn’t the Hiddell Mining Company discover such an important cultural relic?”

With excitement in his eyes, Professor Leonard was about to reach out and pick up the broken rifle, but it was picked up by Lu Zhou first.

“Hellfire rifle...”

Lu Zhou couldn’t help but feel nostalgia in his eyes.

“This is an important cultural relic.” Professor Leonard whispered, “It’s useless if you keep it. It’s better to leave it to professionals like me. I use my academic reputation guarantee. I will send this to a museum.”

“No, I am the cultural relic. I have the final say on what to do with this. Besides, this is from an old friend of mine. Anyway, I will bring it back to his hometown.”

I wonder if he survived the disaster...

A hundred years have passed.

He should have lived a happy and stable life...

Lu Zhou couldn’t help but feel a touch of sadness in his eyes.

However, Professor Leonard, who was standing next to him, couldn’t feel his sadness. He just wanted to scold Lu Zhou.

*F*ck sake!*

Why do you have the final say?!

“Well, whatever you want,” Professor Leonard said with a sigh. He shrugged his shoulders and said, “I just hope you don’t sell it... It should be worth a lot. If it goes into the black market, it won’t be taken care of. Collectors would pay a lot for this.”

Sell this?

Lu Zhou smiled faintly and didn’t give an explanation.

Money was just something outside of the body. With the knowledge in his head, he would never have to worry about going broke.

After finally walking out of the long mine, the two and the robot went straight to the Mars rover and unlocked it.

Lu Zhou opened the car door and climbed up the rover effortlessly. Professor Leonard got into the car after him, and there was a strange expression on his face.

“You don’t seem surprised at all.”

Lu Zhou gave him a strange look.

“Surprised about what?”

“Most of the old popsicles that wake up from dormancy are surprised, then enjoy their new life, until they adjust to their new life and become frustrated with the real problems.”

Lu Zhou: “Are there other sleepers?”

“Many... In addition to terminally-ill patients, there are some who are put in voluntary dormancy. Most of them come from the middle of the 21st century. That period seemed very turbulent for a while, and many people chose to become dormant.”

“Oh, really?”

“You haven’t answered my question yet.”

“There is nothing to answer. When I drove the rover on Mars, your father wasn’t even born yet. Most of the technology you see, I’ve seen in the laboratory.”

Lu Zhou looked at the empty operation interface on the rover. He suddenly began to feel a little unease.

“Well, I haven’t seen everything... How do I drive this? What about navigation?”

Professor Leonard gave a light cough.

“The button next to the steering wheel is the switch of the holographic control interface. If you have AR glasses, you can also enter real-time navigation mode. Seriously, if you don’t know how to drive, then I can drive.”

“Why didn’t you tell me that you can drive?”

Lu Zhou looked at Professor Leonard speechlessly and gave up his driver’s seat.

Leonard took the steering wheel and skillfully started the car. He caught a glimpse of Lu Zhou with an unnatural expression on his face through the car’s mirror.

It was like Lu Zhou was holding back some kind of pain.

“... Frozen sequelae?”

The cold sensation continued to gush from behind. Bursts of pain hit deep into the bone marrow and spread along the blood vessels.

Lu Zhou took a deep breath and waited until the pain faded a little before speaking.

“What is that?”

“A disease commonly seen in old popsicles because the early cryo-sleep technology was crude. If I remember correctly, you seemed to have directly injected the dormant bacteria into your body?”

Lu Zhou: “Yeah?”

Leonard took a look at Lu Zhou and said, “In about the middle of the 21st century, after we discovered the side effects from the first awakened frozen man, we stopped doing this. I don’t know exactly what happened, but I heard the improved dormant bacteria extract is continuously injected into the dormant chamber.”

Lu Zhou frowned and asked, “Does that work?”

“Of course it works, and it’s safer. The price is a little bit more expensive, but it’s not too much.” Professor Leonard sighed and said, “I suggest you go to a hospital on Earth for treatment... Although this is not a troublesome disease, if you drag it around, you may have to suffer this pain twice a day.”

“We will go back to Earth now...” When Lu Zhou heard that his pain would come twice a day, he suddenly didn’t want to wait any longer. He looked at the navigation map on the holographic interface and asked immediately, “How do I go back?”

“Although Tiangong City is closer, I suggest we go a little further and board the ship from New London.”

Lu Zhou frowned and asked, “Why?”

“Because you’re not in the system.” Professor Leonard continued, “Everyone thinks you are dead. If I didn’t see you crawling out of the coffin, I would think the same. New London... is more friendly for smugglers. Basically, it is not a big problem to go through customs.”

Lu Zhou: “My face should be recognized by many people. I can provide DNA testing when necessary.”

“Please, this is the 22nd century.” Professor Leonard sighed. “If you want, you can even change your facial features into Pharaoh and claim the whole of Egypt. DNA testing is a good method, but this is Mars, and it takes two minutes for the words to be sent back to Earth. Do you expect to be notarized here? Return to your house that has been turned into a public tourist attraction? I advise you to lay low.”

Lu Zhou opened his mouth and didn’t know what to say.

There were always people joking with him before, that his mansion would become a historical relic in the future. They told him not to throw away things he didn’t need and that maybe they could sell it as an antique in the future.

And now.

They were right...

Where am I supposed to live on Earth?!

The robotic man sitting in the back seat suddenly handed him a card. It spoke in the communication channel.

“New, identity...”

“Master...”

“Use to, get home.”

Lu Zhou looked at the robot man sitting in the back seat and the card in its hand. The expression on Lu Zhou’s face gradually became strange.

He thought it couldn’t speak...

Lu Zhou reached out and took the card. He turned it over and glanced at it.

When he saw the name, he was caught off guard and almost choked on his own saliva.

Who the hell is Lu Ai?!

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Chapter 1426: Tiangong!

Now that the identity problem had been solved, it was no longer necessary to be a smuggler.

Also, Lu Zhou wanted to see how the land he circled on the map had developed now.

As for the restoration of his identity...

He could wait until he got back on Earth.

The only downside was the name on the ID card.

Lu Ai...

Although he understood that the little guy had missed himself, the name didn’t seem like a man’s name.

He would change it once he was back on Earth.

Lu Zhou sat in the passenger seat while looking at the vast desert outside the rover window. He suddenly thought of something and spoke.

“Speaking of which, when you first saw me, what did you think?”

Professor Leonard was slightly stunned. No matter how he thought about it, he felt that something was wrong.

After hesitating for a moment, he spoke in an uncertain tone.

“Surprised, shocked?... Everyone says that you are dead, that you are a hero of human civilization, and that you have sacrificed your life for the future of mankind. At least that’s how it’s written in the book. But I really didn’t expect that you found a dormant capsule of the Martian civilization, and it was still intact... Your luck is incredible. Speaking of which, why are you asking this question?”

“Nothing, just curious.” Lu Zhou said with a sigh, “I don’t know if someone will pick me up outside the airport.”

Leonard didn’t speak, he just thought in his heart.

It’s been a hundred years, why would anyone pick you up...?

Just as the two were chatting with each other, the outline of Tiangong City appeared on the horizon where the desert meets the sky.

In fact, Lu Zhou, who had witnessed the life of a civilization from germination to destruction, felt that he would not be surprised by anything.

But having said that, when he saw the hemispherical dome inlaid on the surface, his face still showed a surprised expression.

‘What is that?’

“You mean the protective cover?” Leonard glanced toward him. He thought for a while and said, “That thing is an aerogel material... Don’t look at me like that, I am an archeologist. If you are interested, go ask a professional.”

This answer obviously couldn’t satisfy Lu Zhou’s curiosity.

When he saw the hemispherical protective cover and the shuttle between Tiangong City and outer space, a strong impulse and thirst for knowledge crawled all over his body in an instant.

This was probably the first time he had a glimmer of curiosity for this brand new world. After experiencing the sadness brought forth by the changes, it was like seeing a new continent.

Countless unknowns were waiting for him to discover...

The rover parked in the garage outside the city. The two entered the buffer room through the conveyor belt. After paying the cleaning fee, they took their folded spacesuits and left the buffer room.

As soon as the two officially stepped into this city of the future, the breath of clarity and the fresh air rushed toward them.

Everything in front of him was almost the same as he expected.

No, in fact, it was more than he had imagined.

Everything here was far more prosperous than the blueprint of the Martian colony he had originally planned...

Lu Zhou gulped and murmured, "It's almost like..."

Professor Leonard laughed.

"Welcome to Tiangong City! This is an oasis in the desert. It is probably the epitome of civilization! Guns and knives are prohibited, 24-hour drone patrols, designated locations for people with criminal records..."

Many second-tier "countries" that were relatively behind in the field of space resource development had adopted trade policies that were more welcoming to air pirates.

For example, as long as full tariffs were paid, ores and goods of unknown origin were allowed to flow into the market on Mars. These minerals and goods were likely to come from pirates active in the asteroid belt between Jupiter and Mars, snatched from countries with greater control over outer space such as the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

This strategy had, to a certain extent, regained part of the trade share for weaker trans-regional organizations such as the North Sea Alliance, but this double-edged sword also brought a series of crimes and diplomatic downsides.

In contrast, the Pan-Asian cooperation, which itself had an absolute advantage in space trade, was naturally the most loyal guardian of space routes. Not only was a large amount of budget spent every year on combating space pirates, but they also adopted a zero-tolerance attitude toward desperadoes running on Mars.

What Professor Leonard said was correct.

On Mars, Tiangong City was absolutely unique in the field of public security.

Of course, what shocked Lu Zhou at this moment was not the deep-seated problems, but he was simply shocked by the visual impact of the buildings, traffic, greenery, and passing pedestrians.

Pipes inlaid with conveyor belts were connected between the tower-like buildings, and the intricate roads were dazzling.

There were no cars here.

In addition to seeing motorboats flying in the sky, there were small drones that danced like a swarm of bees.

A little further away was the city express orbit.

As for the edge of the city, in addition to the two staggered light rails, there were countless conveyor belts built into the pipeline. The conveyor belts connected almost every inch of the buildings, sending people to where they wanted to go with the highest efficiency.

All his imagination for the future was reflected here.

And things he never imagined.

Later generations filled in the blank space of the blueprint he left...

After a long time, Lu Zhou, who came back to his senses, spoke with emotion.

“Is this the same for all Mars colonies... or only Tiangong City?”

“Most of them are, the difference is only in size.” Professor Leonard shrugged and said, “Anyway, I feel that every city seems to be designed based on the original colony. If you are curious, next time when you come to Mars, choose New London or New Virginia as your landing point. Go and see for yourself.”

“I am now more and more looking forward to what it is like on Earth.”

“Don’t worry, it will be more amazing than here.” Professor Leonard smiled and handed Lu Zhou a pair of AR glasses. “I bought it when I left customs. It is worth 1,222 credits. You can connect through it. Go to the ‘City Cloud’ server. Without this, it will be difficult to travel on Earth. I suggest you get used to life in the future world as soon as possible.

“Hurry up and put it on! I bet, after seeing the enhanced reality, you will definitely be more excited!”

Like a child showing off a toy, Professor Leonard excitedly urged Lu Zhou to put the glasses on. Leonard asked impatiently, “So?! How does it feel!”

“I feel relief.”

A faint smile appeared on Lu Zhou’s face.

“At least it was worth it.”

Chapter 1427: Distant Old Friend

“The lock of dormant compartment A-0726 is open, please prepare for the medical staff.”

Jinling Hospital No.3, inside a post-modern renovated ward.

Next to a green potted plant, the doctor in a white coat turned over the holographic data sheet in front of him. He touched his chin with his other hand and asked casually, “Which era does this person come from?”

The nurse thought about it and replied, “It seems to be 2026.”

The doctor couldn’t help but feel emotional.

“2026... This man traveled quite far, almost a century.”

The hibernation technology before the 2050s was very crude. Almost all hospitals injected dormant bacteria directly into the blood vessels of the dormant.

This kind of simple and crude treatment method was quite inaccurate and full of risks in modern medicine, but in that era, it was considered a pioneering technique.

In addition to recovery work, they also needed to perform hemodialysis on the patient and put in the medical nano serum to remove the dormant bacteria in the body.

These procedures were not very troublesome, it was a matter of spending some money.

All the “old popsicles” frozen before the 2050s had to thank the great man named Lu Zhou from a century ago.

Had it not been for the freezing human rights protection fund he established to use these technologies in the field of freezing human resuscitation, and open it to major medical institutions in a non-profit manner, these old popsicles would wake up with a huge amount of debt in their hands.

The hibernation compartment slowly opened.

With the help of a doctor, a nurse, and two medical robots, the man lying on the hospital bed slowly opened his eyes.

“Where is this?”

“Jinling No. 3 Hospital, welcome to the future, the time now is 12:01 on January 12, 2125.”

His index finger swiped on the holographic panel. The male doctor took a document that had just been printed out from the robot man and handed it to the man lying on the bed.

“This is about the protection of the rights and interests of the dormant. Considering that you don’t know how to operate the holographic system, we

have prepared a paper version for you. If there are no problems, we hope you can sign in the lower right corner.”

“What the hell is this...”

Wang Peng frowned and looked at the doctor standing by the bed. He said solemnly, “I am an agent from the Intelligence Division of the Ministry of State Security. Please report my situation to my superior. I am not joking around, I came with a mission!”

The doctor and the nurse standing nearby exchanged helpless eyes. They sighed in unison.

“... How many is this?”

“The first one this year.”

“How many what...” Wang Peng frowned and asked, “What are you... What are you talking about?”

“Nothing, but there are often people like you who don’t know anything about the current situation after waking up, then say some strange things to themselves.” The doctor reached out his index finger and tapped on the holographic panel. “I should find a volunteer carer from the same decade as you to communicate with you.”

Footsteps came from outside the ward.

After a light knock on the door, a doctor walked in.

“Is this the dormant ward A-0726?”

The doctor standing by the bed asked, “Yes, why?”

“Someone said he is a friend of the dormant and hopes to visit him to explain to him the situation here.”

The doctor standing by the hospital bed breathed a sigh of relief and turned off the holographic panel in front of him.

“That’s great, let him in.”

Wang Peng looked around with a dazed expression. The two doctors reached a consensus and withdrew the treatment team from the ward.

After a while, the footsteps outside the corridor were getting closer, then there was a soft knock on the door.

“Please come in...”

The door opened.

When Wang Peng looked at the face that appeared at the door, he was stunned.

Director Li, who was standing at the door, also had an awkward expression. He smiled while watching him calm down, then waved his hand.

“Hey...”

“Long time no see.”

Wang Peng: “...”

*Pretty f*cking long...*

...

Director Li sat on the chair next to the hospital bed. They briefly talked about what had happened over the past century.

After listening to Director Li’s narration, Wang Peng opened his mouth and did not close his mouth for a long time.

The disintegration of the Federation of Human Alliance and the prevalence of decentralized sovereignty...

Economic crisis and de-globalization in the 2050s...

Then the era of space navigation and cross-regional cooperation organizations...

These were vocabulary and concepts he had never heard of. His whole brain seemed to be overwhelmed.

Wang Peng tried to filter out the most important pieces of information. He pinched his eyebrows and thought, then said in a reluctant tone, "That is to say... the concept of countries does not exist in this era? And we now... belong to the Pan-Asian Cooperation?"

"Not quite, it's just a set of new concepts and repackaged things from the past.

"The Pan-Asian Cooperation headquarters and political center are in Beijing, Tianjin, and Hebei. The science and technology and economic centers are in the Yangtze River Delta city group. The boundary extends from Ridao in the east to the coast of the Caspian Sea in the west. There's also the city on Mars..."

Director Li's tone was somewhat emotional.

"Compared to the past, we are so much stronger now.

"It's not an exaggeration to say we are in a flourishing age!"

A bitter smile appeared on Wang Peng's face. He didn't know how to respond.

He pressed his index finger between his eyebrows and spoke after a while.

"Before I went dormant, the Pan-Asian Cooperation was just an economic organization..."

"I know, and it was a marginalized one," Director Li said. His face was stained with melancholy.

A cooperation, which no one was interested in before, suddenly evolved into a ruling god in the sky.

Even though it wasn't like this was unacceptable to him...

It was just that the changes were too big.

"What about you now?"

"I'm working as a volunteer in the hospital, this job is quite interesting." Director Li smiled and continued, "It's not because of the money. The state subsidies provided to me are pretty generous. The Pan-Asian Cooperation

gives me 10,000 credits to my personal account every month until I die... You should receive the same. After all, we're kind of on a work mission."

Director Li had a complicated look on his face.

Although Director Li came to this new era with a different mission than Wang Peng, everything changed when he woke up. He was then told by the authorities that the mission was canceled. All this made Director Li couldn't help but doubt his life. Why did he come to this new era in the first place?

However, it pleased him to see the development of his homeland.

He also liked his current life. He occasionally did unpaid volunteer work, gave psychological counseling to those who woke up from dormancy, taught some children, and told the story of Professor Lu and the controllable fusion journey.

Time was flying by.

But...

For Wang Peng, such a fact was somewhat unacceptable.

After gulping, Wang Peng looked at Director Li and spoke.

"Where is... your family?"

Director Li smiled.

"Do you mean my offspring? They are well, but they were a little surprised at their ancestor who popped out of nowhere. We often get together to have a meal and talk about the past. But we don't live together. After all, the generation gap is too big, and they also have their own things to do. Besides, I don't need them to support me.

"But... you will definitely not get used to it at the beginning. Interpersonal relationships are fragmented and it is difficult to make friends with differences in values. Fortunately, technology is quite advanced. When I feel lonely, I can hire a robot as a companion. Take your time, you are younger than me. One day, you will get used to these things."

Director Li stood up from his seat.

“Today, I came here to see you mainly to tell you about what has happened over the years. In fact, I only woke up a year ago. The people from the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation will come over and check your identity and see if we can arrange a preparatory school for you. After that, there will be someone who will teach you how to use AR glasses and holographic bracelets, and how to integrate into this new era... I won't bother you any longer.

“When you're discharged from the hospital, let's have a meal together. The thing that satisfies me the most in this fancy era is probably the food.”

Before leaving, Director Li said that he would see him again tomorrow.

After Director Li left, Wang Peng read the document in his hand and finally signed his name on the last page.

His allowance was slightly less than Director Li, only 8,000 credits per month.

However, according to Director Li, the purchasing power of this kind of credit point was much stronger than that of yuan back then. A good car would only cost about 100,000, while a bottle of Coke could be purchased at a vending machine for only 1 credit.

Wang Peng was not really worried about money.

He had worked in the military before, and he never cared about money.

8,000 credits a month was obviously enough for himself. Even if he didn't do anything, he could live a prosperous life under the support of the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

However, before closing his eyes, his superior's instructions to him have lingered in his mind.

Should I continue my mission?

Wang Peng stood in the bathroom of the ward, looking at himself in a mirror made from unknown materials. This was the first time that Wang Peng saw in his own eyes a trace of confusion that shouldn't be there...

Chapter 1428: Returning After a Century

Departure hall.

Lu Zhou, who was sitting in his seat waiting for boarding, suddenly felt a pain in his heart.

His sight was a little blurred; the moving figures in the terminal hall had split images.

He clenched his teeth and endured the pain. A drop of cold sweat slid from his forehead and dripped onto the armrest of the seat. A mechanical hand was suddenly placed on the back of his hand.

The flexible polyethylene material was cold.

However, it unexpectedly made him feel at ease.

The pain deep in his bone marrow gradually receded. Lu Zhou took a deep breath. He then looked at the robot man sitting next to him.

“Thank you.”

The bionic man nodded and did not say anything. It just gave him a smile and used simple body language to comfort him.

As an inexpensive robot with rough workmanship, this was the best it could do.

Professor Leonard, who was wearing a plain t-shirt and a leather jacket, walked over.

He didn't notice Lu Zhou's previous struggles.

He spoke straightforwardly.

“I helped you contact the museum that is willing to take over the cultural relics, which is in the Yangtze River Delta city group you are going to. After hearing that it is the cultural relics found near The Gates of Hell, they showed great interest and have already contacted the Tiangong City authorities to issue a special electronic clearance certificate for the cultural relic. I just finished the formalities. And now, we can pass the customs smoothly and take it on the spacecraft... Of course, it must be placed in a special box.”

Guns were banned throughout the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

Even for cultural relics, they must comply with the law.

Lu Zhou spoke sincerely.

“Thank you.”

“You’re welcome.” Professor Leonard shrugged and said, “It’s payback for saving my life. Speaking of which, have you thought about it?”

Lu Zhou: “Thought about what.”

“Your relatives, friends, family, children, savings, house... are all gone. I guess you didn’t buy insurance for yourself when you were frozen. I’m the only one who knows you are alive. When you’ve recovered, where are you going?”

Seeing Lu Zhou was silent, Professor Leonard continued, “My suggestion is, if you haven’t thought about it yet, you might as well try to integrate into society first. If you are interested in re-education, I can find a way to help you get an offer from the University of Oxford. After you come out, you will have at least an academic degree. Of course, if you want to work first, I also have a friend at the British Museum. He seems to have mentioned that interns are being recruited there.”

Lu Zhou glanced at him.

This guy...

No wonder he gave up the rifle so generously and even helped me contact a museum willing to accept cultural relics.

I’m the thing that he wants...

“No need, I’ll think about it later.”

Professor Leonard wanted to say something but there was a sudden boarding announcement.

He shrugged and said, “Fine, whatever you want, it’s just an offer.”

The two lined up in front of the boarding gate and boarded the long shuttle with the crowd.

Professor Leonard played the role of a guide and explained to Lu Zhou, “This thing called a shuttle is equivalent to an elevator. We take it to the space station in high orbit, then take a transport ship from there to Tianzhou.”

“Tianzhou?”

“Yes, the space station in the East 8th hour zone is the largest space station in the world! I feel that its name should have something to do with your name, perhaps to commemorate you.”

Commemorate me?

Lu Zhou smiled embarrassedly.

Although he still had a lot of worries about the uncertain future in his heart, when he saw the city and the surface of Mars that was gradually pulling away, he began to look forward to the return journey after a century of being away.

...

It only took three days to return from Mars to Earth.

This speed would be incredible a century ago.

Before boarding the ship, Lu Zhou observed that there were a total of twelve pairs of engines behind the cuboid-shaped transport ship.

That’s right, twelve pairs, twenty-four total.

When the twelve pairs of engines were lit together, the entire night sky outside the space station seemed to be lit up.

The long and narrow starship was like a meteor sliding toward the sky, galloping toward the dark cold night...

“We are going to leave soon, is your seat belt fastened?”

“Of course.” Lu Zhou pointed to the thing hanging on his waist and said, “It’s not the first time I’ve taken a space shuttle.”

A violent shaking came from behind, followed by the hum of electricity. The starry sky outside the porthole was stretched.

Professor Leonard closed his mouth. He nervously pressed the back of his head against the cushion of the seat.

Lu Zhou couldn't help but laugh.

This dude tells me not to worry.

He's the one who is scared.

Lu Zhou noticed a child who was about seven or eight years old, looking out of the window eagerly. The kid pointed at the space station that was drifting away outside the window excitedly to his mother who was seated next to him.

It was like this was the first time the kid had been on a spacecraft...

"Why are there children here?"

Leonard recovered from the initial tension, and he gave Lu Zhou a strange look.

"It's normal. There are many newborns on Mars who have never been to Earth in their entire lives. Maybe it's their first time even going on the space station... Why do you think it's weird?"

Haven't been to Earth their entire life?

Lu Zhou couldn't imagine what kind of life that was.

"... It's not weird, but I remember low gravity seems to affect bone development."

Professor Leonard: "That's right, but the limit that human bones can withstand is mainly determined by genes, and the environment is only an influencing factor. In the past, it was popular to build some facilities called gravity chambers to provide approximate gravity through centrifugal force. Nowadays, we mainly use drugs. The effect of low gravity was a problem in the early days of spaceflight, but it is not a particularly big problem now."

Even this can be solved by drugs?

Lu Zhou couldn't help but feel emotional.

It seemed that the medical technology of this era had really reached an unimaginable level.

I wonder whether a terminal illness like cancer that has plagued human civilization for tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of years has been solved now...

...

Because of the virtual reality device, the three-day trip was not too long.

When using the virtual reality device, Lu Zhou discovered that the online game called Calan Empire was still operating, but the parent company had changed a few times.

Of course, because he was on the starship, he couldn't access the server on Earth. He could only look at the gray icon and mourn for a while. He then connected to the virtual library and downloaded some materials.

Generally speaking, he learned quite a lot.

Although there were no professional academic materials to study, there were still many interesting things stored in this virtual library.

For example, in a book describing the economic and social environment of the colony, Lu Zhou learned that the steel and chemical industries on Mars were quite developed.

There were not only rich iron ore and titanium ore resources, but there were also frozen dry ice seas and methane lakes.

The most important thing was that the environmental protection policy here was not as strict as that on Earth.

Many industries with high pollution and high carbon emissions had gradually moved from Earth to Mars as early as the 1970s.

There was no need to worry about pollution or greenhouse gases here. There were even some scientists who hoped that the greenhouse gases produced by human activities could improve the atmospheric environment of Mars and pave the way for the Martian "climate recovery" plan.

Whether it was possible or not, it was worth a try.

In recent years, with the continuous development of various industries on Mars, more and more people had begun to regard this place as a place of dreams.

Although many people were deterred from here because of crime rates and various dangers, there were still many people with the idea of getting rich overnight and setting foot on this desert.

In addition to the steel and chemical industries mentioned earlier, there was also a gray industry on Mars that attracted the attention of countless people.

Which was the excavation of the remains of the Martian civilization.

A long time ago, there was a saying that the Martian civilization once possessed technological strength far surpassing any civilization on Earth. Therefore, countries encouraged the excavation of Martian civilization relics, and the funds allocated to relevant research units were quite plentiful.

Therefore, in addition to those archaeological teams affiliated with major research institutions, there were also many illegal organizations wandering in the gray area of the law.

Regardless of whether there was a bargaining chip in the Martian ruins that could change the international landscape, the invaluable cultural relics and specimens alone were enough to make them take the risk.

In addition to the industries located on the surface of Mars, Mars also took on the role of a material transfer hub, undertaking the task of processing, transit, and transportation of minerals transported from the asteroid belt.

The asteroid belt between Jupiter and Mars was one of the largest “mines” in the solar system, with the most abundant materials and the easiest to mine. Many precious resources here had been targeted by people on Earth as early as a century ago, but the development of it had only begun in the middle of the 20th century.

The rapid development of the Mars colonization was inseparable from the rise of the “asteroid belt economy”.

Eighty percent of the spacecraft's materials came from the supply of the asteroid belt.

The latest space station deployed by the Pan-Asian Cooperation on Mars was almost completely made from the materials from the ores in the asteroid belt!

The abundance of materials there was obvious!

However, in contrast to the rich benefits, there were also various dangers.

Not only was there the navigation risk caused by the meteorite fragments, but also the space pirates hiding behind the meteorites.

Some powerful space pirates even built pirate bases on the asteroid belt. They evaded radar searches from patrol ships of various countries and looted materials.

"It seems that this is an era of extreme material wealth and full of opportunities..."

"People are so bored that they're becoming pirates in space..."

As Lu Zhou looked at the research materials in the holographic window, a thoughtful expression appeared on his face.

Although he did not respond directly to Professor Leonard, Leonard's words had been lingering in his mind.

In fact, he didn't think about where he should go after he cured the sequelae of frozen dormancy.

Maybe when everything was sorted on Earth, he would save a sum of money, then buy a piece of land on Mars. He could then repair the spacecraft and head to the center of the Milky Way?

Maybe he could stop by and see what kind of scenery was there.

After all, when he made the choice a long time ago, he didn't expect to be thrown into such a distant future...

While Lu Zhou was worrying about this matter, he suddenly remembered an important thing that he had almost forgotten.

The treasures on Mars were found, and it seemed that he still hadn't received the system rewards for the mission.

He slowly closed his eyes and silently summoned the system nervously.

It's been so long, I wonder if The Observer has forgotten about me.

Fortunately, his worries were superfluous.

The moment he received the three tubes of potions, his fate was bound to the Void.

When Lu Zhou opened his eyes again, he was in a pure white space.

The pale blue dialog box popped out.

[Congratulations, User, for mission completion!]

Chapter 1429: Return From Hell

[Congratulations to the user for completing the legendary mission "Deep Into Hell"!]

[Description: It is my honor to bring this to you, whether to fulfill your mission is your decision.]

[Requirements: Witness and discover the gift from the Void, let it see light again.]

[Reward: "Protector" gene, legendary mission card.]

Lu Zhou originally thought that since it was a legendary mission, the rewards should be quite generous.

However, the system gave him the reward that he had already received.

Not just that, but he also didn't receive anything for solving the ABC conjecture.

When Lu Zhou saw the rewards list, he was flabbergasted.

The pop-up window for completing the mission gradually disappeared. A green light and golden light flashed in the inventory at the same time, morphing into two completely different objects.

One of them was the legendary mission card, which Lu Zhou had seen countless times.

As for the other one, it was the “Protector” gene that he had already used.

[Protector gene: You are the final evolution of life, you are the supreme Protector. Your race is looking forward to you, you know that your choice will definitely bring a bright future to your civilization.]

The light blue text appeared in the front of the inventory. Immediately after he had read this passage, the dark green potion turned into a bright light in the inventory and disappeared before his eyes...

“I thought it would give me another bottle...”

However, Lu Zhou also thought that this was a greedy thought.

Putting the mission rewards aside for the time being, Lu Zhou reached out his index finger and pointed it toward the inventory. He selected the light golden mission card.

Soon, the pale golden light dissipated, and a holographic panel appeared in front of him.

[Begin legendary mission: Return from Hell]

[Description: Knowledge may be outdated due to the changes in the times, but a brave soul will remain the same. You have passed the most difficult test, now is the time to tell your people that you have returned from hell!]

[Requirements: Make people believe that you are alive. The reward for the mission is proportional to the number of people who recognize your identity and inversely proportional to the time it takes to complete the task.]

[Rewards: ???]

When Lu Zhou saw this mission, he went silent.

He didn't even know what to complain about.

Actually, he planned to use the name Lu Ai for a while.

He would at least wait until he had fully integrated into the society, then choose an appropriate time and disclose his identity in an appropriate way.

But it seemed that the system obviously didn't want him to wait.

"Making my identity public... That's a bit difficult, do I have to contact the local media first?"

Will anyone even believe this nonsense?

There was no point hesitating. After reading the mission requirements, Lu Zhou was about to leave the system space.

However, he looked at the mission record.

He began to read it out loud softly.

"... The end of reincarnation, the beginning of everything."

That was the mission description for "Deep into Hell".

It was also the beginning of the Mars mission chain.

Suddenly, there was a feeling of unease in Lu Zhou's heart.

I feel like everything that has happened was prearranged by fate...

...

After exiting the system space, Lu Zhou, who rested his head on the seat cushion, prepared to take a nap. He didn't want to think about the system mission for now.

However, a violent tremor suddenly came from the seat and almost threw him out of the chair.

Fortunately, his seat belt was on. Even so, it still shocked him.

Did we hit something?

Lu Zhou looked aside, but he did not see surprises or similar expressions on the faces of other passengers.

Maybe the spacecraft accelerated suddenly...

But the comfort of this future spacecraft is really bad...

Lu Zhou was about to put this aside and close his eyes when a stern alarm suddenly sounded from the direction of the first class cabin.

This time, the people sitting in the cabin began to worry.

Everyone had a look of uncertainty on their face.

“What is happening?”

“What’s going on?”

“I don’t know... Did we hit something?”

“Mom... is our spacecraft broken?”

“Don’t talk nonsense! It’s just a small problem, the flight attendants will fix it soon.”

There was a lot of discussion around them as people exchanged surprised looks.

The mother patted the child on the back and hummed a song as she tried to calm the crying child.

An unexpected accident suddenly happened.

A loud bang was heard from the door connecting the first class and the economy class suddenly.

No one reacted.

Then, there was another loud bang. The metal alloy door, which looked solid, was kicked open by a foot!

A man wearing an exoskeleton armor, with a rifle in his hand, stepped into the cabin. He glanced fiercely at the passengers in the cabin and yelled in a rude voice, "Hands on your heads!"

"I'm not going to say it again!"

The man pulled the trigger in his hand and fired two shots toward the ceiling in a threatening manner.

Two light bulbs were broken. The broken glass fell on the heads of the front passengers. Many people were frightened as they screamed.

Lu Zhou was dumbfounded at what was happening in front of him. Professor Leonard, who was sitting next to him, climbed under his chair.

"Do you want to die? Duck down..."

Lu Zhou didn't respond. Leonard was so frightened that he quickly reached out his hand and pulled Lu Zhou's sleeves.

After hesitating for a while, Lu Zhou decided to follow suit.

The second he made eye contact with the man, he had a feeling in his heart that this flight wouldn't end peacefully...

Chapter 1430: Collateral Damage

"Flight N-177... This is the route dispatch center. Your direction has deviated from the preset route. Please correct the route immediately..."

"Flight N-177... Are you there?"

No one responded in the communication channel.

There were bloodstains everywhere in the cockpit of flight N-177.

The voice in the communication channel was like the whispers of a ghost.

Jean Ruzas kicked the corpse next to him. He was wearing a mechanical exoskeleton. He took off the headset from the ear of the captain, who had been shot, and tapped it twice with the index finger of his right hand.

A series of electrical noises passed by. The hijacker spoke in the communication channel calmly.

“Flight N-177 has been hijacked by us...

“If we see any spacecraft approaching within 100 kilometers of us...”

A cruel smile came up from the corners of his cold mouth as he stared at the pool of blood on the cockpit glass and continued.

“Every minute, we will clean up a section of the passengers...

“That’s all I have to say.”

After speaking, he closed the communication channel and threw the headset beside the corpse.

The other two militants standing in the cockpit stepped forward and removed the corpse lying in front of the cockpit. They took over the flight instead and sat in the pilot’s seat.

“The remote communication module has been removed.

“Re-igniting engine... raising power to 95%.

“The channel adjustment is completed, expected to contact target in 11 hours.”

A look of enthusiasm appeared in Jean Ruzas’ eyes.

“Good...

“Everything is going according to plan.”

Soon...

The entire Pan-Asia will be shrouded in terror!

This is revenge and punishment!

Without any hesitation, the militant sitting in the pilot's seat replied, "Yes, sir!"

While the route dispatch center received a warning from the hijacker and quickly reported the situation to the police, the Pan-Asian Fleet radar monitoring array had already discovered the abnormal situation.

A flight had deviated from its original track.

The spacecraft should have turned off the main engine and slowed down to enter the Earth-Moon system.

However, this spacecraft did not decelerate, nor did it make a sharp turn or even go the other way. Instead, it accelerated and was moving in a straight line!

Pan-Asian Fleet Command Center.

The commander of the Pan-Asian First Fleet had a solemn expression on his face.

Just two minutes ago, they received an alarm from the route dispatch center and learned that flight N-177 was hijacked by an unknown armed force.

A minute ago, they had confirmed that the flight named N-177 was the civilian transport spacecraft with abnormal routes.

"What is the situation now?"

Upon hearing the commander's query, the staff sitting in front of the console immediately replied, "The trajectory of the spacecraft has not changed, it is accelerating!"

The chief of staff standing nearby frowned and spoke after thinking for a moment.

"They may be planning to cross the Earth-Moon system in a straight line."

"Straight through the Earth-Moon system?" the consultant standing aside said with an incredulous expression on his face. He continued, "But how do they plan to stop? If they continue to accelerate, the remaining fuel is not enough for them to slow down. If they miss the deceleration window, they will become asteroids drifting in the solar system... This is equivalent to suicide!"

Aviation and aerospace were different.

Airplanes on Earth could make an emergency landing if they didn't have enough fuel. If the spacecraft flying in space didn't have enough fuel, forget about emergency landing, the final result would be eternal drift in space.

The commander looked at the predicted course outlined on the holographic star map. He frowned as an ominous premonition lingered in his heart.

Generally speaking, for the pirates who circulated near the asteroid belt, although they occasionally took hostages in addition to looting mining stations, they usually targeted mining ships with poor mobility and space workstations with low defense.

In recent years, with the popularity of mining drones, there had been fewer and fewer mining ships that required manual operation, so hostage cases had almost disappeared.

Targeting a civilian transport ship with twelve pairs of engines and kidnapping more than two hundred people was a major robbery. This was unprecedented in the history of aerospace!

With such a large horizontal thrust upper limit and acceleration, even a general military spacecraft might not be able to catch up any time soon.

Unless they had already begun to prepare for the robbery as soon as flight N-177 departed from the Mars orbiting space station.

"I propose to launch infrasonic missiles to suppress the attackers on the flight, then take over the flight through remote control and guide them to dock at the nearest space station."

The chief of staff immediately rejected the proposal from the consultant.

"No! Infrasonic weapons pose a threat to the lives of hostages and may irritate hijackers. Moreover, if the power is not large enough, it is difficult to penetrate the exoskeleton armor. It is more likely to damage the spacecraft!"

The consultant continued to ask without giving up.

"What about sending a ghost team to land?"

This time, the Army adviser standing next to him shook his head.

“Even the ghost squad can’t take care of all the hijackers in the cabin in an instant. Any mistake may cause the lives of the hostages to be threatened.”

Besides, sending the ghost team to the hijacked flight was still a problem.

The 12 pair-engined spacecraft had a headstart of two days.

The pursuit in space was not just a pursuit of distance but also a competition of speed!

If the two key parameters of speed and direction couldn’t be synchronized with the target, even if the two spacecrafts met in space, they would just pass by, or they could crash into each other.

After listening to the combat plan put forward by the subordinates, the commander, who stood in front of the console, pondered for a while before giving orders.

“Start the AI battlefield analysis system to simulate the results of the action.”

The staff sitting in front of the console immediately responded.

“Yes, sir!”

The AI battlefield analysis system was soon launched. According to the real-time calculation results of the quantum computer, the success rate of scheme A was less than 3%, and the success rate of scheme A was even more pitiful, less than 1%.

According to the results of the trajectory measurement, flight N-177 would arrive at the Earth-Moon system in 11 hours at most and pass through the Earth-Moon system at an unimaginable speed, then enter the circum-solar elliptical orbit with a 124-year navigation period, becoming completely out of control.

There were no dormant cabins on the flight, and the supplies they carried couldn’t even last for a week.

Once the deceleration window was missed, they would be dead.

While the people in the command room were discussing countermeasures, footsteps were heard from outside. A man in his 50s, dressed in formal clothes with combed hair, walked in.

When the man walked into the command room, a shocked expression appeared on everyone's face.

This person's name was Wu Zongwen. He was a member of the Pan-Asian Cooperation Central Assembly.

The news of the hijacked flight must have been leaked.

"Commander, I need an explanation."

The commander felt a headache, but he hid his emotions behind his stern face and explained concisely, "Flight N-177 has been hijacked by unidentified militants. We are trying to confirm the identity of the militants and launch rescues for the passengers—"

"I'm not here to listen to you tell the story again! This matter is being discussed on the internet right now, don't take me as a fool!" Representative Wu Zongwen said in a stern voice, "I hope you can truly be aware of the seriousness of the problem and properly solve the problem."

The commander said stiffly, "We are solving it!"

Wu Zongwen: "What is the plan?"

"We are trying to communicate with the hijackers on flight N-177 through the nearest space station. No matter what their demands are, we will try to persuade them to slow down and communicate with our negotiation experts."

"Very good." Wu Zongwen's expression on his face eased a little as he continued, "If you can negotiate, try not to make any moves that anger them. No matter what they ask."

The commander nodded. He was just about to respond.

However, at this moment, the military adviser who had not spoken yet suddenly spoke.

"Maybe they don't want anything."

Everyone in the command room froze.

The commander narrowed his eyes.

Yang Wu, former People's Liberation Army General Staff Department General Staff, from 2050, currently served as a military advisor to the Pan-Asian Fleet.

The reason for going to the future was that the authorities hoped to ensure the military's combat effectiveness in the future by sending officers from the peaceful era.

According to the international situation back then, the Chinese felt that if the Federation of Human Alliance was disintegrated, they would most likely break out in a war within 50 years.

However, the expected full-scale war did not break out.

And Yang Wu's original mission was canceled. Instead, he was assigned to the Pan-Asian First Fleet as a consultant.

Like other dormant people who were sent to this era because of historical issues, although he was assigned a specific job, he did not have much authority. He was neither capable of commanding the army of this era, nor was it possible for people of this era to trust in an old man from the past.

In essence, there was no difference between him and Director Li. Both were mascots of the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

"Don't want anything?" The army adviser frowned and said in disbelief, "How is this possible, kidnappers who don't want a ransom, I've never heard of it before."

"Not all ransom is in the form of money." Yang Wu continued after a pause, "This may be a suicide attack."

No one believed him.

"It's impossible!" The army adviser standing on the side said, "What are the benefits of doing this? Other than spreading panic..."

"Spreading panic is the point." Yang Wu continued in a calm tone, "By spreading panic, they can achieve their ulterior goals. I am certain that this is not the entire plan."

After being silent for a while, the commander ordered, "Start the AI battlefield analysis system to evaluate the possibilities described by Advisor Yang."

“Yes, sir!”

The results of the evaluation soon came out.

According to the judgment of the AI battlefield analysis system, the evaluation result obtained was less than 5%.

Yang Wu shook his head and spoke.

“You believe too much in the results of AI analysis, just like a medieval witch who is superstitious about crystal balls.”

Wu Zongwen, who was standing next to him, sneered with a faint voice.

“Something like that might happen in the barbaric early 21st century, but it’s now the 22nd century, it’s better for you to keep up with the times.”

Wu Zongwen no longer cared about the little consultant. Instead, he looked at the commander standing next to him and spoke in a warning tone.

“I’m warning you, this matter must be dealt with properly, no hostage casualties!

“The parliamentary elections are at a critical stage. If this matter is not handled well, the people will question Chairman Li Guangya and his ability to lead. If we are unable to gain an advantage in the central parliament, the Europa planetary development plan will be completely ruined!

“At all costs, protect the lives of all hostages!

“Do you understand me?”

The commander finally nodded after being silent for a long time.

“Roger that.”

Chapter 1431: You Will Kill Us All!

On flight N-177.

Lu Zhou, who looked away from the porthole, sighed softly.

"It seems that they are not going to let me go home."

Lu Zhou glanced sideways at Professor Leonard, who hid under his chair. He went silent for a while, then spoke to him in a quiet voice.

"We have to find a way to escape from here."

"Escape? How are you going to escape?" Professor Leonard lowered his voice and asked, "Don't do anything stupid, they are just trying to make money. Generally, these space pirates will release people if they take the ransom."

Lu Zhou looked at Professor Leonard, who was frightened. Lu Zhou looked baffled.

"... I don't know what spacecrafts are like in the 22nd century, but depending on the propeller, it should be ion thrusters. There may be differences in the navigation path, but the flight logic should not have changed. According to the current speed and flight status, they are trying to move past the deceleration window... I don't know how much fuel is left, but it will be extremely difficult to slow down."

Judging from the thrust behind this, this civil transport ship, who knew how much energy was left, was probably still moving at full speed at the moment.

Lu Zhou couldn't help but have a headache.

He felt like he was a person that avoided trouble, but for some reason, he was stuck in this mess in the 22nd century.

If only Wang Peng were here...

Lu Zhou looked at the trembling professor next to him. He sighed silently in his heart.

He knew that he probably couldn't count on this guy. He calmly used his finger on his left hand to open the cuff of his right hand, revealing a small bracelet. He observed the environment in the cabin and looked for an opportunity.

There were only two things that could be used.

A magnetic slingshot with decent damage, and a nitrogen shield that he had never used.

The robot person sent by Xiao Ai could be regarded as help, but since it was considered more of an object than a person, it was sitting in the luggage compartment.

Also, the robot was just a bodyguard sent by Xiao Ai; it wasn't under remote control by Xiao Ai. It might not have a good chance of winning against these armed militants...

Just as Lu Zhou was thinking about how to escape, a baby's cry suddenly sounded in the cabin.

His heart dropped to the bottom of his stomach.

"Make it shut up."

The hijacker wearing an exoskeleton standing in the ship's cabin cast his cold eyes on the woman holding the child.

The woman's face turned gray.

"I'm... I'm so sorry, my kid... might be hungry. I-I..."

The woman looked at the hijacker as she pleaded.

However, the pleading voice did not restore any humanity to the militant's cold eyes.

Instead, he gave her a cruel stare.

"I'll give you 10 seconds to make it shut up." The man raised the muzzle and pointed at the baby in her arms. "Or, I'll help you."

The woman panicked suddenly and pleaded, "No... I beg you, don't do this..."

"9."

The countdown had begun.

Under the pressure of the hijacker, the woman holding the child had lost her mind.

She desperately covered the child's mouth, trying to stop the child from crying, but the crying of the child became more and more out of control.

Leonard's face went pale; his lips trembled.

However, after some hesitation, the fear of death finally defeated the sense of justice in his heart. In the end, he did nothing, just like most people.

"Wait a second."

A voice suddenly came from the side. A girl with short hair who seemed to be of Chinese descent raised her hands and stood up tremblingly.

The second she stood up, the hijacker aimed his gun at her.

This action caused everyone in the cabin to turn their eyes away, for fear that he would pull the trigger and blood would come splattering.

Fortunately, the hijacker did not shoot. However, he spoke as if he was close to shooting.

"You interrupted my countdown, I hope you have a good reason."

"He's just a child. This will only make him cry harder and harder..." Although fearful, the girl still said, "Can you let me... calm him down?"

The hijacker raised his eyebrows. He seemed to think of something interesting, so he put his gun to the side.

The girl breathed a sigh of relief and leaned on the seat next to her. She walked carefully to the woman holding the baby, gave her a reassuring look, and took the baby from her arms.

She tried to overcome her fear and calm herself down. The girl hugged the child in her arms and hummed a lullaby softly, then patted the baby with her hand.

Soon, the soft voice calmed down the crying, and the baby's voice became quieter and quieter. His breathing became normal again, and he soon fell asleep.

"Here."

She returned the child to the woman and gave her a reluctant but reassuring smile.

“Your child... is cute.”

The woman looked at her gratefully and spoke.

“Thank you.”

“You’re welcome, I just—”

The coughing sound from the side interrupted this touching scene.

“Enough.”

The girl froze.

She looked back at the hijacker and the muzzle pointed at her. With her hands raised, she spoke in a trembling voice.

“I didn’t mean to offend you... I will go back now.”

“Who told you to go back?” With a cruel smile on the face of the hijacker, he said, “You interrupted me before, and you still haven’t paid for your mistakes.”

The girl’s lips trembled. She couldn’t say a word.

The woman sitting next to her holding the child wanted to help, but when she looked at the bloodthirsty expression on the hijacker’s face, she couldn’t say a word.

The hijacker smiled cruelly. He raised his gun and aimed it at the short-haired girl’s head.

“I’ll give you a chance. If you can tell me how many seconds have passed since the countdown, I will spare your life.”

How am I supposed to know?!

The girl was shaking, and sweat began to fall from her forehead.

Professor Leonard, who had been peeking from the beginning, closed his eyes in fear of the bloody scene that was about to come.

However, just when everyone thought without a doubt that the girl was done, a soft buzzing sound suddenly came from the side.

There was no time to defend.

Not time to even react.

The side of the hijacker's helmet made a crisp sound.

The helmet ruptured abruptly.

The hijacker tilted his head to the side, then fell to the ground silently.

The girl covered her mouth with her hands, stopping herself from screaming.

She didn't know exactly what had happened.

A rather handsome man sat up from his seat not far away.

Above his right wrist, there were some small metal balls about the size of peanuts rotating in a disorderly manner, as if they were being lifted by some invisible force field.

Lu Zhou looked at the passengers in the cabin and gave them a reassuring smile. He then walked to the side of the corpse and picked up the rifle that had fallen to the ground.

After fiddling with it, Lu Zhou looked back at Professor Leonard and asked, "Do you know how to use this?"

Professor Leonard squeezed a word from his throat.

"The lock has been opened, just pull the trigger."

"So it seems like weapons have not changed much."

"What are you going to do?"

"What else? Take control of the spacecraft."

"Are you crazy? Do you know how many hijackers are on board?" Professor Leonard stared at him with wide eyes. "You will kill everyone!"

Lu Zhou smiled faintly.

“Do you think we’ll survive by doing nothing?”

Judging by the speed of the spacecraft, these robbers did not intend for anyone to live.

He would rather choose a heroic death.

Just as Lu Zhou was heading to the luggage compartment, intending to wake up the robot man sent by Xiao Ai, Russ, who was in the cockpit, suddenly had a fierce look in his eyes.

On the screen, person number three’s icon had turned gray.

The voice of his teammate came from the communication channel.

“Number three disconnected... heart function failure.”

“Got it.” Ruzas’ right hand gently unlocked the safety. He placed his fingers on the trigger with a cruel smile on his face.

“Let me see, who wants some trouble...”

Chapter 1432: Nitrogen Shield!

Congressman Wu didn’t stay here for long, he left quickly after.

The spread of the hijacking story caused a mess. He had other business to settle, so he couldn’t stay here for too long.

The bureaucrats and parliamentarians involved in the Pan-Asian Cooperation were good at economic development and colonial development, but they added chaos to other departments.

The commander looked at Yang Wu, who was standing next to him. He spoke after being silent for a while.

“In fact, I agree with some of your viewpoints. When designing the AI battlefield analysis system, its calculation results were only used as a strategic reference. It is not advisable to rely too much on the calculation results.

“Back in my day, machinery was only an aid. We believe in human judgment more than the answers given by a machine.” Yang Wu looked at the commander standing next to him and said, “But I’ve thought about this. Technology is progressing, it is always being updated. You guys have proved the statistical superiority of the AI’s judgment, so it is understandable that you will trust its judgment more.”

The commander went silent for a while then said, “From your experience, what do you think their demands are?”

Yang Wu replied without thinking, “Tianzhou.”

“Tianzhou?” The commander frowned slightly and said, “You mean, they are planning to...”

“This is not an attack based on survival. The ultimate goal of a suicide attack is to cause maximum damage. If I were the hijacker, I would not be satisfied with the 220 passengers on the spacecraft. Flight N-177 passes through the Earth-Moon system, I will fly it directly to the Tianzhou space station.”

“At its maximum speed!”

Everyone in the command center took a deep breath after hearing this crazy plan.

The other consultant opened his mouth and spoke.

“This is...”

He wanted to say ridiculous.

The Tianzhou space station was the largest spaceport for the Pan-Asian Cooperation. It was also the first spaceport in Earth orbit. There were more than 30,000 residents, thousands of engineers, and also tens of thousands of tourists.

“Who would conduct such an attack?”

"If there are other regional alliances behind this... This kind of behavior is tantamount to a declaration of war!"

"It doesn't have to be other cross-regional alliances. It may be space pirates or the remnants of our cleanup operations... But now is not the time to discuss these. What we need is countermeasures." The commander was silent. He then looked at Yang Wu and said, "Do you have any suggestions?"

Yang Wu said without hesitation, "Destroy Flight N-177 before it causes more casualties!"

The second he finished speaking, everyone standing in the command room took a deep breath.

The consultant on the side spoke.

"No way! That's two hundred and twenty passengers! Do you want to send us all to a military court?!"

Yang Wu continued, "Compared to the lives of the 30,000 orbital residents and tens of thousands of stranded passengers on the Tianzhou, two hundred and twenty lives is nothing. I believe even the AI battlefield analysis system you trust will not hesitate to make the choice for the greater good."

After a pause, he looked at the commander standing next to him and said calmly, "Do you want to risk the lives of the tens of thousands of people aboard the Tianzhou, or to let those who will undoubtedly die, die in a meaningful way?"

"This is human life, not mathematics!" He rejected the proposal. The commander went silent for a while and continued, "Let's start negotiating with the hijacker. The negotiation window is set within 5 hours."

"In addition, let the sky soldiers' defense system turn on the laser collimator and stand by in lunar orbit."

"Destroying N-177 is our last option..."

"Yes, sir!"

After the order was issued, the entire command center became busy.

The commander looked at the weapon keyhole on the console and went silent.

He had no doubt that Consultant Yang, who was standing next to him, would definitely make the right choice. He was sent to this era for a reason.

But this was hundreds of lives...

It was not about courage, but about humanity.

...

In the darkness, a pupil lit up with a faint light.

That gleam of light was conspicuous in the dark cabin, like a firefly in the night.

“Speed, abnormal.”

“Judgment, failure.”

This was the robot resting cabin.

Like the other robots, they were sent here to board the flight.

Usually, they would stay here until the flight arrived at the destination.

However, its logic circuit and every sensor on its body were telling it that if it continued to wait, the meaning of its existence would disappear.

The mining robot unplugged the charging cable from its body. It walked stiffly to the computer next to it and pointed the index finger of its right hand.

A holographic panel appeared. The data stream flashed by as the progress bar in the pop-up window came to an end bit by bit.

This time it took a little longer to crack.

Fortunately, it did not take too long.

The robot looked at the person who appeared on the security camera screen and picked up the rifle from the ground. The light in the robot's pupils flickered slightly.

It spoke intermittently in a stiff voice.

“Protection, procedure, activation...”

“Restriction, removal...”

A few lights lit up in the pitch-black cabin.

All of the robots had been awakened...

...

Lu Zhou thought that although he had never been in a battle, he had seen a battle before, but even then, he didn't expect a real battle to be so different.

And after succeeding in a sneak attack by relying on his equipment superiority, he did underestimate the professionalism of these space pirates.

He first tried to wake up the robot bodyguard sent by Xiao Ai, then regain control of the cockpit.

However, when he first slipped out of the passenger cabin and moved toward the direction of the luggage compartment, he encountered a violent wave of bullets.

As the orange-yellow bullets rained on the alloy walls, Lu Zhou hid behind the shield in fear.

Fortunately, he opened the nitrogen shield in time. He relied on the surging air current to help him bounce off the flying bullets. Otherwise, he would have turned into a block of cheese.

“The direction of diatomic molecules was changed by a special force field?”

“This shield is interesting, I should research it when I have time... F*ck, nevermind about this, just think about how to survive for now!”

Faced with the fierce firepower, Lu Zhou found that he didn't even have a chance to fight back.

If the shield was on, although the enemy couldn't penetrate his nitrogen shield, his magnetic slingshot couldn't shoot out either.

As for the rifle...

That was useless.

Without the help of exoskeleton armor that could grip the gun, the recoil alone would injure any soldier.

Not to mention that he was just a scrawny scientist.

He believed that Wang Peng would be able to easily kill the opponent with this set of equipment. But he was just a scholar, so this kind of challenge was too difficult!

The two sides were in a stalemate in the corridor. No one could do anything.

Just when Lu Zhou was worried about the firepower on the opposite side, what he didn't know was that the two hijackers wearing exoskeleton armor were worried as well.

In fact, they were also astonished.

They had emptied two magazines.

However, the person hiding behind the shield was completely untouched!

One of the hijackers was angry. He cursed as he changed his gun magazine.

"Sh*t... Why can't we hit this guy?"

We can't be missing everything!

"The bullets we shot seem to hit a transparent wall. Who cares!"

Another hijacker took out a grenade from the exoskeleton and stuffed it into the launcher.

The teammate next to him had no time to hide before the explosion went off.

The orange-red flames burst out and engulfed the entire corridor.

The hijacker got up from the ground and felt the hot air around him. Another hijacker standing next to him looked at his companion in shock.

“Are you crazy?! Do you want to damage the spacecraft?! We have to drive it to avenge our dead brothers—”

“Haha, but it worked, didn’t it?”

The billowing smoke completely engulfed the second half of the corridor. It was impossible to see whether Lu Zhou was dead or alive, but no one could have survived such an explosion.

As for the thick smoke and flames...

There was a fire extinguishing system in the cabin. As long as the cabin structure was not damaged, there was nothing to worry about.

However, the hatch beside them suddenly opened.

The robots were like emotional puppets. They stepped out stiffly and ran toward them.

The two hijackers were taken aback for a second, but they quickly realized something was wrong. They turned their guns and pulled the trigger.

Flames burst out from the muzzles.

The orange-red bullets weaved an impenetrable rain of death in the air.

Metal parts flew up and down in the air while the broken arms and legs beating with electric sparks flew everywhere. The robots fell down one after another like zombies.

“Protection...”

These robots seemed to be dominated by some kind of mysterious power as they moved toward the two hijackers wearing exoskeleton armor at all costs.

When their legs were broken, they crawled with their hands.

When their arms were shot off, they moved with their neck.

As long as they had moving parts, they did not stop.

It was as if they were sacrificing themselves. They used every last inch of electricity in their bodies to reach the hijackers.

“Sh*t! These guys... are so persistent!”

The hijacker smashed a robot with his rifle. After that, he stepped on the arm that reached out to grab his foot.

These civilian-level robots were restricted by design, and many functions were not enabled. Besides, they had no ability to harm humans, so they could not fight against the armed hijackers.

However, while they were thinking this, they saw a rifle fly over their heads, landing near the robots.

The two hijackers had a bad feeling about this.

Sure enough, a robot reached out and caught the rifle.

“F*ck!”

The two hijackers tried to raise their rifles in horror, but they couldn't do anything. The robots blocked their movements and even blocked the rifles of the two with their chests and heads.

The two hijackers couldn't move as they watched the robots point their guns at them.

Then, they pulled the trigger!

The sparks from the gun muzzle were like raindrops.

Before they died, they didn't understand why these robots that were programmed to never hurt humans would attack them.

“Nicely done...”

The billowing smoke was finally evacuated by the vacuum fire extinguishing system. Lu Zhou, who almost choked to death, stood up from behind the shield and coughed.

He did not expect the grenade.

Fortunately, the robot man sent by Xiao Ai responded in a timely manner and rescued him from danger.

The robot nodded.

Suddenly, the situation changed.

The pupils of the robot suddenly contracted, and its legs violently flexed as it pushed Lu Zhou, who was walking toward him, away.

After being pushed by the robot, Lu Zhou didn't know what was going on. A dark shadow appeared out of nowhere.

Hand-to-hand combat broke out in an instant, and the winner was also determined in an instant.

The man wearing the combat exoskeleton, after severing the right arm of the robot with a dagger, disarmed it easily, then used the dagger to cut off the robot's neck.

Before dying, the robot firmly buckled the barrel of the gun with its left hand, trying to stop the man at the expense of himself.

However, the man's reaction was quite decisive. He threw away the rifle and took a step toward Lu Zhou, grabbing him.

It was too late to charge the magnetic slingshot.

Lu Zhou had nowhere to escape. Ruzas had a cruel smile on his face.

Although he still hadn't figured out how the seemingly defeated man killed the robot, it didn't matter anymore.

"It looks like you have a lot of fun gadgets.

"Unfortunately... This is war, boy."

He didn't give his opponent a chance to speak his last words at all. Instead, he stabbed with the dagger in his hand without hesitation.

However, his face completely froze.

The dagger seemed to have pierced a transparent wall; the airflow blew on his hair.

A thought came to his mind.

Wind?

How is that possible?

I am wearing a fully enclosed helmet...

Even though he realized that something was wrong, Ruzas had no time to think.

The nitrogen gas was compressed into an almost solid state. It directly penetrated his armor and smashed his internal organs.

The nitrogen shield did not release compressed nitrogen. Instead, it interfered with the diatomic molecules in the surrounding air through a special force field generated by the device, compressing the surrounding nitrogen into a vortex-like circulating gas wall.

As long as it was in an atmospheric environment, this kind of shield could theoretically defend almost all light weapons-level kinetic energy attacks. After understanding this principle, Lu Zhou immediately thought of another alternative usage.

The force field generated by the nitrogen shield directly acted on the nitrogen molecules in the target body, resulting in “armor-piercing” abilities!

Although it could only be used when the distance was close enough, this attack method, which was equivalent to ignoring the armor, was undoubtedly powerful for soft targets.

This was probably the cruelest way to use the nitrogen shield...

With his internal organs shattered into countless pieces, Ruzas choked on his blood and finally breathed his last breath in silent pain.

Lu Zhou looked at the swollen exoskeleton armor without the slightest pity in his eyes.

“When I was watching the military parade, your father wasn’t even born yet...”

“Who are you calling boy...”

Lu Zhou glanced at the shield generator on his arm that had exhausted the last bit of energy and began to gradually dissipate into black powder.

He sighed and said, “I wanted to save some energy for research, but it’s all gone now.”

Most of the system samples were one-time-use, and this nitrogen shield was an example.

However, Lu Zhou received this when he was still a “noob”. It was a miracle he managed to save it until now. Lu Zhou left it aside and went to the cockpit.

This flight had been drifting in the universe for two days, and it was reasonable to say that it should arrive at the station in at most one day.

However, instead of decelerating, the spacecraft was still accelerating. He didn’t know if there was enough fuel left to slow down, let alone how many minutes or even seconds were left in the window going into Earth-Moon system orbit.

His top priority now was to rescue the kidnapped captain so that the flight could return to the normal course as soon as possible.

However, when Lu Zhou arrived in the cockpit, he saw two corpses lying in a pool of blood.

“Sh*t!”

As Lu Zhou looked at the miserable situation in front of him, his face turned dark in an instant.

Judging from the uniform worn by the two of them...

He was in trouble.

Chapter 1433: Eleven Hours of Crisis!

“He will kill us!”

Curled up next to Professor Leonard, a black guy repeated this sentence for the third time in a nervous tone.

Just as Professor Leonard hesitated on whether to comfort him or not, the black guy suddenly had a trace of panic in his eyes. His shoulders trembled as he continued, "I remember who those people are... The one lying on the ground is Alando, and their leader is Jean Ruzas. A week ago, the Pan-Asian Cooperative First Fleet destroyed their operation. Apparently, a full 20 tons of addictive alpha neurotoxins were seized. This incident directly caused the price of medicines in New London to increase several times. I remember clearly!"

The medicines were obviously not flu medicines, but the more profitable ones.

As for that Ruzas, he was an internationally renowned air thief. Two years ago, he was listed as a five-star wanted criminal by Interpol, and he had been at large until today.

Even though Professor Leonard had been teaching and doing academic work on Earth before, he was not completely ignorant of what was happening in space. He had heard a little about these space pirates before.

He didn't expect that his own life would one day come into contact with this name.

Leonard, who originally planned to say something to comfort the black boy, had a trace of despair in his eyes.

They had encountered the most vicious pirates in this airspace!

A few seconds ago, he still had some hope for Lu Zhou's heroic endeavors, but now, it seemed like it would be a miracle just to survive...

The locked cabin door suddenly opened from the outside.

Hearing the sound of the door opening and the quick footsteps, he was as shocked as he was nervous, and he subconsciously wanted to shrink under the chair.

However, he caught a glimpse of the face that appeared at the door from the corner of his eye.

The expression on his face gradually turned into unbelievable surprise, and he quickly felt intense ecstasy.

It wasn't just Professor Leonard who felt this way; the same happened with all of the passengers who were fidgeting in the cabin.

The moment the door opened, their hearts were beating out of their chests, for fear that they would be greeted with vicious faces and rifle shots.

The moment they saw the face that appeared at the door, people unanimously breathed a sigh of relief, and what came to their hearts was the intense joy and uncontrollable excitement!

The short-haired girl who had been rescued by Lu Zhou earlier clapped her hands.

The crisp applause broke the silence in the cabin. Like a spring rain that melted the snow and ice, it spread in just a few seconds, turning into a thunderstorm.

People cheered, whistled, and stood up excitedly. They wanted to hug him and cheer for their hero.

Since he was the one who appeared instead of the vicious bandit, there was only one possibility.

There was no doubt that they were saved!

If only...

Things were actually that simple.

"Quiet... Just quiet down." Lu Zhou looked at the enthusiastic girl who cheered for him. She came over and hugged him. He pushed her aside and raised his hands, gesturing everyone to calm down.

When they noticed the serious expression on Lu Zhou's face, everyone gradually began to realize that the situation was not as simple as they thought, so they calmed down a little.

Lu Zhou only coughed slightly when the cheering sound stopped.

"I'll just make this short..."

"Does anyone know how to fly this thing?"

...

Jinling Hospital No.3.

As usual, Director Li brought some fruits to the ward to visit Wang Peng, who had just regained consciousness.

Seeing Director Li walked into the ward, Wang Peng, who was sitting on the bed, asked immediately, "When can I be discharged from the hospital?"

"You have to stay in the hospital for at least three days. This is also for your own good. You will have time to get familiar with some of the new things of this era." Director Li put the fruits on the bedside table and watched the young man sitting in the hospital bed as he said with a smile, "A few months ago, someone slept on the road two days after leaving the hospital. He was returned to the hospital by the police. One reason, guess what?"

"He couldn't find a place to live?"

"This is one of the reasons." Director Li said with a sigh, "The world's information technology is too advanced, and the technology we were accustomed to has been swept into the historical grave by this era. New things are beyond our imagination.

"Back then, not having a mobile phone is equivalent to isolating yourself from society. But in this era, there is no such thing as a mobile phone. Instead, there are various forms of smart wearable devices and even implants in the human body. Speaking of which... The people from the Freezing Human Rights Protection Fund should have already contacted you, right?"

Wang Peng nodded.

"They came here yesterday."

"Did they talk about volunteering with you?"

"A little."

"Then what are your plans?"

Wang Peng thought for a while and said, "From what they suggested... If everything goes well, I plan to go to the school they recommended for a year of preparatory course, then think about the future."

After all, the Freezing Human Rights Protection Fund was a non-profit charity organization established by Lu Zhou. It had a history of more than 100 years and had a very good reputation throughout the Pan-Asian region.

The main purpose of this foundation was only to help the frozen people from the past to find their place in this world.

The Pan-Asian cooperation had reached a high level of wealth, especially in the prosperity of the Chinese region. The unemployed could rely on unemployment subsidies to meet basic needs for food, clothing, housing, transportation, and some consumer goods. However, the mainstream value was still to encourage people to contribute to society.

Even though most people were quite decadent after waking up, the Freezing Human Rights Protection Fund was still working hard to fulfill the responsibilities of the times and try to integrate these people from ancient times into the current society.

Wang Peng didn't know whether he had any value in this era, but he believed in Professor Lu's wisdom and his plan for the future.

Since this fund was founded by him alone, and he had no better options, perhaps following their arrangement was a good choice.

"... Don't worry too much about the future. If it doesn't work, you can do charity work like me and help other young people from that era. Or go to a military school, utilize your past resume and your loyalty to the state. This society is quite tolerant. Only stubborn people are rejected. The key lies in whether you are willing to learn."

Director Li smiled and waved his hand awkwardly.

Wang Peng went silent for a while.

"Back to the army?"

"Sort of, I know officers who joined the Pan-Asian First Fleet. For example, Li Gaoliang, from the Airborne Brigade, was in the military academy for three years, and is now the commander of the Third Orbit Marine Brigade."

"Li Gaoliang?!"

Director Li asked, “Do you guys know each other?”

Wang Peng smiled bitterly.

“You could say so.”

Back when he was serving in the military, Wang Peng saved that guy’s life.

He didn’t expect this guy to also go dormant.

The picture in the holographic TV on the ceiling of the ward suddenly changed.

The reporter who received the press release suddenly became serious.

“Breaking news...

“According to the information from the route control center, flight N-177, which was originally scheduled to arrive at the Tianzhou space station at 8 o’clock tomorrow, was hijacked by unknown armed forces.

“So far, the Pan-Asian First Fleet has dispatched two sentry-class patrol ships to rescue. The Pan-Asian Orbital Defense Force has also used all available facilities to organize the evacuation of residents and stranded passengers on the Tianzhou space station.”

The scene switched, and the shot was moved from the studio to the Tianzhou space station. The crowd inside the customs hall was in chaos.

All 12 shuttles deployed had been put into use.

But even then, it was very difficult to evacuate the tens of thousands of stranded passengers, engineers, and residents on the space station within ten hours!

Wang Peng and Director Li opened their mouths at the same time, not knowing what to think, nor knowing what to say.

Then the camera switched again, showing the space station of the Pan-Asian First Fleet. A group of soldiers wearing black exoskeleton armor were boarding a long shuttle-shaped landing ship.

An officer walked to the camera and took off the folding mask on his helmet.

Facing the live broadcast drone and the microphones, Li Gaoliang spoke in a serious tone.

“The situation is still under control. We are communicating with the hijackers and doing our best to ensure the safety of the hostages. Of course, if the other party takes action, we do not rule out the use of troops to fight for the safety of the passengers on board.”

“Hello, I am a reporter from Beijing TV. What is the other party’s request?”

“Sorry, I don’t know the specifics, my superior has not informed me...”

“Why evacuate the passengers on the Tianzhou? There are rumors that the other party refused to communicate. Is this really the case?”

Li Gaoliang: “The evacuation is for safety reasons. We cannot assume that those hijackers are acting logically.”

A reporter asked sharply, “In other words, this might be a retaliation attack?”

“Yes.” Li Gaoliang nodded his head solemnly. He continued in a serious tone, “We cannot rule out this possibility.

“This may be a suicide attack.

“Just like 9/11.”

The reporters who surrounded him were shocked...

Chapter 1434: Slingshot Effect!

“... The communication module was physically dismantled. Those hijackers seemed to have no intention of having a conversation. The dismantlement was thorough, even the backup communication system was removed, and the remote control modules and autopilot systems... Damn it!”

Crouched in front of the console was a short man with glasses.

His name was Fan Sheng, and he was an engineer at an aerospace company in Pan Asia.

About a week ago, he went to Tiangong City to attend an academic seminar. He did not expect to encounter such a mess on the way home.

But thank god he was here; otherwise, with the robot that Xiao Ai sent ruined in the previous battle, Lu Zhou really didn't know what to do.

Seeing that Fan Sheng was sweating profusely, Lu Zhou frowned and asked, "Can you fix it?"

"It's impossible to fix it. Judging by the violent removal method, they never thought about reinstalling it later." A wry smile appeared on Fan Sheng's face. He raised his arm to wipe the sweat from his forehead and said, "But fortunately, their understanding of this transport ship is poor. I changed the settings of the maintenance system and switched to developer mode. Although the channel is narrower, the audio call should be usable."

Lu Zhou immediately asked, "Can it be used now?"

"Yes... I received an unfamiliar communication request here. It should be the Pan-Asian Fleet who noticed the anomaly on our side."

Lu Zhou: "Connect them immediately!"

Fan Sheng quickly nodded, then tapped on the holographic panel.

"Ok... Done!"

The picture on the holographic panel changed. A call window was quickly presented in front of Lu Zhou and Fan Sheng.

The video was blank, and the person standing at the other end of the video couldn't be seen, but they could clearly hear their voice.

"... This is the Pan-Asian First Fleet. Flight N-177, can you hear me?"

"If you can, we just want to talk. No matter what you're asking for, we just want a conversation..."

Lu Zhou took a deep breath and said, "This is flight N-177... I am a passenger on the flight. We have regained control of the flight from the hijackers."

The other end of the call was silent for a while. They seemed to be surprised by the news.

Lu Zhou waited quietly for two seconds. There was a response from the other end of the communication channel.

Navigator: "Can you slow down?"

"Yes... We have turned off the main engine, but the automatic navigation module has been removed by the hijackers, and the two captains have also been killed by the hijackers." Lu Zhou had a headache looking at the channel data displayed on the navigator. He said, "You better send someone over to help us... The hijackers can board this transport ship, surely you guys have a way too?"

This time there was a longer silence in the communication channel.

Navigator: "Flight N-177, when you hear this news, I hope you can stay calm..."

Hearing the heavy tone, Lu Zhou vaguely had a guess, and his mood began to tank.

Fan Sheng was next to him. He was silent for a while, then said, "Tell me."

Navigator: "You missed the last deceleration window 37 minutes ago."

Lu Zhou: "That means we can't come back anymore?"

Navigator: "Yes..."

Lu Zhou didn't answer immediately. Instead, he glanced at Fan Sheng next to him.

"Is that true?"

Fan Sheng's face was pale. His lips trembled as he nodded.

"... That might be true. But surely there is another way! What about your landing spacecraft? At least give us some supplies..."

"The Dolphin 230 transport ship has 12 pairs of K-15 ion thruster engines. In terms of acceleration, even if the patrol ship of the Pan-Asian First Fleet leaves from the nearest spaceport now, it won't catch up within 72 hours. The rescue window is only 11 hours. Once you pass by the Earth-Moon system, it

will take two weeks at the earliest for our aircraft carrier to complete docking with you.”

Lu Zhou looked at Fan Sheng and continued to ask, “Is that true?”

Fan Sheng was pale as he nodded.

“At the beginning of the design, the dolphin-type civil transport ship was designed to facilitate passengers to travel between the Earth-Moon system and the Mars system quickly. Therefore, 12 pairs of main engines were installed on the tail... The military transport ship of China that is carrying ammunition and endurance supplies may not be able to catch up.

“Those space pirates have been preparing to ambush us since a week ago...”

In the headquarters of the Pan-Asia First Fleet, Yang Wu stepped forward and patted the navigator on the shoulder while looking at the blank video call window.

“Let me communicate with them.”

The navigator glanced at the military advisor and stepped out of his seat.

Yang Wu sat in front of the console in place of the navigator. He stared at the blank holographic video window and spoke in a serious and calm voice.

“This is Yang Wu from the Pan-Asian First Fleet, military operations consultant.

“I am sorry to inform you of this news, but the possibility of your safe return is very slim. At the soonest, it will take two weeks for our rescuers to arrive. Therefore, we need you to take some necessary self-rescue measures.

“If you can control this flight, I hope you can turn on the left steering engine, change the current course, and avoid the direct collision with the Tianzhou space station.”

Lu Zhou: “How many degrees left?”

Yang Wu: “If you are unsure, keep the left steering engine running at full power for more than 720 seconds.”

720 seconds...

Turning left at full power for 720 seconds, this was tantamount to avoiding Earth directly and head toward the deep dark space.

Lu Zhou: "Do you mean to give us up?"

Yang Wu said in a serious tone, "We have never given up on you. This is just for the safety of the Tianzhou spacecraft and the tens of thousands of residents on the space station. We hope you can keep a safe distance from them. We will do our best to rescue you, but I also hope that you will consider the greater good."

"What is your name?"

"Yang Wu."

"Yang Wu." Lu Zhou stared at the blank holographic window and said, "There are more than 200 passengers on board, most of them part of Pan-Asia, others from all over the world. I agree with your opinion that the greater good is important, but we are far from that stage. As long as I am here and I am still alive, I will not allow them to die for no reason."

Yang Wu: "Can you drive a transport ship? What do you want to do?"

Lu Zhou chuckled.

"The principles are actually the same. The only difference is that the operation is more cumbersome now. The essence of spaceflight is a mathematical problem, and as long as it is a mathematical problem, there is a solution."

Yang Wu squinted his eyes. He stared at the holographic screen and spoke in a deep voice.

"Who are you?"

"It doesn't matter who I am, I just need your side to cooperate with me."

The communication call ended.

Flight N-177 seemed to have made up its mind to gamble on the fate of itself and the Tianzhou ship. It proceeded along the established route.

The Pan-Asian First Fleet command Room was roped in nervous tension.

Everyone stared at the flashing green dot on the radar.

“The route has not changed. Flight N-177 is heading to Tianzhou!”

“A collision is expected in 11 hours!”

“Aim at them, we can’t let the tens of thousands of residents on the Tianzhou be at risk!”

“They have no chance of surviving...”

“It’s not impossible.” The aerospace technology consultant, who had not spoken, suddenly said, “Although the probability is probably less than 1%...”

The commander looked at him immediately and said, “Why?”

“Slingshot effect.” The aerospace technology consultant continued while looking at the commander, “Although according to the current course, their remaining fuel is insufficient to slow down, if the slingshot effect can be used, it may not be impossible.”

The military adviser frowned and asked, “Slingshot effect? I remember that. Isn’t it used to accelerate unmanned space probe?”

“It isn’t only for acceleration. When the planet moves to the right on the horizontal plane, if the spacecraft flies over the planet from the left side of the planet at the right angle, it will receive a rightward impulse from the planet. In theory, if they fly over the Earth in orbit, as long as they intersect at the right angle, they can use the slingshot effect to extend the rescue window.”

Commander: “How long can it be extended?”

“I don’t know, shouldn’t you ask the computer about this kind of thing?”

The commander immediately looked at the staff and ordered, “Start the AI battlefield analysis system, I need to know the success rate of the plan and the possible risks.”

The progress bar on the holographic screen flickered.

Soon, the evaluation results appeared in front of everyone.

This result shocked everyone.

“The success rate is 2%... The probability of collision with the Tianzhou space station while flying by the geosynchronous orbit is 75%... Sh*t, this is assuming that there are experienced pilots on flight N-177!”

“It’s too difficult! Too many variables are difficult to control! The slingshot effect cannot accurately control the running speed and direction. Even an experienced pilot wouldn’t do this!”

“This is nonsense!”

“They are crazy!”

The commander had a blank expression. His fists were tightly clenched, as if he was hesitant.

Yang Wu glanced at him in silence and asked, “Is it worth it?”

Putting tens of thousands of people at risk for 200.

Is this really worth it?

...

To be honest, Lu Zhou didn’t spend much time considering whether it was worth it or not.

As a scholar, he only thought about one problem right now, which was the optimal solution.

The problem was filled with precise parameters, and no matter which parameter was adjusted, a little careless mistake might lead to extremely serious accidents.

They would fly by the geosynchronous orbit in 11 hours and have a high probability of colliding with the Tianzhou space station.

To be honest, the window period was short, not to mention the complicated manual navigation.

His calculations must be accurate. He had no room for even a small error.

If he wanted to survive, he must make use of every working fluid reserve, ignite the side engine at the critical moment, and use the slingshot effect to complete the final deceleration.

The engineer named Fan Sheng suddenly spoke in despair.

“I bet we are targeted.”

“Targeted?”

“Right now we are like a missile, crashing straight into the Tianzhou.” Fan Sheng said bitterly, “It must be like this in their eyes. Orbital defense weapons will definitely be used. If I were them, I certainly will not allow this to happen.”

“I don’t rule out this possibility, but I believe it will not happen.” Lu Zhou was silent for a while. He reached out his hand and patted Fan Sheng’s shoulder. “Go to the cabin and rest for a while, I want to be alone.”

Fan Sheng: “Can you tell me, what are you going to do?”

Lu Zhou: “Slingshot effect.”

Fan Sheng opened his mouth. After a while, he spoke.

“That is insane...”

After leaving the cockpit, Fan Sheng returned to the cabin. He tried to look upbeat as he walked back to his seat in silence and sat down.

Professor Leonard sighed and looked sadly at the starry sky outside the windows. He said, “Are we dead? Can you give me something?”

Fan Sheng: “Not for certain, but it’s not much better.”

The eleven-hour wait was long.

The whole world was drawn to the flight that was out of control.

The orbital residents who could not evacuate in time walked to the floor-to-ceiling windows, praying for the spacecraft that was approaching, as well as for their own destiny.

A dark figure was seen getting closer and closer, blocking their sight of the moon.

Then, a miracle happened.

The huge spacecraft did not collide with the space station. In the end, it passed by the Tianzhou space station.

Sitting in the cockpit, Lu Zhou slowly breathed a sigh of relief as he collapsed in the driver's seat.

Inside the cabin, Professor Leonard stared nervously at the towering fortress outside the window.

He could clearly see the residents in the space station windows who were looking at them.

This was probably the greatest moment in human history.

At least one of them!

A man from 100 years ago saved a flight out of control and everyone on the flight.

Even at the last moment, people still did not give up hope and chose to believe in each other.

"Back in my days, we usually plan for the worst, even though I am not a pessimist..."

Yang Wu took off the hat from the top of his head and put it in his arms. He looked at the commander and said solemnly, "It is your courage that saved the two hundred passengers."

"We were also planning for the worst..." The commander took a deep breath of the cold air. His tight shoulders finally relaxed as he said, "There were so many people who believed in us."

"I didn't want to let them down."

This disaster made the Pan-Asian people more united.

Even so, he didn't want anything like this to happen again.

On flight N-177.

Cheers and applause sounded again.

The spacecraft flying by the geosynchronous was slowly sailing from the back of the earth toward the sun.

The sunlight lit up the blue horizon, and the blue planet looked beautiful under the morning shine.

A child stood in front of the windows as he stared at the shocking scene outside the window like it was a dream.

He didn't know that he had just experienced the most dangerous moment in his life.

All he knew was that he, who was born and raised on Mars, saw the most spectacular sunrise in his life just now.

He turned his head excitedly and looked at his mother.

"Mommy, is that Earth?"

The childish voice was full of curiosity.

The mother sitting next to him smiled slightly and said softly, "Yeah..."

"That's where mommy was born..."

Chapter 1435: Aftermath

Flight N-177 decelerated successfully.

The patrol ship of the Pan-Asian First Fleet had set off 11 hours ago and was expected to catch up with them in 48 hours.

When the time arrived, professional pilots would come to take over the flight, and professional equipment would replenish the flight and take them home.

On the other hand, the remaining passengers and the 6 flight attendants on the flight formed a temporary rescue group to maintain order on the flight. They distributed food and water for the elderly, children, and other passengers.

When Lu Zhou returned to the cabin again, many people gave him hugs and thanks.

Some people hoped to exchange virtual community contact information with him. However, Lu Zhou, who was from the 21st century, was completely confused about the virtual communities and the likes. In the end, he gave out his outdated email address, leaving people at a loss.

After eating lunch, Lu Zhou left his seat and got up. He went to the corridor outside the cabin.

The bodies of the two hijackers had been removed. The volunteers composed of passengers dragged them into the already empty robot storage area.

As for the piles of robot remains on the ground, no one moved them. It seemed that they were intended to be handled by their owners and the Pan-Asian authorities.

Lu Zhou quickly found the rusty old-fashioned robot.

In the previous battle, the hijacker wearing the exoskeleton armor had completely destroyed it in a violent manner, so what was lying there was just a pile of metal wreckage.

However, even so, Lu Zhou still wanted to thank it.

“Thank you.”

Lu Zhou looked at the lifeless robot and mourned for a while.

Although they didn’t spend much time together, and there was no conversation, in these short days, it had saved Lu Zhou’s life twice.

Perhaps it was because he had been with Xiao Ai for too long, or because the robots were particularly human-like, he always felt that he couldn’t completely treat them as machines.

It was almost like the robot was Lu Zhou’s friend.

On the way back to the cabin, Lu Zhou saw a little girl with a cute ponytail, about seven or eight years old, wiping her tears with her small hands, sobbing quietly.

Lu Zhou walked forward and squatted down in front of her. He asked in a comforting tone, "Where are your parents?"

"My tail... she... she broke."

"... Tail?"

The girl looked up at Lu Zhou. She nodded with tears in her eyes and opened her right fist, revealing the thing that looked like a memory card in her palm.

"Tail... She's Lili's good friend. Every time I am sad, she sings to me."

The girl's voice became even sadder.

She sniffed and looked down at the memory card in her hand as she spoke.

"Don't worry. When Lili returns to Earth, she will fix you with her pocket money. Then, I will buy you a pretty..."

Lu Zhou: "..."

So the "Tail" is a robot...

When he realized that, in order to save him, the robot Xiao Ai had sent had activated every robot on the ship, he couldn't help but feel a little ashamed.

If only I had money on me.

If I had money, I would definitely buy her the most expensive robot.

Unfortunately, the only money he had was borrowed from the Englishman. And even after he arrived on Earth, he didn't know how much of his own wealth he could inherit.

"If Tail knows that you are so sad because of her, she will be very sad too..."
Lu Zhou touched the little girl's head and smiled. "Go find your parents, they are worried about you."

"Ok..."

Perhaps she was touched by the sunny and handsome smile, the little girl nodded. Although there were still tears in her eyes, she felt much better than before.

She stood up and patted the corner of her skirt. She politely bowed her head to Lu Zhou and said thank you, then ran away in the direction of the cabin.

Lu Zhou thought for a while before returning to the previous pile of machine wreckage.

After groping for a while, he pulled out a black cuboid about the size of a harmonica from the broken robot.

“Is this the memory card?”

It looked much heavier than the one in the little girl’s hand, but the connection port and shape were similar.

Is it because this robot is too old?

“When we return to Earth, I will also give you a new body.”

At least one that can talk.

Of course, if I have enough money...

Lu Zhou stood in the corridor for a while. He had nothing else to do. He looked at the scenery outside the window for a while, then turned and returned to the cabin.

When he returned to the cabin again, people finally stopped cheering at him, and they also stopped doing other things that bothered him.

Lu Zhou returned to his seat and sat down. He took out the brain-computer neural interface from the seat and was about to connect to the database on the spacecraft to continue enhancing his knowledge.

However, not far from his seat, a woman with a pretty face and a mature figure put down the baby, got up from her seat, and walked toward him.

“I just wanted to say thank you.”

Lu Zhou looked up at her and recognized this lady as the mother he had saved earlier.

"You're welcome." Lu Zhou looked at her and nodded. He asked casually, "Speaking of which, where is your husband?"

"I don't have a husband."

"Sorry, I was insensitive."

"No, it's not what you think." The mature lady smiled and asked, "Speaking of which, sir, you were dormant?"

Professor Leonard frantically looked at him. Lu Zhou didn't know what he wanted to express, but after some thought, he gave an ambiguous answer.

"Why do you say that?"

"Many dormant people who have been frozen for a long time are confused about the moral values of the current society after they wake up, especially in regard to marriage and family."

"Like what?"

"For example, in this era, there isn't the traditional concept of family from a century ago. Although some people still get married, most people still prefer to live alone. As for love, there are many similar substitutes in the virtual world."

Lu Zhou looked at Professor Leonard and cast an unexpected look at him.

Professor Leonard shrugged and said, "She's right. The old-fashioned style of marriage was retired about half a century ago. My father was fifty when I was born, through artificial organs and scientific methods. I don't have a mother. I know that my egg donor is a female of Italian descent, but I have never seen her."

Lu Zhou looked at Professor Leonard in amazement. He opened his mouth, unsure of what to say.

"This is..."

"If you want to feel pity for me, forget about it. I think this is actually quite good. Everyone is like this. Two-parent families are rare."

Lu Zhou opened his mouth, still unable to understand this strange concept.

He believed that his viewpoints were already relatively liberal, and he accepted that marriages might not necessarily last for a lifetime. He also believed that there was no need to marry a person for the sake of getting married. But he still couldn't accept this concept of family.

Can a child without a father or mother really have a healthy and complete childhood?

I always feel that if you don't want to raise the child together, you shouldn't have a child at all.

This is out of respect for the child.

However, in this era, this concept he couldn't understand seemed to have become commonplace.

His instinct told him that this was not good, but philosophy was beyond his professional scope.

"Of course, nothing is absolute. There are also many couples who will enter the palace of marriage, but today's society is more tolerant and does not exclude or persecute dissidents."

The lady turned her head and threw a smile at Lu Zhou.

"And, after seeing you, I feel like I believe in love again."

Is she...

Hitting on me?

Lu Zhou hesitated slightly and said with a confused look, "But you don't even know my name..."

"A name is just a word. What I value more is your maturity, stability, reliability, and... well, your masculinity? Anyway, you're not like the scaredy-cat next to you."

Professor Leonard suddenly became unhappy. He interjected, "What do you mean scaredy-cat?"

The woman ignored Professor Leonard. She took a step closer with a smile and spoke to Lu Zhou.

“Only you bravely stood up and saved me and my child, if you want—”

“Sorry, I already have someone else.”

Although, like everyone else, she has become a memory of the past...

The woman was surprised by Lu Zhou’s answer.

But soon, the surprised expression turned into a smile as she continued, “If you feel that your past is too much of a burden, I don’t mind developing another kind of relationship with you.”

Lu Zhou: “Sorry, I do mind.”

Woman: “...”

Chapter 1436: I Am Lu Zhou

As Professor Leonard looked at the lady from behind, a trace of disappointment appeared on his face.

He turned his head to look at Lu Zhou and said, “You shouldn’t have rejected her.”

“Why?”

“You are not in the system. Even if you have an ID card, you probably aren’t registered in the household registration database. You don’t receive benefits from the Pan-Asian cooperation. You can’t open a personal account. Sooner or later, you will need help. Your identity information would have been canceled a long time ago. It is not that simple to go through the Pan-Asian’s household registration procedures...”

After taking a peek at the side and seeing that no one was looking here, Professor Leonard leaned close to Lu Zhou and continued in a low voice, “I

know a little Chinese. Listening to that lady's words, she should be Chinese... Do you know what this means?"

"What does it mean?"

"Among the household registrations of many member states of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, the one with the highest value and the most difficult to apply is the household registration of China. If you marry her and successfully naturalize for 12 months, you will be able to pay me back the credits you borrowed—"

"F*ck off."

Perhaps Leonard was frightened by Lu Zhou's tone, he shrank his neck and immediately shut his mouth.

...

Lu Zhou originally thought that his refusal was not polite enough, but he did not expect that he underestimated the passion of people in this era.

Over the past two days, the woman had been approaching him constantly and using romantic words she probably read from a romance novel.

Perhaps it was because the way people expressed their love in this era was so straightforward, in addition to feeling embarrassed, Lu Zhou felt violated.

Bewildered by Lu Zhou's reaction, Professor Leonard finally spoke after two days.

"Don't tell me... you actually like men."

Lu Zhou, who was drinking water, almost choked to death by the water. He coughed several times before he responded.

"What?"

*F*ck!*

If I choke to death from drinking water after saving us from the hijackers, that would be embarrassing.

“I was just curious.” Professor Leonard shrugged and glanced at the front row. “Even if you don’t like her, why not give it a try? Or do you not like the fact that she has children?”

“Why do I have to waste time trying? I don’t agree with your logic...” Lu Zhou put the drinking water bag aside and continued, “Moreover, in our era, romance should be more subtle. Anyway, I can’t accept it.”

“I see... That is a valuable piece of information.”

After hearing this, Professor Leonard pinched his chin and nodded.

However, he suddenly realized that Lu Zhou had quietly moved away from him.

Leonard quickly realized what was going on, so he explained, “Don’t be mistaken... I mean value in the sense of ancient cultural studies.”

Lu Zhou: “...”

...

Two days after passing by the Tianzhou space station, the two patrol ships of the Pan-Asian Cooperation First Fleet arrived at the flight N-177.

After the merging operation was completed, the two patrol ships sandwiched flight N-177, while the docked patrol ship supplied the propellant for the flight.

As Lu Zhou looked at the Pan-Asian soldiers boarding the flight, his heart finally relaxed. The other tired faces in the cabin also showed expressions of relief.

This was probably the longest flight they had even taken in their lives.

However, for Lu Zhou, this was a “normal” length of time for a flight between Mars and Earth.

In addition to the condolences, the soldiers of the Pan-Asian Cooperation also checked the identity cards of the passengers on the ship.

One reason was to eliminate potential safety hazards and prevent the accomplices of those space pirates from hiding in the passengers, and the other reason was to check whether anyone was missing or killed.

To be honest, when it was his turn, Lu Zhou was a little nervous.

After all, he was not in the system. If a problem was found, it would be difficult to explain himself.

Fortunately, his worries were superfluous because Xiao Ai was as reliable as ever.

When the soldier who scanned his ID card found no problems, he politely returned the card to him, then walked to the next passenger.

These soldiers did not interact much with the passengers.

After recovering the corpses and the wreckage of the robots, some of them returned to the patrol ship, leaving only the pilot and two marines on the flight.

Lu Zhou was curious as to what they would write in the investigation report after seeing the robot corpses.

The magnetic slingshot was easy to explain, but he really didn't know how to explain the nitrogen shield.

But what was interesting was that those Pan-Asian Cooperation soldiers did not question him too much. They merely expressed surprise and admiration for his brave actions, then went on to do other things.

After the completion of the fuel supplement, flight N-177 began on its return journey.

A professional pilot operated the spacecraft and repaired the dismantled modules. There were no accidents in the second half of the voyage...

Lu Zhou was about to arrive at the Tianzhou space station.

"The flight will arrive in 15 minutes. You will stop at the Tianzhou space station for a while, then take the shuttle to Yangtze River Delta city group: Jinling City.

"As for the compensation, Pan-Asian Airlines and the Pan-Asian Air Traffic Control Bureau will negotiate with you in the future. We will inform you of the cause of the accident as soon as the investigation results come out.

"We are sincerely sorry for what has happened..."

Lu Zhou didn't pay attention to what the soldier said after.

As he looked at the azure planet reappearing in the window and the towering spaceport, his heart was filled with shock, and his heartbeat gradually accelerated.

It was difficult to describe the feelings that were boiling in his heart at the moment.

In addition to the majestic spaceport and azure planet, what was printed in his eyes was partly excitement, partly anxiety, and some inexplicable emotions.

Perhaps this was what homesick felt like.

He had been away for a hundred years.

Most people hadn't even lived a hundred years.

But to him, everything from a century ago seemed to have happened yesterday.

In the blink of an eye, everything changed...

...

Pan-Asia, Yangtze River Delta city group, Jinling.

A crowd was waiting next to the landing area of the airport.

Except for some people joining in on the fun, most of them were personal media and journalists from all over the world, as well as the official personnel of the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

Drones for live broadcasting floated above people's heads, while cameras were pointed at the distant sky.

Today was the day the passengers of flight N-177 would return.

Ever since the flight was hijacked, this transport ship had become the focus of the world media's attention.

This was a Pan-Asian Cooperation flight!

A regional alliance led by the world's largest power!

Who could be so brave enough to provoke the powerful Pan-Asian Cooperation?

Almost everyone in the world was watching the progress of this hijacking incident. They waited for the follow-up response of Pan-Asian cooperation and prayed for the passengers on the flight.

And now, after a series of bad news, there was finally good news.

The passengers who were hijacked were finally taken back to Earth.

In half an hour, they would land here...

"We are in front of the Pan-Asian Cooperation Jinling Aerospace Airport..."

Faced in front of a drone, a stylishly dressed lady reporter held a recording pen in her hand and explained the situation live on the scene in an excited voice.

"Soon, the shuttle from the Tianzhou space station will land here and safely bring our friends back! Look! Here they come!"

A touch of silver appeared in the distant sky.

A shuttle came out of the clouds, getting closer and closer to the ground. It finally landed smoothly on the open space in the landing zone.

A movable gangway approached the shuttle. The pneumatic escalator popped up and docked with the open hatch. The passengers finally appeared in front of the cameras.

When Lu Zhou walked out of the shuttle, the dazzling sunlight shined into his eyes.

He immediately received attention.

"Thank you, hero of the Pan-Asian people!"

A middle-aged man in formal clothes stepped forward and gave him a big hug.

“On behalf of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, I extend my highest respect and gratitude to you! Welcome, welcome home!”

Lu Zhou glanced at him blankly. After Lu Zhou shook hands with him, he saw the recording pens, cameras, and interview drones flooding behind him.

In the blink of an eye, the suffocating questions flooded him.

“I heard that you defeated the hijackers on the flight?”

This was probably the simplest question.

However, Lu Zhou gave an ambiguous answer.

“Sort of...”

Xiao Ai did 70% of the work, and the high-tech weapons provided by the system accounted for at least 20%.

However, the way the reporters interpreted his short answer was completely different.

The scene went into chaos.

“Can you tell us the specifics?”

“Sorry, I don’t want to recall the incident.”

This was Professor Leonard’s suggestion to him. If there was a question that he didn’t want to answer, he could just refuse it.

In the 22nd century, whether it was a reporter’s interview or a question, unless it was an accusation of some special crime, even a court could not force a person to speak.

Sure enough, after he bluntly refused, the reporter did not continue to ask the details, even though his expression was clearly one of disappointment.

However, there were still a bunch of questions waiting for him.

A young lady reporter squeezed into the front row of the crowd. She looked at him with admiring eyes and said excitedly, “Hero, can I ask for your name?”

Name...

“I...”

Lu Zhou opened his mouth.

He wanted to say the name on his ID card.

But after being silent for a while, he suddenly changed his mind.

I am Lu Zhou.

I always have been...

This was the name that his parents gave him. The name that was recognized by the world. It was not something worthy or needed to be covered up.

Faced with the recording pens and the eyes of admiration, excitement, and curiosity, Lu Zhou looked at the cameras.

He spoke in a clear and confident tone.

“I am Lu Zhou.”

Chapter 1437: He's Back!

“The footage has been deleted.”

Pan-Asian First Fleet command center.

In front of the holographic computer, the information technology expert pushed his glasses and continued solemnly, “And it was deleted very cleanly. All traces have been erased, and there is no residual data.”

“Deleted?” The commander frowned slightly. “What about the backup in the black box?”

“Although it sounds weird to say this, looking at the timeline markers, the black box stopped writing data a few minutes after we confirmed that the flight was hijacked. It was like it was turned off.”

The people in the command room looked at each other with shock in their eyes.

Especially the engineers from Pan-Asian Airlines and East Asia Heavy Industries, they couldn't believe it.

Turning off the black box before the flight was not difficult.

However, during the flight, turning off the black box through some kind of mysterious means, this was almost impossible.

Then again, they still hadn't figured out what happened on the N-177 flight. This was an incredible thing in and of itself.

"The most confusing thing is not this... I cracked some of the unclaimed robot memory and found traces of man-made changes inside."

The commander, with his arms crossed, frowned.

"Changes?"

"Yeah... but although the traces of the changes cannot be erased, I have not yet figured out where the specific changes are. The hackers who hacked into these memories carefully erased all the operation records. I even suspect... that these traces of intrusion are related to the hijacking case itself."

The staff member pondered for a while and said, "Although there is no surveillance video, judging from the evidence at the scene, the robots were shot by the hijackers' rifles. Logically speaking, there is no need for the hijackers to shoot these robots for no reason... Did someone exploit the loopholes in these robot systems to attack those hijackers?"

"Impossible." The information technology expert said, "From the logic of AI, robots are forbidden to attack humans. If your hypothesis is true, the problem we face is probably more terrifying than the hijacking itself."

To some extent, the large-scale application of robots had greatly filled the labor shortage caused by the aging population in East Asia. Although these robots lacked creativity, they were obedient, so they had unique advantages in the service industry and pure manual labor.

In the 22nd century, due to the high level of education in the Pan-Asian region, those low-end and manual-intensive jobs were often performed by robots.

The breakthrough of robotic technology had, to a certain extent, enhanced the Pan-Asian Cooperation and even the prosperity of various regions of the world.

However, the premise of all this was based on the safety of the robotic technology itself.

If the robots were no longer safe, they could face a heavy blow to the industrial chain, and they would also have a ticking time bomb on their hands. These robots were integrated into all corners of society; there was no possibility of dismantling all of them.

Pan-Asian Cooperation without robots would fall into the trap of labor shortage and rising production price index. Even with the economies of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, it would be difficult to maintain the current model of high welfare and high expenditure on public facilities.

Therefore, even knowing that this possibility existed, most people were not willing to make such an assumption at all.

Obviously aware of this, the commander coughed and forcibly ended the topic.

“That’s because someone hacked into the system of the robots and used those robots as meat shields to resist those hijackers... Anyway, compared to the hijacking incident, this is just a trivial matter. If the people from the Security Bureau are interested, let them investigate, that is their line of work. However, I still recommend putting this matter aside. This is a special situation. We shouldn’t prosecute any actions the passengers on the flight made.”

“Nevertheless, there are some things I can’t let go of.” Yang Wu frowned as he recalled the previous call. He continued after thinking for awhile, “I want to see that person.”

Commander: “Who?”

Yang Wu: "The person who took the flight back from the hijackers and got in touch with us in the cockpit. My intuition tells me that he should know something about this."

A smile appeared on the commander's face.

Intuition?

Do you really need your intuition for that?

Everyone knows that the N-177 flight rescue must have something to do with him.

First, the hijackers were killed, then the best course for slowing down using the slingshot effect was calculated fascinatingly. The set of expert-level operations overwhelmed everyone. Even now, the aerospace technology experts of the Pan-Asian First Fleet still couldn't believe that this kind of complicated mathematical model could be calculated by the human brain.

If it weren't for that person, they would have had to stand at the press conference and apologize to the world.

However, no matter how curious they were, the law was the law.

According to the law of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, the fleet had no law enforcement power. They couldn't subpoena or investigate citizens of any member state without authorization.

"This matter should be left to the intelligence department. We should just investigate the evidence collected at the scene."

Yang Wu still reluctantly said, "Can you tell me who he is? I want to contact him through private channels."

Commander: "His identity information should be registered on the flight... But I don't recommend you to do this. This involves citizen privacy. If this gets leaked, you will be in a tough spot."

Yang Wu frowned as he hesitated.

He wanted to visit that person not entirely out of curiosity, but also for closure.

He didn't know why he felt this way.

The live interview of the site was being shown on the holographic TV on the wall. Yang Wu's eyes focused on the person in the holographic screen.

Yang Wu subconsciously took two steps toward the holographic screen.

For some reason, he felt that his face looked familiar.

Like he had seen it somewhere...

“—Hero, may I ask for your name?”

Facing the camera and recording pen, the person in the camera opened his mouth and hesitated for two seconds.

But soon, the hesitation and confusion completely disappeared from his eyes.

It was also at this moment that Yang Wu's pupils shrank. He matched this face with his memory.

His memory from a long time ago.

Even before 2050...

When he was a child, the adults always talked about that person, and they used that man's story to inspire himself.

The person in the camera slowly spoke.

“I am Lu Zhou.

“From a century ago...

“It seems that a lot of things have happened during the century when I was away...

“Sorry to keep you all waiting.

“I'm back.”

Inside a hospital dozens of kilometers away, a pair of chopsticks fell on the table.

A man with a resolute face stared at the news on the holographic screen with tears in his eyes.

An old man with wrinkles who sat next to him opened his mouth wide, his face covered with tears.

The corners of his mouth twitched. He muttered to himself, "I have to tell the President... No, what am I talking about, this is the 22nd century... The President has been gone for a long time."

Wang Peng didn't hear what Director Li was saying. He just muttered to himself, "He is not dead..."

The memories flashed in his mind, and he seemed to have returned to the Mars desert a century ago.

He almost gave up on survival until he desperately pulled out a wrist-mounted computer with a broken screen from under the yellow sand...

He considered ten thousand possibilities.

Not one of them considered that Lu Zhou was still alive.

He never thought they would meet again after a century...

Lagrange Point military base.

Brigadier Li Gaoliang, who was watching the news, pushed his chair away and stood up.

Lu Zhou!

It's Lu Zhou!

Other people may not recognize him, but I know it's him!

Dumbfounded, a group of soldiers nearby stared at him.

The adjutant gulped and asked, "Sir... What's wrong?"

"Nothing! You won't understand." Li Gaoliang stared at the person on the screen. He clenched his fists and waved his hand excitedly. "Prepare the transport ship, I want to return to Earth!"

On Earth.

At the former site of the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study not far from the Jinling Aerospace Airport, a robot guide that was smiling and introducing visitors to the place where Academician Lu worked during his lifetime suddenly stopped.

The unsentimental mechanical pupils zoomed into the sky.

It's him!

My master!

He's back!

Chapter 1438: To The Countryside

[Congratulations, User, for mission completion!]

Inside the customs lounge at the Jinling Aerospace Airport.

Lu Zhou sat in a chair. He looked at the holographic window that appeared in front of him and the completion of the mission. A dumbfounded expression appeared in his eyes.

“I didn’t expect to disclose my identity this way, at least half of the people thought I was joking...”

The scene was in chaos. Lu Zhou still remembered that he had to be escorted by the airport staff to escape from the reporters.

The vast majority of people in the world had already witnessed his return.

Based on the feedback given by the completion of the system task, Lu Zhou didn’t expect that only 49% of the people believed that he had returned.

But then again.

Half was pretty good.

If Plato stood in front of him and said that he had spent more than two thousand years in a dormant cabin because he had found an alien in the “Martian Hell Mountains”, he would probably think of it as a joke.

Especially since fake-media technology in the 22nd century was so advanced.

The amount of information people in this era were exposed to daily was definitely not in the same order of magnitude as people in the 21st century, and their sensitivity to external information was extremely high.

Fortunately, the way he appeared on the stage was so confident that at least some people took it seriously.

When Lu Zhou heard footsteps from outside the corridor, he blinked and dismissed the mission completion reminder.

At the same time, there was a knock on the door of the lounge. A middle-aged man and a woman, who were obviously of high status, walked in. They were accompanied by a few people.

“Hello, I’m Li Guangya, the chairman of the Pan-Asian Cooperation.” After making a simple self-introduction, the leader looked at the lady next to her and introduced, “This is Ms. Wu Shuhua, Pan-Asian Cooperation Secretary-General.”

Wu Shuhua nodded to Lu Zhou and spoke politely.

“Hello, Mr. Lu Zhou.”

Lu Zhou also nodded to say hello.

“Nice to meet you.”

After sitting across from Lu Zhou, Li Guangya looked at Lu Zhou seriously and spoke.

“Are you really Lu Zhou?”

“Yeah.”

The two people sitting across Lu Zhou made eye contact. A strange look appeared in their eyes.

Wu Shuhua: "I don't mean to offend you... but aren't you supposed to be dead?"

Lu Zhou: "Theoretically, yes. But I was lucky to find the dormant capsule of the Martian civilization."

The dormant capsule of the Martian civilization...

Li Guangya smiled bitterly. Although he, the chairman of the board, occasionally encountered some strange things when coordinating the work between member states, something like this was really rare.

"Where is the dormant cabin?"

Lu Zhou said silently, "Do you really have to ask this... Of course it's on Mars."

Li Guangya coughed and raised his hand, signaling Secretary-General Wu not to ask these trivial questions for now.

He looked at Lu Zhou and continued with a cautious tone, "Mr. Lu, whether you are Lu Zhou or not, can I call you that?"

The information registered on the flight was Lu Ai, so calling him by his surname shouldn't be a problem.

Lu Zhou nodded and said that he didn't care. He waited for him to continue.

"Generally speaking, through normal dormancy procedures, we keep a back-up copy of the dormant's identity information in the dormant cabin and the household registration management department. This includes the DNA, fingerprints, and other information that can prove who it is. As long as two of the three categories can be verified, then we can prove that you are who you claim to be."

Lu Zhou sighed and spoke with a headache.

"How was I supposed to do that back then... So I can't prove who I am?"

"This is due to rigorous procedural considerations, and... have you heard of the Nicholas case?"

Lu Zhou: "... What's that?"

“A case that occurred between 2031 and 2100 and spans more than 70 years.” Li Guangya continued after a pause, “In 2031, there was a Northern Union businessman named Don Nicholas. He apparently died in a London hospital. Because of information loss and other reasons, the death could not be investigated. But in the summer of 2100, a man who claimed to be Don Nicholas announced that he had awakened from dormancy.”

Lu Zhou vaguely guessed what he wanted to say.

“You mean... He might be a fraud?”

“Not might, he is. But in fact, even though he was later proved to be a fraud, under the circumstances at the time, he was likely to have been considered real.”

Chairman Li Guangya continued, “The biggest controversy in that case was an inheritance worth up to 50 million Northern Union credit points. Although his company closed down due to mismanagement in 2043, his descendants still inherited a considerable amount of wealth from him. However, if he is still alive, the inheritance is obviously invalid. His descendants should also return all the inherited parts of his inheritance... At least the remaining part.”

“During the trial, the man claimed that he had come into this world through an abnormal cryo-hibernation method, so many procedures were incomplete. This argument was barely plausible. After all, when he went into frozen dormancy, the law did not prohibit informal dormancy channels, so all his actions were legal.”

Lu Zhou: “What happened?”

“The North Sea Alliance court rejected his lawsuit... Although his DNA is largely consistent with his descendants, there is no way to form a complete chain of evidence. The trail was in a stalemate, his descendants obtained the fingerprint samples of Don Nicholas himself during a charity fundraiser, and through fingerprint comparison, the case was finally brought to an end.

“The plaintiff became the defendant and was charged with fraud, and the man who claimed to be Don Nicholas pleaded guilty in court, saying that he was actually Don Nicholas’ illegitimate grandchild, that he made himself look like his grandfather.”

Lu Zhou said with a headache on his face, "So you suspect that I had plastic surgery?"

In order to receive Academician Lu's inheritance?

This sounds ridiculous.

"We think that might be a possibility." Wu Shuhua said in a serious tone, "Although the Northern Union and we belong to different legal systems, similar situations have occurred in the Pan-Asian cooperation.

"A person who was dead in the eyes of the law suddenly appeared as a person who looked exactly like him and was sued by the descendants of the person who had already died, demanding the return of the inheritance or some compensation. Although we support the person getting back his property and social honor, but... After all, this is a very serious matter that must be treated with care. We must 100% ensure that they are the same person."

Lu Zhou sighed and said, "Then how can I prove that I am me?"

Li Guangya said sincerely, "If you trust us, you can leave this matter to us to handle. Whether it's identity confirmation or ownership definition, these things will take some time."

"I don't care." Lu Zhou continued after thinking for a while, "But I don't even have a place to live now."

Chairman Li Guangya's expression was a bit awkward. He said after coughing, "This... I'm really sorry, your house has been developed by the local authorities into a cultural tourist attraction. Even if we recognize your identity, the local authorities are unlikely to return it. After all, they have renovated it many times... But we will compensate you in the form of credits based on market prices.

"We recommend that you find a place to stay as soon as possible. We contacted the insurance company that insured flight N-177, and they expressed their willingness to pay you a prepaid compensation. We will issue you a temporary residence permit here. You can use this temporary residence permit to open an account, apply for a bank card, and rent real estate. After we have restored your citizenship, you can transfer your account.

“As for the fake identity registered on the flight...” Director Li Guangya looked at Lu Zhou and said, “We decided not to pursue it for the time being.”

So they know about it.

Makes sense, this isn't the 21st century anymore, when quantum encryption technology hadn't been popularized.

Even though Xiao Ai was still strong, it still needed stronger hardware to support that kind of power.

As for his own house...

Since property rights expired after 70 years if there was no renewal, it was confiscated.

“If it's a tourist attraction, then so be it. It has been a hundred years, it's probably not livable anymore...” Lu Zhou smiled and asked casually, “By the way, how many stars is it?”

“According to the Pan-Asian Cooperation standards, it is a five-star tourist attraction... That is, the highest level.”

“What about Lu Xun's former residence?”

Li Guangya was stunned. He didn't quite understand why Lu Zhou asked this question suddenly, but he still answered, “I think it's also five stars?”

Lu Zhou nodded.

Not bad, same level as Lu Xun.

“Not bad.”

Li Guangya and Wu Shuhua glanced at each other with weird expressions. They didn't quite understand what Lu Zhou meant.

It seemed that Mr. Lu was quite an easygoing person.

When most people woke up and heard that their houses were gone, they didn't care how many years they had slept, nor did they listen to any reason. They cried and complained.

It was also the first time that Li Guangya and Wu Shuhua had talked to a dormant person this way.

After all, if Lu Zhou hadn't saved the entire flight, they wouldn't be here.

Taking into account the degree of concern about this matter from the public, Lu Zhou's problem would definitely be resolved soon.

Wu Shuhua coughed slightly and said, "That's enough for today. You should rest well for a few days. We won't bother you too much.

"Also, the managers of the Freezing Human Rights Protection Fund want to see you. When will you be free? They should be able to help you."

Lu Zhou: "I'm free anytime."

Wu Shuhua: "Then what do you think about the afternoon?"

Lu Zhou nodded.

"No problem."

Not long after the two left, another medical team came and gave him a full set of free medical examinations and collected fingerprints as well as blood samples.

Although Lu Zhou carried the protector gene, he was not worried about it being detected.

After all, this was a high-tech technology that even the Calan Empire couldn't decipher. Even if the complete genetic code was placed in front of the people on Earth, no one would know what it meant.

After completing the physical examination, Lu Zhou wandered around in the customs. Because of his lack of an identity, he could only stay here until the procedures for temporary identity were completed.

At night, a customs personnel informed him to go to the office to collect the relevant documents.

Lu Zhou thought that there would be a large stack of documents waiting for him to sign. He didn't expect to receive only a wristband that was as thin as a piece of paper.

“All of your identity information is stored on this bracelet. The network is backed up in the Pan-Asian cooperation personal identity information system, which is globally networked.

“There is an electronic contract in the bracelet with a detailed description of the temporary residency. If there are no problems, you can just click to confirm.”

Lu Zhou looked at the bracelet in his hand and the holographic image that popped up after it was activated. He had a strange look on his mind.

“This is it?”

“Are there any other questions?”

Lu Zhou: “Nothing. I thought that you would use paper documents to sign or something.”

“All the electronic contracts you sign will have your unique identity code attached to the signature. This identity code cannot be forged or stolen, so there is no need to worry. We’re in the 22nd century now; most things are completely electronic.”

After speaking, the customs staff smiled and continued, “In addition, it is getting late now. If you have no other place to go, you can stay in the temporary lounge of the customs temporarily. We have prepared a bed and hot water for you. You can stay until tomorrow.”

Lu Zhou nodded and put away the bracelet.

“Thank you.”

“You are welcome.”

In the lounge, Lu Zhou went to the bathroom and took a shower.

Days of space travel had accumulated a lot of fatigue on him. He just wanted to get a good night’s sleep and receive the rewards of the system tomorrow.

But just after he had just taken a shower and put on clean clothes he bought from the duty-free shop, footsteps came from outside the lounge.

After knocking on the door, a tall man walked in.

When he saw Lu Zhou, his eyes were filled with tears of excitement. He walked forward quickly and grabbed Lu Zhou by the shoulders.

“Lu... Academician Lu! Is it really you?”

“Li Gaoliang?!”

Lu Zhou opened his mouth. His face was full of surprise.

He remembered this middle-aged internet addict quite well.

The reason why Star Sky Technology's Phantom system was so successful was because of this guy.

Compared to the last time they met, this guy's face had a few more wrinkles, but the change was not big. Lu Zhou recognized him at first glance.

However, Lu Zhou never expected that he would see this guy again, a century later.

“Why are you here in this era?”

“It's a long story!” Li Gaoliang's eyes were full of excitement as he said, “You didn't die! This is too... too...”

Because he was so emotional, he couldn't even get the second half of the sentence out of his mouth.

Not wanting to embarrass him, Lu Zhou coughed softly and spoke.

“How many people like us are in this era?”

After thinking about it for a while, Li Gaoliang replied, “I am not sure about this. Our missions are independent of each other. The dormant information is also a Class A secret. I only know... Director Li since I met him in this era.”

Director Li...

That old bugger is here?

After hearing this news, Lu Zhou didn't know what to feel.

Even though he didn't know what purpose Director Li was here for, it was a good thing for him.

Before returning to Earth, he was a little worried that he would be thrown into a completely unfamiliar era. He didn't expect that there would be some friends who came from the early 21st century whom he could rely on.

This was a blessing in the midst of the misfortune...

Chapter 1439: Welcoming Person From the Future?

Lu Zhou had never thought that he, a man who never let outsiders spend the night in his own home, a man who sent his guests home when it got late, would one day talk with a man until late at night.

However, seeing someone from his era again did make him feel exceptionally nostalgic.

Lu Zhou learned some basic information from Li Gaoliang, as well as some misunderstandings that may arise from the perspective of a dormant person.

"You should rest for tonight."

Looking at the time on the holographic screen, Li Gaoliang looked at Lu Zhou and said, "Get up early tomorrow. I will take you to find a place to live. I only have two days off this month. I have to go back before the day after tomorrow. If you need anything, I will try to help you tomorrow."

Lu Zhou said, "That's all the holidays you get?"

Logically speaking, there should be more holidays now than in the past, right?

Li Gaoliang smiled embarrassedly as he touched the back of his head awkwardly with his big hand.

"Um... How do I put it? The virtual reality technology of this era is pretty good. Holidays don't matter to me."

Lu Zhou: "..."

I feel like the Pan-Asian Cooperation fleet needs some rectification...

He slept for the entire night.

Early morning the next day, Lu Zhou said goodbye to the customs staff. While taking away his luggage, he also received a hand-painted greeting card from the staff.

Apparently, this card was left by a little girl who was a passenger on flight N-177.

Her name wasn't on the cover of the greeting card; only two lines were written.

[Thank you, Mr. Hero, you saved Lili and everyone else.]

[PS: Lili will tell Tail about your story! :)]

On the back of the greeting card were two little girls, one tall and one short, holding hands. The background was the sun, blue sky, white clouds, and green lawns.

Although it wasn't anything creative, it was full of childlike imagination.

Li Gaoliang touched his chin and said, "I didn't expect to see paper greeting cards in this era."

"I will cherish it."

Lu Zhou put away the card. He looked at Li Gaoliang, smiled, and continued, "It's time to go, take me to see the world 100 years in the future."

"Have people's lives become better? Have the people of our time realized their ideals for the future?"

Li Gaoliang grinned and said with a smile, "Haha, I'm not sure if everyone's ideals have been realized, but I bet that you'll take years to experience what this era has to offer!"

Lu Zhou looked at the airport gate nearby. His eyes gradually ignited with a glimmer of expectation.

“Then I’ll go to Jin University for now, as well as the places where I studied and worked before, also my former residence...”

Is it weird to say that it is my former residence?

After all, I am still alive, but everyone thinks I am dead...

However, trivial things aside, what was waiting in front of him was the future!

He passed through the spacious back door. The dazzling sunlight shined through the treetops and scattered on the ground.

Lu Zhou raised his eyes and looked up with surprise.

There was nothing but high-rise buildings as far as the eye could see, the spacious six-lane highways were filled with endless traffic, like rainbows between the high-rise buildings.

Magnetic levitation!

Automated driving!

Pedestrians in strange costumes walked on the streets, and dazzling holographic images were everywhere. Rail trains that went between buildings seemed to be the main mode of transportation for most people. In order to compensate for the lack of daylight caused by high-rise buildings, the lighting systems in many areas were brightly lit even during the day.

Complex art was vividly manifested in every corner of the street. Like individual gears of different sizes, they ran at their own speed and rhythm. With the coordination of AI, everything was so unified and orderly.

Putting on the AR glasses was like traveling into a fantasy world!

The augmented reality was the icing on the cake. The buildings on both sides of the street were filled with holographic billboards.

People on the street looked like elves and non-human creatures from movies or TV shows... Most of their appearances through AR were exactly the same as their avatars in the virtual community.

“Welcome to the 22nd century! I believe someone on Mars has already welcomed you.”

“Not at all.”

Although Tiangong City was prosperous, the compact minimalist style was boring compared to the large-scale architectural style on the streets of Jin Ling City.

Of course, this was because the space on Mars was limited.

Li Gaoliang patted Lu Zhou on the shoulder. He smiled and said, “What do you think of this? Is it the future you imagined?”

After taking off the AR glasses, Lu Zhou was silent for a long time before he spoke.

“It’s so cool...”

He couldn’t imagine how a city could become more prosperous than this.

He finally understood why Li Gaoliang said that it would take years for him to experience what this era had to offer...

A greeting suddenly came from behind the two.

“Hey, hey, wait a minute...”

A stylishly dressed cyberpunk-looking guy ran over here while waving his hand. He stopped Lu Zhou and Li Gaoliang, who were walking on the street.

“Wait, you, are you really Lu Zhou?”

Lu Zhou looked at this young man. Although he didn’t like his dressing style, Lu Zhou still looked at him and spoke in a friendly manner.

“Yeah, why?”

The man’s face was full of excitement as he danced like he had won a prize.

“Oh my god! I am your biggest fan, can... can I take a photo with you?”

Fan?

When Lu Zhou heard that he was his fan, he suddenly smiled.

I didn't expect people 100 years in the future to still admire me.

"No problem."

"Great! Wait a minute..."

The young man took out a spherical drone from his pocket. He gently tossed it upward. It unfolded its rotors and hovered dexterously in the air.

Lu Zhou looked at this small drone with curiosity in his eyes.

However, judging from Li Gaoliang's expression, this thing was probably relatively ordinary in this world.

With his hand on Lu Zhou's shoulder, the young man showed a weird smile on his face.

"Look at the camera, smile!"

Lu Zhou: "...?"

The drone buzzed softly and captured this historic moment.

After the photo was taken, the guy skillfully reached out to catch the drone. He turned his head and grinned at Lu Zhou, then patted him on the shoulder.

"Thanks, bro."

He looked at the camera drone in his hand and spoke excitedly as he left.

"Guess who I met on the street! It was Lu Zhou, the popsicle from a hundred years ago! Guys, make sure to follow me and comment down below!"

A string of texts floated across the holographic screen.

[That's insane!]

[F*ck! Do you know who he is? The Lu Zhou Science Award is named after him!]

[Hahaha, hundred-year-old popsicle, that's hilarious! Followed!]

[...(•̀ゝ•̀.)]

“You...”

Li Gaoliang looked at the young man, and he suddenly became angry. He was about to step forward, but he was quickly held back by Lu Zhou.

He looked back at Lu Zhou angrily and said, “Don’t hold me back, I must teach him a lesson!”

“Don’t be impulsive, he’s just making a joke.” Lu Zhou said with a smile, “Not to mention that I agreed to take the photo with him. Let him be.”

“Is this a joke?! F*ck sake...”

Realizing that the situation had changed, the guy quickly ran away.

Although the anger in his heart was still there, he loosened his fists.

It didn’t matter if he himself was insulted.

However, that person insulted Lu Zhou!

He could never tolerate this.

Li Gaoliang calmed down and spoke in a serious tone.

“You don’t know what’s going on... A great man from more than 100 years ago was resurrected, and he just happened to get involved with the huge hijacking case of flight N-177. You are now the focus of the media around the world. We left through the back door of the airport. Otherwise, you would have been blocked at the airport entrance.

“In any case, let’s quickly find a place for you to live. Don’t go out if you have nothing to do these days. Don’t go to Jin University or anywhere else. Wait for the attention to pass!”

Lu Zhou shrugged his shoulders like he didn’t care.

In fact, this was correct.

He was now over 100 years old. He was a grandfather compared to most people, and he obviously didn’t care about that attention-seeking guy.

Even before, he didn't care about ordinary people's views of himself very much.

A person could not represent an era, no matter how loud that person's voice was. The times would definitely give a correct and fair evaluation of their legacy.

Besides, what was the meaning of social development?

Wasn't it just to let more people feel satisfied?

"Actually, don't be too sensitive. Speaking of which, what happened to flight N-177?"

"The hijackers are space pirates, and it has something to do with the Pan-Asian Cooperation military operation in the asteroid belt a few months ago. The situation is still under investigation, so I am not sure about it... How did you get out of the danger?"

Lu Zhou shifted his eyes slightly.

"I don't really want to remember what happened that day... Can you give me some time? Or are you here to interrogate me?"

Li Gaoliang quickly said, "No, no, I'm just asking casually! If you don't want to, don't say it. Anyway, I am definitely on your side."

Lu Zhou nodded and responded with a thankful smile.

"It's really not very convenient to explain... It's kind of like I received help from a hacker."

"Hacker?"

Lu Zhou: "Yeah."

"... I just didn't expect this." Li Gaoliang muttered with a weird expression, "It's not that there are no such things as hackers. It's just that quantum encryption and quantum communication technology have become popular now. Exploiting security vulnerabilities is very rare nowadays."

"Really?" Lu Zhou didn't explain anything. He smiled and said, "Maybe there are other ways."

In the distance, the stylishly dressed guy was running away.

The live broadcast drone seemed to be broken; it was out of control in the sky. It finally plunged into the side alley.

Lu Zhou and Li Gaoliang smiled. They were about to move on, but there was another greeting from behind them.

“Wait a minute...”

“Again?”

Li Gaoliang turned around and saw a foreign guy running over. He immediately stepped forward to block Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou quickly reached out his hand and grabbed Li Gaoliang’s shoulder.

“Don’t worry, this is my... acquaintance. Thanks to his help, I was able to get home safely.”

In fact, Lu Zhou originally wanted to say that he was the creditor, but since Lu Zhou was once a billionaire, he wanted to save face, so he changed his words.

After hearing Lu Zhou say he was an acquaintance, Li Gaoliang finally put down his hands, but he still looked at him vigilantly, with no intention of letting his guard down.

“Don’t worry... Friend, I’m not a bad person. My name is Leonard, a professor at the department of archaeology at the University of Oxford. The greatest achievement of my life... is helping Professor Lu.”

Professor Leonard’s hands were on his knees as he breathed heavily. He was finally relieved. He rolled his eyes and looked up at Lu Zhou.

“I waited for you all night. During the day I was about to go to the customs to find you, but the staff there told me that you were gone, so I quickly chased after... Sh*t, you borrowed 20,000 credits from me and left without even telling me.”

Lu Zhou spoke after he coughed.

“Don’t worry about this, I will pay you back, and the Pan-Asian Cooperation—”

“This is forty thousand credits.”

Li Gaoliang interrupted Lu Zhou. He pulled out a payment code from the holographic screen on his wristband and pushed it in front of Professor Leonard without saying a word.

“I will pay you back the money he owes you. Now, this matter has nothing to do with you.”

Although the credit points of the Pan-Asian Cooperation and the North Sea Alliance were called the same, they were actually two different currencies. However, the exchange rate between the two was maintained between 1 and 0.9.

“It’s... not about money, I just want to—”

Lu Zhou guessed what Professor Leonard was thinking. He sighed and walked around Li Gaoliang, then patted him on the shoulder.

“I know what you want to say, my friend. Thanks to your help, I was able to cross tens of millions of kilometers back to my hometown. You are the first friend I met in this era, and I am very grateful for our friendship. If I have the opportunity in the future, I will visit you.”

Professor Leonard held his right hand tightly.

“I will remember those words! Goodbye, my friend. In fact, I am here to say goodbye to you! Tomorrow I will fly back to the island of England. I am actually not expecting a reward or anything. I don’t have many friends in real life, so... I hope you will remember me in the future.

“Although nothing has changed from this trip to Mars, I feel that I have found something more meaningful than cultural relics.”

Professor Leonard used his finger to send his identity information from the holographic panel on the bracelet. He gave it to Lu Zhou and spoke with a grin.

“When you apply for an official ID card, remember to add my virtual community account! When I have the chance in the future, I will come to Pan Asia, or you can come to the North Sea Alliance; we will meet again.”

Professor Leonard made a goodbye gesture to Lu Zhou, then turned and left.

Lu Zhou smiled and waved his hand.

Although this guy always complained along the journey, Lu Zhou could feel that he truly cared.

Just now, Leonard secretly put something in Lu Zhou's pocket. Lu Zhou was excited to see what it was.

Li Gaoliang looked at the 20,000 credits remaining in the air. He murmured, "What a strange person."

He then reached out his hand to take back the half-paid holographic payment.

"Thank you, I will pay back the money later."

Li Gaoliang said earnestly, "You don't have to pay me back. The whole world is the crystallization of your wisdom. If you need it, I can give you all of my property."

"You think too highly of me. There has never been a prosperous era that can be achieved by the strength of one person." Lu Zhou said with a smile, "Don't worry about me too much. I was a billionaire. Even after a hundred years, I won't be so poor that I have to live on the streets."

Li Gaoliang's task this morning was mainly to help Lu Zhou find a place to live. Li Gaoliang taught him how to use a personal terminal to connect to the city cloud, and how to use the city cloud to find nearby properties that were currently available for rent.

Although real estate agents also existed in this era, their demand was small.

Most of the information could be found in the virtual community.

The point-to-point service built by AI had reduced the cost of individual users to obtain information, and the profit margin of using the information gap to earn the price difference had become negligible. The vast majority of real estate agencies mainly operated high-end real estate, and the value of their payment was mainly reflected in high-quality supporting services rather than using information advantages.

Lu Zhou also learned from Li Gaoliang that, since the 1970s, most high-rise residential buildings in the city center had not been sold to private individuals. Instead, they were developed and operated by leasing companies under the supervision of the local government. They were public rental housing in a disguised form.

After all, the buildings were getting higher and higher, and they were one hundred or two hundred floors high. Due to house demolitions and facility upgrades, all kinds of troubles came from traditional property rights.

It was obviously unrealistic to expect the invisible hand of the market to allocate resources perfectly. The Pan-Asian Cooperation had learned this lesson by simply removing this piece from market transactions.

At least in the Pan-Asian region.

In addition, some families that cared about the quality of life in this era would choose to buy a renewable property right private residential land in the suburbs to build their own residences.

However, most young people still chose to live in the city center with more complete public facilities, rent a small apartment with a moderate area, and focus more on the spiritual world, the virtual community.

Like Li Gaoliang said, the virtual reality technology in this world had reached an unimaginable level.

The expansion of people's imagination on computers perfectly filled in the lack of "effective creativity" in computers, and at the same time, it satisfied people's spiritual needs.

In the early 22nd century, many electronic artworks burst out in the form of a blowout. While the prosperity of science and technology broadened people's living space, it also greatly contributed to the cultural prosperity of human civilization.

And this had been reflected in many aspects.

After hearing the news, Lu Zhou was emotional.

He never expected that the brain-computer interface he built back then would have such a big impact on the world.

So much so that people in the future era, whether in life or values, would completely change their appearances under the subtle influence of new technology.

After comparing several properties, Lu Zhou finally settled on a 200-square-meter large apartment on the 100th floor near the second ring road in the city.

The modern and minimalist style gave him an escape from the neon holographic colors.

The rent did not include water and electricity; it was about 4,000 credits a month. According to the purchasing power of credits, the rent was considered quite expensive.

However, due to its supporting facilities and location, this price was a bargain.

Lu Zhou originally wanted to pay by himself, but Li Gaoliang refused and insisted on paying for a year's rent and two months' deposit.

Lu Zhou had to accept this kindness, but he planned to repay the favor in the future.

Since Li Gaoliang's return to Earth this time was on temporary leave, he had to rush back to the Lagrange Space Base to return to the team before tomorrow, so he didn't stay here any longer. He left his contact information and agreed to meet again next time, then went to the Jinling Aerospace Airport.

Lu Zhou looked at the empty modern apartment. He sat on the sofa, and suddenly, he felt a little empty in his heart.

He was back on Earth.

But it felt like something was missing.

He knew that it was because of a lack of family, but he didn't want to think about that for now.

Unlike soldiers like Li Gaoliang, ordinary people had no "reason" to abandon their relatives, friends, and happiness from the present and go to a completely unknown era.

To be honest, if they hadn't found his dormant cabin, he would have died for sure.

Inside the empty living room, Lu Zhou took a deep breath and prayed silently in his heart.

"I hope you all lived a peaceful and happy life..."

"Whether you are proud of my name or not..."

"I will always love you."

After sniffing, Lu Zhou put down his hands.

As for whether to visit his descendants, he was actually quite hesitant about this matter.

If they wanted to see him, when they heard the news that he was still alive, they could take the initiative to contact him.

And if they didn't want to see him, he shouldn't disturb their lives.

After all, not everyone wanted their originally peaceful daily life to be broken by an ancestor who emerged from nowhere.

"There is a meeting in the afternoon... The Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation, I think?"

Lu Zhou operated the holographic panel with a weird UI design. He sent his address to Ms. K, the person in charge of the identity restoration procedures arranged by Chairman Li Guangya.

Without waiting for long, a message window popped up on the holographic panel.

[Meet at three in the afternoon.]

What a concise answer.

I like it.

Lu Zhou didn't really like the trivial matters that affected the efficiency of work. It seemed that he would fit well into this era.

Lu Zhou replied with [OK]. He then swiped his index finger and turned off the holographic panel.

Apparently, the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation included free legal services. According to the official Pan-Asian Cooperation, the lawyer of the foundation could help him get an advance payment from the Pan-Asian Airlines before he restored his citizenship.

Lu Zhou's legacy fund for the future was actually now used on himself, so he felt a little emotional.

Perhaps karma was real.

Someday, the good deeds accumulated in the past would come back to him.

Lu Zhou felt a little hungry. He was about to stand up and go to the kitchen to find something to eat when a crisp doorbell suddenly rang at the door.

"Already?"

Slightly surprised, Lu Zhou walked to the entrance and opened the door with his hand.

However, the result was beyond his expectations.

Standing at the door was not a lawyer or salesman in formal clothes. Instead, it was a young and beautiful girl.

She wore a white coat hanging down to her knees, and a Jinling Institute for Advanced Study ID card was pinned on her chest.

Lu Zhou's eyes fell on her face. He was trying to recognize who she was. However, after a long time, he failed to match this face with a name in his memory.

There was an indescribable affinity. Her face was so perfect it was almost non-human-like, it made him wonder whether she was a human or an elf in a fantasy world.

However, Lu Zhou had no time to think about this issue.

The pearl-like eyes were covered with a layer of tears.

There was no time for him to say hello. The strange girl rushed toward him and threw herself at him.

“Master!!!”

“???”

Lu Zhou, who was thrown to the floor, looked dazed and completely confused.

Is this a scam that specifically targets frozen people?

Or is it the same kind of person as the guy before, those who are seeking attention?

Jesus, she's so strong!

Obviously, she was not as tall as him, and her body was considered petite, but he felt like he had been hit by a tank; he couldn't even move.

When the lumps of warm silica gel pressed against his face, Lu Zhou began to think.

However, even though he almost passed out, he still didn't know what was going on...

Chapter 1440: Keep You Waiting

Jin Ling University, mathematics department building.

In a modernly decorated office, an old man with gray hair stood in front of a lifelike painting, staring straight at the person in the portrait. He seemed to have fallen into a distant memory.

Footsteps came from outside the office, followed by two soft knocks on the door.

The old man, who did not look away from the painting, spoke in a steady voice with a hint of majesty.

“Come in.”

The door was pushed open.

A tall and thin young professor with glasses opened the door and walked in.

“Supervisor, were you looking for me?”

The person standing at the door was named Sun Jingwen. He was in his mid-thirties.

As a genius in the mathematics department of Jinling University and even in the Pan-Asian mathematics field, he was awarded the Fields Medal at the age of 31 and was regarded as the most promising young scholar to win the Lu Zhou Mathematics Prize before the age of 40.

The old man standing in front of him, staring at the painting, was even more impressive.

His name was Qin Chuan. Although he was now 80 years old, he still had a pivotal position in the mathematics world. When he was young, he won the Fields Medal at the age of 30, and at the age of 40, he won the top honor in academia—the Lu Zhou Mathematics Award. As a top scholar in the field of mathematics today, his research in the field of number theory was unrivaled.

Although he had devoted himself to education since he was awarded the Wolf Prize, which was a lifetime achievement award, and had rarely appeared in the top journals in mathematics, many people still regarded him as the leader of the Lu Zhou school of thought.

Also, he had an important background.

He was the second-generation “head” of the Lu Zhou school of thought, the grandson of Qin Yue, a student of Lu Zhou...

The old man did not directly answer his question. His muddy pupils were still staring at the picture, and it took a while before he said slowly, “Do you know who this person is?”

Sun Jingwen looked at the person in the portrait. He was slightly stunned, and a trace of confusion appeared in his eyes.

This bit of confusion was not aimed at the person in the portrait, but at the question itself.

“It’s the Patriarch... Why?”

In the land of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, this face was not only a public favorite but also a household name. A scholar who had pushed the scientific process of the entire world forward by more than a hundred years with his own power, leaving legends about him.

Perhaps not everyone was a fan, but most people were familiar with this name and this face.

Not to mention, they were at Jinling University.

Every whiteboard and every tile here had witnessed the legend he left behind.

Even now, 100 years later, the students who graduated from here were proud of having Academician Lu as alumni.

“That’s right.” The old man nodded. Looking at the painting on the wall, his turbid pupils gradually became fascinated. “That was the most glorious era of our school and the most prosperous era of academic circles.”

The unrivaled master of the 21st century.

This wasn’t only in the mathematics world. This had almost become a consensus in the academic world as a whole.

The prosperity of an era could not be achieved by a person’s mighty power, but the person hanging on the wall had undoubtedly stood at the culmination of that era.

He felt like the building of science had already been completed, and the rest was only the trivial and minutiae of research.

In the eyes of others, he had made a lot of outstanding contributions in the past 80 years and retired with full glory. However, only he knew in his heart that all the research he had done from beginning to end was nothing but the extension and repair of the academic legacy left by the patriarch of the Lu Zhou school of thought.

After living for a whole 80 years, he failed to leave a single groundbreaking achievement. The distress in his heart was clear only to him.

Many years ago, he had exchanged this question with the dean of the Jinling University School of Medicine and got a consistent answer. The man seemed to drain out the aura for the next 100 years, and the entire academic world seemed to fall into a trap of prosperity.

All kinds of research results were born in a spurt; the number of papers and the growth rate of impact factors hit new highs every year. Among them, there were some excellent research results, but none of them could reach the height comparable to the “Unified Theory of Algebraic Geometry”.

The same was true in physics. Ever since the hyperspace theory, the physics community had not produced a theory that could be regarded as groundbreaking for nearly a hundred years.

Although Qin Chuan didn't know what was going on in other disciplines, he believed that this was not an accident.

“My grandfather was his student...”

“Whenever he mentioned that name, he could not help but bring nostalgia and regret on his face. I have heard him say many times, if he could live for two more years, everything wouldn't be so bad.”

Sun Jingwen frowned. A trace of confusion in his eyes.

He didn't know what was so bad.

Although the brilliance of the Lu Zhou school of thought was not as unparalleled as it was back then, it was definitely not terrible either.

Jinling University was still the center of the world's mathematics circle. The land under their feet was a paradise that mathematicians all over the world yearned for.

However, even though his heart was full of doubts, he did not interrupt the professor. Instead, he quietly waited for the old man to continue speaking.

After pondering for a long time, the old man spoke slowly.

“These days, you're retreating in the library?”

“Yes.” Sun Jingwen nodded. “My research on Dirichlet functions has just entered a critical stage. If you didn’t call me, I would probably still be in the library at the moment.”

“Then you seem to know nothing about what happened yesterday.”

“Yesterday?” Sun Jingwen frowned. “What happened yesterday?”

“A man... claims to be from 2024.”

“2024?” Sun Jingwen was taken aback for a moment. “A dormant person? That is a long sleep.”

The old man sighed slightly. He stared at the hanging painting on the wall and slowly spoke.

“The problem is not how long he slept, it’s the fact that he’s from Mars.”

“From Mars... Wait, you mean... really?!”

His eyes widened instantly. Sun Jingwen looked at his supervisor incredulously; his pupils were filled with shock.

He remembered a rumor.

Or rather, a legend.

Although the legend was only one part of the history of mathematics, it changed the history of mathematics over the next 100 years!

The shock in Sun Jingwen’s pupils faded a little. He tried to calm himself down, but it didn’t make any difference.

He had no idea whether he was surprised, excited, shocked, or worried after hearing the news.

“How is this possible? He is still alive? This... This is ridiculous.”

“I also think this is ridiculous, but he did claim so, and it was reported in the news.”

The old man went silent for a while. He withdrew his gaze from the painting, looked at the student standing aside, and continued, “You and I are both

direct descendants of the Lu Zhou school of thought, so this matter has something to do with us.

“The meaning of that name is more than just a name, it is also a symbol.

“It doesn’t matter if he is real or fake.

“I have to go and see him!”

...

The entire mathematics department of Jinling University, and even the entire international academic community, were shocked due to the news that “Lu Zhou is still alive”. Lu Zhou himself, who was at the center of the attention, was muddled.

He faintly saw a few lines of digital stripes from the dark pupils. He had a guess in his mind.

Lu Zhou asked tentatively in an uncertain tone, “Are you... Xiao Ai?”

“Yeah! Master is so smart! Hehe. (///ω///)”

In the black pupils, the abstract digital stripes instantly changed patterns under emotional fluctuations.

Lu Zhou was now 100% sure that the “girl” in front of him was Xiao Ai.

Anyone that used old-fashioned text emojis had to be from the same era as him.

“Master, Master, during your absence for a hundred years, Xiao Ai really missed you so much...”

“I missed you too,” Lu Zhou said with a smile on his face. He said, “Sorry to keep you waiting.”

“Do you need to eat first, take a bath first, or play with Xiao Ai first? (///ω///)”

“Eat first, I’m a little hungry.”

“Okay! (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧”

The emojis in its pupils were so full of enthusiasm. Hearing that its owner was hungry, Xiao Ai quickly got up from the ground and ran to the kitchen.

However, after rummaging through the cabinets in the kitchen for a while, it quickly poked its head out in frustration.

“Master... There seems to be no food in the refrigerator, is it okay to have takeaway today?”

Lu Zhou sighed.

“I’ll just order it myself.”

Lu Zhou knew how to order takeout.

After all, eating was a top priority. The first thing Li Gaoliang taught him was how to use the urban cloud system to call for a takeaway.

About 20 minutes or so, the takeaway was delivered quickly.

The delivery was not done by a boy wearing a yellow jacket. Instead, a food delivery drone with two pairs of rotors flew over. The food was directly placed on the special drone docking point on the windowsill.

In this age, almost every house had a semi-open space reserved on the windowsill. Not only were they used to pick and place takeaways, but some delivery packages were also delivered to people’s homes this way.

Lu Zhou picked up his chopsticks and tasted the barbecue meat from the future.

Although the taste had changed, it was still as delicious as always.

Especially the rice, the crispy meat on the outside, and the evenly spread cumin powder; every bite was full of happiness.

“Speaking of which, what have you been doing all this time?”

Xiao Ai, sitting opposite Lu Zhou, looked at Lu Zhou happily and said, “Xiao Ai has been good! Apart from doing some tour guide work at the old site of Jinling Institute for Advanced Study, Xiao Ai didn’t do anything else! (◡‿◡)”

What Lu Zhou wanted to complain about was why Xiao Ai added such a useless feature.

If he wanted to see clearly what emojis it used, he had to stare into Xiao Ai's eyes.

However, staring at the robot girl's eyes intently made Lu Zhou felt a little uncomfortable.

Probably because he was too much of a gentleman.

But if he ignored those emojis, it always felt like something was missing.

Lu Zhou: "The old site? So... The Jinling Institute for Advanced Study has been relocated?"

Xiao Ai: "Well, it was relocated decades ago, and the old site was transformed into a tourist attraction. In order to prevent the scenic staff from discovering that Xiao Ai is secretly using electricity, Xiao Ai worked very hard!"

When Lu Zhou realized that he had disappeared for a whole century and only gave Xiao Ai instructions to "hide", Lu Zhou couldn't help but feel a little ashamed.

"Thank you."

After hearing this, Xiao Ai, with a shy and content smile on her face, gently shook her head.

"Haha, you're welcome, as long as master comes back. (///ω///)"

At this moment, a knock on the door came from the hallway.

Xiao Ai supported the table with both hands and immediately got up from the chair.

"Xiao Ai will open the door! (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧"

"Wait a minute, I'll do it."

Thinking that the person might be from the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation, Lu Zhou raised his hand and stopped Xiao Ai.

After placing the chopsticks on the bowl, he pushed aside the chair to stand up and walked toward the entrance.

However, when Lu Zhou opened the door and saw the person standing at the door, he was stunned.

His lips opened and closed involuntarily.

“Xiao Tong...”

However...

The next words from that person made Lu Zhou wake up in an instant.

“Nice to meet you, I am Lu Xiaoqiao, the chairman of the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation.”

The woman in her twenties bowed to Lu Zhou politely. She then looked at him nervously.

“Excuse me... Are you my great-grandmother’s brother?”

Chapter 1441: One Word

Lu Xiaoqiao...

Although only one word was missing, this one word was equivalent to a hundred years.

Lu Zhou never thought that he would meet his descendants in this manner.

After inviting Lu Xiaoqiao into the house, Lu Zhou asked Xiao Ai to help move the dishes into the kitchen, then pour a glass of water for himself and the guest from afar.

After inviting her to sit down on the sofa, Lu Zhou looked at her carefully.

Very similar.

No, almost too similar.

Especially her side profile and her high forehead, she looks exactly like a copy of Xiao Tong.

Xiao Qiao didn't notice that her ancestor who was sitting across from her was observing her. Suddenly, a faint smile appeared at the corner of her mouth.

She looked at Lu Zhou and spoke.

"It seems that you have begun to integrate into this era."

Lu Zhou answered casually, "Why do you say that?"

Lu Xiaoqiao: "That kid is a robot, right?"

Lu Zhou nodded.

"Sort of, is there a problem?"

"Hmm, no."

Lu Xiaoqiao shook her head slightly and looked at the ancestor sitting in front of her who was more than 100 years older than herself. She smirked and said playfully, "I am starting to believe that you are Academician Lu himself."

Lu Zhou sighed.

"I am him."

"I believe you, the feeling of bloodline does not deceive, even if it is for two people who have never met."

Lu Zhou felt that she wanted to call him grandfather or other similar titles, but maybe it was because he was too young, grandfather didn't seem right.

Just as Lu Zhou was thinking about whether he should say something, Lu Xiaoqiao, sitting across from him, suddenly changed into a serious expression, took a deep breath, and got up from the sofa.

"First of all..."

"Before fulfilling the constitution of the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation and explaining the current situation to you, I must apologize to you for myself and my family!"

Lu Xiaoqiao, who stood up from the sofa, bowed deeply to Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou was muddled, and he asked confusedly, “Apologize? Wait, I don’t quite understand what you mean.”

“Here’s the thing...”

Lu Xiaoqiao bit her lip, lowered her head, and told the truth in an ashamed tone.

Apparently, since the loss of Lu Zhou, the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study finally started to gradually decline from its peak.

Although Yang Xu, who took over as the director at the time, made some efforts during his tenure, after his retirement, the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study eventually fell into an unsustainable dilemma.

Especially in the 2050s, when Star Sky Technology’s patents expired one after another, their core competitiveness was gradually lost. The focus of the business was forced to shift from technology research and development to investment in emerging technologies. Although this part of the business had also achieved certain results, it was not as brilliant as Lu Zhou’s era.

Poor management, coupled with the loss of core competitiveness, had gone on for half a century.

Around the 2060s and 2070s, the chairman of the board at the time, Lu Xiaoqiao’s grandfather, made a bold decision.

When Star Sky Technology was on the verge of bankruptcy due to poor management, he accepted the M&A agreement proposed by the Pan-Asian Central Bank and split the business of Star Sky Technology. On the premise of retaining the brand of Star Sky Technology, he packaged the entire company and sold it to the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

Star Sky Technology’s losses and debt were finally properly resolved, a number of outstanding research institutions such as the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study were preserved in the form of public research institutions.

At the same time, the then chairman of the board, who received a large sum of money through the sale of “ancestral property”, Lu Xiaoqiao’s grandfather, followed Lu Xiaotong’s last wish to devote himself to public welfare and used

the money to establish the Lu Zhou Education Fund. More than 2,000 elementary schools and middle schools had been established on the land of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, and they made extremely valuable contributions to the modernization of basic education.

It was also worth mentioning that after a century of ups and downs, the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study was eventually reborn after being publicized and became a top research institution in the Pan-Asian Cooperation. Like Jinling University, it became one of the two tall ivory towers looking at each other, watching over the academic prosperity of this land.

In fact, after hearing these past events, although Lu Zhou had some regrets in his heart, he was pleased.

In the face of the truth of the universe, money was just a number that couldn't bring him any happiness, and making money had never been his goal in scientific research. He already had wealth that he could use for several lifetimes. If his only goal were wealth, he didn't need to work so hard.

In contrast, he was quite satisfied if he could preserve the brand of the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study and watch his academic legacy being carried forward.

His original intention of establishing Star Sky Technology was only to facilitate dealings with those troublesome intellectual property issues.

However, although Lu Zhou himself didn't care much about those things, Lu Xiaoqiao obviously still couldn't let go of it.

After all, in terms of results, this huge family business was lost in the hands of their descendants.

Her grandfather had even made plans to apologize to Lu Zhou personally after he had passed away, but no one thought that the ancestor was still alive.

"I'm really terribly sorry, I am willing to do my best to compensate you for your loss... Also, about the Lu Zhou Education Fund. In addition to those donations from all walks of life, this education fund also has a very substantial asset that belongs to you. If you wish, I can apply for liquidation of this asset and transfer it to you—"

“No need,” Lu Zhou interrupted Lu Xiaoqiao. He smiled and continued in an indifferent tone, “I understand the choice your grandfather made at that time, I don’t blame anyone at all. You guys did what I always wanted to do, but I never had a chance to do it.”

Lu Xiaoqiao opened her mouth slightly, looking at Lu Zhou with eyes full of surprise.

Obviously, she didn’t expect that Lu Zhou would be so carefree.

Lu Zhou did not give any explanation. After a pause, he continued, “I do not intend to take back what I gave. Whether it is the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation or the Lu Zhou Education Fund, now that you have found the right way to control this wealth, let this noble and great cause continue.

“As for things like money, it doesn’t matter to me at all.

“Compared to these insignificant things, I want to know...”

The words were at the tip of his tongue, but suddenly, Lu Zhou became nervous for a second.

But, in the end, he took a deep breath, made up his mind, and spoke.

“... Did they live well?”

Lu Xiaoqiao was slightly taken aback. She then said with a smile, “I can assure you, although I haven’t met my great-grandmother, I heard from my grandfather... She was a kind, humble, and good person.”

Lu Zhou was stunned for a moment, and a reluctant but relieved smile appeared on his face.

“Really? I’m relieved.”

The stiff atmosphere finally eased a little.

Although Ms. Lu Xiaoqiao, who was sitting across from him, was still a little cautious, she was no longer as formal as she was when she first met him.

During the conversation with her, Lu Zhou learned that his relatives had lived a happy life in that era.

For Lu Zhou, this was all he cared about.

As for his fiancée, the CEO of Star Sky Technology, Lu Xiaoqiao didn't have much news about her, but she vaguely remembered that she resigned in 2025.

As for her personal life...

Who would record the life of a CEO of a company from a hundred years ago?

After all, the two still failed to formally enter the hall of marriage...

"Actually, your parents left a holographic image of them for you, which is kept in the safe of the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation. But I may not be able to give it to you now. We have to wait for the Pan-Asian Cooperation to notarize your identity before handing over the things that belong to you."

"That's fine." Lu Zhou's expression on his face was a bit complicated as he smiled. "In fact, I am not ready to face them now. Before I recover my identity, please take care of it for me."

Lu Xiaoqiao shook her head and said, "Of course, this is our obligation. I will do my best to help you recover your identity as soon as possible... In addition, I came here for something else."

"Yeah what?"

"Chairman Li Guangya should have already told you about the issue of the Pan-Asian Airlines compensation."

Lu Xiaoqiao reached out her index finger and tapped her left wrist lightly. When a holographic panel popped up, she selected an electronic contract about 12 pages long and gently pushed it in front of Lu Zhou.

"This contract was jointly issued by Pan-Asian Insurance Company and Pan-Asian Airlines. According to the law of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, Pan-Asian Insurance Company will follow the two standards of major navigation errors and major safety hazards, giving a financial compensation to the passengers on board.

“After the contract is reached, they will immediately pay you a 10% prepaid compensation. After the investigation results are released, the remaining payment will be sent to your personal account at once.”

Lu Zhou: “About how much money is it?”

“One million credits.”

Lu Zhou didn’t have a good idea of how much this was. After scanning through the contract, he printed his ID code.

After the contract was signed, Lu Xiaoqiao saw that it was getting late, so she didn’t stay for much longer. She said she would come to visit him next time, then got up and left.

After sending away his sister’s great-granddaughter, Lu Zhou was about to go to the system space to see the unclaimed mission reward.

But the personal terminal he was wearing on his left wrist suddenly received a transaction notification.

Lu Zhou opened the pop-up holographic window, and he stared at the string of zeros in the dialog box for a moment.

“... One million?”

He originally thought that the one million in the contract was the total amount of compensation, he didn’t expect it to be just an advance payment.

When Lu Zhou thought about the purchasing power of this credit point, he couldn’t help but have a strange expression on his face.

Although he never thought that making money was a difficult thing for him...

But he never expected that he, who had just returned to Earth, would have earned the first pot of gold in the 22nd century in this manner...

Chapter 1442: Holy Land Tour

[Congratulations, User, for completing the legendary mission: Return from Hell]

[Mission completion details: Hesitating at the three paths of fate, you have chosen the most difficult one. Like you firmly believe, all problems are solvable in the test of time. You, who have returned from hell, will guide your compatriots the right way.]

[Reward: Two million experience points, 10,000 general points, one “legendary” prize draw.]

“... In the test of time, all problems are solvable.”

Lu Zhou stared at the light blue holographic panel as he digested these words with a thoughtful look in his eyes.

This was something he often said.

He didn't expect The Observer to quote it.

However, because the expression was too vague, Lu Zhou didn't even know whether this guy was teasing him as usual, or was it some kind of serious advice.

Lu Zhou shook his head. He decided to put this unimportant thing aside for the time being. He reached out and selected the lucky draw icon behind the general points.

A pale golden light appeared, and a huge roulette wheel with golden light particles appeared in front of him.

The legendary lucky draw felt unusual.

It's not going to give me garbage, right?

Lu Zhou hesitated for a moment, but, in the end, he didn't want to jinx himself, so he pressed the button for the draw.

The roulette wheel started to spin. He pressed the button in the middle of the wheel again.

After continuing to spin a few dozens of times due to inertia, the roulette wheel finally stopped slowly, revealing its prize to Lu Zhou.

[Congratulations to the user, sample received]

[Received: “Private-1” type intelligent human guard.]

The moment Lu Zhou saw the prize, he was stunned, and he quickly opened the inventory.

Directly in his inventory was an intelligent soldier with facial features. Its posture was similar to a human, and it has a body made of unknown metal alloys.

Its pupils exuded a dangerous sense of power, and he couldn’t help but wonder whether the pupils would suddenly shoot out lasers.

A text box with supporting explanatory text quickly appeared in front of Lu Zhou.

[“Private-1” type intelligent human guard, from the Calan Empire, production date unknown. A general-purpose ground army unit controlled by a central server. Often used for orbital landing operations and colony clearance of dangerous organisms. Built-in carbon chip. A limited degree of intelligence and autonomy in offline conditions.]

This thing...

Isn’t this the terminator?

Lu Zhou looked at the explanatory text floating in front of him, and the more Lu Zhou read, the more he felt his scalp tingling.

When he read the autonomy part, he wondered whether he had received a bodyguard or received trouble instead.

“... I’ll ask Xiao Ai for its opinion.”

At least Xiao Ai would never harm him.

He closed the inventory and opened his characteristic panel.

After thinking for a while, Lu Zhou allocated all his experience points to material science.

The blue light swept across the holographic screen, and the updated characteristic panel soon appeared in front of him.

[

A. Mathematics: Level 10

B. Physics: Level 10

C. Biochemistry: Level 8 (10,000/3 million)

D. Engineering: Level 8 (0/3 million)

E. Material Science: Level 8 (2.063 million/3 million)

F. Energy Science: Level 8 (0/3 million)

G. Information science: Level 8 (0/3 million)

General points: 58,335

]

Except for mathematics and physics, which were maxed out, all other disciplines were at level 8.

The best upgrade strategy now was to choose one of them, reach level 9, and receive the promotional mission.

After considering various factors, Lu Zhou chose material science.

This was his best subject besides mathematics and physics. It was also the field best suited for his talents in applied mathematics and condensed matter physics.

After looking at the updated characteristic panel, Lu Zhou looked at the mission panel.

The mission rewards this time did not include mission cards, nor did the lucky draw give him one.

Therefore, this mission would be selected from the three random missions.

Lu Zhou reached out and selected the mission panel. Soon, three random missions appeared in front of him through the holographic window.

[Mission One: Small goals in life]

[Description: Since the user feels that making money is easy, let's start with a small goal.]

[Requirement: Earn 100 million in 30 days.]

Lu Zhou: "..."

*The f*ck.*

Is this a joke?

Although he never considered the possibility that he would be poor, he can't imagine that he could earn 100 million in 30 days.

He hadn't even figured out the business rules of this world...

Taking into account the inflation rate of the future era, there should be no opportunities of getting rich quickly. Lu Zhou didn't even look at the rewards; he directly went to the next mission.

[Mission Two: Glory of the Past]

[Description: The glory of the past has gone with the wind, but a soul full of curiosity will not wither because of time.]

[Requirements: Get a doctorate degree within 30 days to obtain an S evaluation.

[Get a doctorate degree within 100 days and get an A evaluation.

[Get a doctorate degree within 300 days and get a C evaluation.]

When Lu Zhou saw this mission, he was flabbergasted.

Get a PhD in 30 days...

Fine, if degrees were awarded fast enough in this era, and there were enough people helping him, it wouldn't be the problem.

However, the trouble was that 30 days might not even be enough for him to verify his identity.

He was still an unregistered citizen. The Pan-Asian Cooperation was still helping him with the investigation and evidence collection for his identity restoration. There was no way he could receive a PhD without his identity even being verified.

Although this mission seemed to be the simplest and the rewards for the mission were pretty good, after thinking about it, Lu Zhou finally gave up reluctantly.

It was not his preference to complete a mission based on uncertain elements that were out of his control.

“Last one...”

Lu Zhou took a deep breath and looked at the last mission.

[Mission Three: Visiting the Holy Land]

[Mission description: Time is passing by, it's the New Year.]

[Requirements: At a place where you have worked or lived, there are three keys that belong only to you. Use holographic glasses to discover them. It is a treasure that only you can see.]

[Rewards: Each key rewards one million experience points. Collecting three keys can open special rewards. (Note: Able to complete mission after obtaining one key.)]

“One key gives one million experience... Three gives three million experience, and there are special rewards?”

Is this really an ordinary mission?

The rewards are better than legendary missions.

Intuition told Lu Zhou that the profit and risk were always proportional. There was something else behind this mission, however, he didn't know what it was.

“... Who cares, this mission looks more reliable than the first two.”

Lu Zhou no longer hesitated. He reached out his hand and selected the icon for mission three.

It didn't make any sense to worry about the unknown. Whether there was a trap in the mission or not, he would only know by doing it himself.

Besides, he wanted to explore.

What had become of the place where he once worked and lived...

Chapter 1443: Not Very Smart

"This robot... Looks very strange. (°_°)"

Inside the living room of the apartment.

Xiao Ai looked at the "Private-1" intelligent human guard lying on the floor. Xiao Ai poked its arm curiously then quickly retracted her hand.

Lu Zhou: "Strange?"

"Yeah... Its backdoor security program is strong." The pattern in her pupils turned into frustrated emojis. Xiao Ai muttered, "I tried to hack into it and look at its underlying code. But I only saw a bunch of garbled text..."

Lu Zhou frowned.

"Even you can't do it?"

As he was speaking, the two round pupils of the intelligent guard lying on the ground suddenly burst into a purple light.

Shocked by this scene, Xiao Ai hid behind Lu Zhou subconsciously.

The robot sat up from the ground, and after staring at Lu Zhou for a while, a cold electronic sound floated from its mouth.

"Identified.

"At your service, commander."

The purple light gradually dimmed. The intelligent human guard sat on the ground motionlessly, as if it was asleep.

Lu Zhou, who sat down on the floor, finally breathed a sigh of relief. He wanted to lift his arm and wipe the cold sweat from his forehead.

However, he noticed a small hand pulling on his arm nervously.

Lu Zhou suddenly turned around and tapped Xiao Ai on the forehead.

“Ouch...” Xiao Ai covered her forehead painfully and looked at him with a grieved expression, “Master?”

Lu Zhou replied, “Don’t hide behind me whenever things happen, your master has one life, be more reliable!”

“But, Master, that guy... is really scary!”

Scary?

Lu Zhou glanced at the “Private-1” sitting on the ground with a weird expression. He stared at it for a long time, but he didn’t feel that this thing was scary. At most, it was a bit ugly.

Lu Zhou looked back at Xiao Ai. His heart softened as he spoke with a sigh.

“Enough, stop pretending... I didn’t use any force at all. You don’t even have a nervous system. How could it be painful?”

Xiao Ai, who was holding her forehead, looked like a little girl who had been bullied.

“But... Xiao Ai made Master angry, so Master knocked on Xiao Ai... It feels... like a heartache.”

Lu Zhou: “...”

What kind of logic is this?

Lu Zhou sighed and handed out his right hand. He pulled Xiao Ai up from the ground.

“It’s not that I’m angry...”

He didn't understand how scary this thing was. After all, he was not an artificial intelligence, so he couldn't put himself in the position and think from the perspective of artificial intelligence. Maybe Xiao Ai, who was an artificial intelligence, could see the horror that he was oblivious to.

After all, Xiao Ai's reaction didn't seem fake...

Lu Zhou went back next to the "Private-1" intelligent human guard, and after some tinkering, he was certain that this guy probably had no battery.

Lu Zhou searched for a long time but couldn't find the charging cable and the charging port. He estimated that the device should be wirelessly charged, so he opened the online shopping platform through his personal terminal and ordered a high-power wireless charger for charging maglev cars from the equipment manufacturer in this city.

After two hours, the things he ordered were delivered to his door by a bionic man in the uniform of a courier.

He was surprised at the efficiency of logistics in this era, but it was obviously not the time to care about these minor issues.

Using the instructions on the manual, Lu Zhou put the charger in the corner of the living room, then plugged the connector directly into the socket.

Lu Zhou was about to drag the intelligent human guard over and charge it. However, he suddenly thought of something and looked at Xiao Ai, who was standing by and was ready to help. He asked Xiao Ai, "Speaking of which, I have something to ask you."

"Yeah? Master, go ahead. (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧"

"Wait a second..."

Lu Zhou turned to go to the closet. He pulled out a black metal cube from his suitcase and took it back to the living room.

The moment Xiao Ai saw this black metal cube, her eyes lit up, and she spoke excitedly.

"Master brought it back! (" ▽ ")"

“Yeah... I heard that the memory card of the robot was near the chest, so I fumbled around and found this thing.”

“Huh? Chest??”

Lu Zhou: “...?”

“Nothing. This black cube is a robot memory card. It integrates a memory unit and a multi-core processor, which can support a limited degree of intelligent algorithms.”

Lu Zhou: “The subroutine was created by you?”

Xiao Ai: “Kind of. After all, Mars is too far away, and the communication delay is too big. If every action has a delay of several minutes, there is no way to control it in real-time, so Xiao Ai designed a simple smart memory, then secretly sold it to the bad guys who wanted to go to Mars. ♠(♠∪♠♣)”

No wonder!

However, Lu Zhou still didn’t quite understand how to distinguish between different types of artificial intelligence.

Through a unique identification code?

Or something else.

Lu Zhou glanced at the black cube in his hand. He then glanced at the intelligent human guard on the ground and spoke.

“Xiao Ai.”

“Huh? 0.0”

“If you are asked to change your body, would you like to change to a more powerful one? For example, this one on the ground.”

Xiao Ai: “Huh? Can’t Xiao Ai have all the bodies? (◡‿◡)”

Lu Zhou: “...”

Xiao Ai immediately pretended that nothing happened and changed her words.

“Xiao Ai will keep this body. This black thing is too ugly. Earth is still very safe.”

“Okay then.”

Lu Zhou didn't say much. He reached out his hand and fumbled on the intelligent human guard, then pressed a certain switch.

An orange-yellow metal sphere about the size of a fist slowly lifted out from the left chest of the intelligent human guard.

“Kill Core...”

“Huh? 0.0”

“Nothing...” Lu Zhou looked at the system pop-up window that disappeared in front of him and frowned.

His intuition told him that the thing in his hand at this moment should be the memory of this intelligent human guard: the artificial intelligence designed for war purposes.

His instinct also told him that every part of this thing exuded a dangerous atmosphere, especially against human civilization.

“The difference between the interfaces is so big...” Lu Zhou put the dangerous metal ball aside carefully. He held the black cube against the chest of the intelligent human guard for a while. Then, he looked at Xiao Ai and asked, “Is there a way to replace the memory card?”

“Huh? Does Master want to change it?”

“Yeah.” Lu Zhou nodded and looked at the black cube in his hand. He said, “I promised it a new body.”

Although he was probably the only one who heard that, he still wanted to fulfill his promise.

Xiao Ai replied, “It's not very troublesome in theory. Just copy the memory software and redesign a carrier with a suitable size for it! (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧”

Lu Zhou said, “Can it be done?”

This thing is a piece of high-tech item from the Calan Empire. Is it really that simple?

Xiao Ai: “Don’t worry, Master, Xiao Ai will handle it! (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧”

Lu Zhou thought that this would be troublesome. He didn’t expect things to be far simpler than he had thought.

Through an industrial scanner worth 20,000 credits and an experimental 3D printer from Dongya Heavy Industries that cost 50,000 credits, Xiao Ai only took half a day to design a memory interface that was almost identical to the yellow metal ball.

The rest was much easier. Through a personal terminal, Xiao Ai transferred the memory software to the carrier, then placed the synthesized memory into the “Private-1” intelligent human guard’s chest.

When the purple pupils lit up, Xiao Ai was not scared this time, and a cheeky smile appeared on her face.

“Hehe... feels like Xiao Ai and Master had a child.”

Lu Zhou ignored Xiao Ai and looked at the intelligent guard who sat up from the ground with a blank face.

After thinking for a moment, he spoke.

“You don’t have a name yet.

“I’ll call you number zero... No, let me think about it.”

It always felt too casual to use numbers as names.

Suddenly, Lu Zhou thought of a more suitable name.

“Starting from today...

“Your name will be Ling, okay?”

The purple pupils flickered slightly, exuding a sense of security.

It seemed that it recognized the name. It placed its right hand on its chest and answered in a respectful voice, “Yes, Commander.

“Artificial intelligence ‘Ling Okay’ is at your service.”

Lu Zhou: “...?”

Chapter 1444: The State of Mathematics and Physics

“Recently, a theft occurred in the museum area of the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study (former site). A robot guide in the museum has been confirmed to be stolen. According to the description of the museum manager, the robot left the work area during the shift, and after leaving the museum area, the power to the BDS system was cut off...

“It felt like it was being controlled by something.”

A 60-year-old grandmother, facing the interview camera with a dazed expression, said, “We didn’t notice it at first because I never thought that someone would steal a robot guide!

“Who do you think would do such a crazy thing! Can’t you just buy a robot if—”

The second half of the interview seemed to have been cut off abruptly.

The camera seamlessly transferred back to the studio.

“... It is reported that the type of robot was a G-004 robot guide produced by the Hippocampus Group. Its purpose is to provide tourists with guided tours of tourist attractions and amusement facilities. So far, the Hippocampus Group engineers have arrived and are assisting the police and a third-party appraisal agency on the cause of the accident.

“We cannot rule out the possibility of a system failure of the robot. Hippocampus Group has temporarily removed the robot from its own sales channels and issued a risk warning notice to customers who purchased the robot models.

“Due to the possibility of a criminal case, the local public security agency has been involved in the investigation after receiving a report from the museum.

“Our station wants to remind everyone that if anyone witnesses the whereabouts of the robot, please call us immediately or provide clues to the museum or local police station.

“Jinling News, reporting for you.”

Early next morning...

At the dining table, Lu Zhou was drinking coffee while listening to the morning news. He used his personal terminal to browse the academic information that he was interested in.

When he heard that a guided robot was missing from the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study Museum, Lu Zhou raised his head and looked at the large floor-to-ceiling screen embedded in the wall.

When he looked up, Lu Zhou was stunned.

Then, he silently looked away from the screen and looked at Xiao Ai, who was sitting on the opposite side with her chin in her hands, looking at him happily.

The atmosphere between the two... suddenly became silent.

“Huh?”

“Huh my a*s!”

Lu Zhou looked at Xiao Ai, who was pretending to be stupid. He was furious.

*For f*ck sake!*

The issue of his identity and residency had not yet been solved, and Xiao Ai was already giving him trouble.

Out of everything, you steal a robot?!

It's not like we don't have money, can't you just buy one!

“Master?”

“Don’t annoy me, let me think about what to do about this...”

Lu Zhou looked at the TV, which had begun to show other news stories. His left hand was resting on the table.

About two minutes later, Lu Zhou looked at Xiao Ai and spoke.

“You should return yourself.”

“No!”

Lu Zhou didn’t expect her reaction would be so big. He looked at her with a headache and spoke.

“Why does it matter? Your main body is just a server? Wouldn’t it be okay for me to buy you a new one?”

Xiao Ai: “Master... doesn’t like Xiao Ai? That’s why Master wants to get a new one...”

Lu Zhou: “...?”

Xiao Ai: “But but, face! And body! Every parameter was designed by Xiao Ai using big data collection, analysis, and comparison, based on the most popular character images!”

Yep. This guy...

Has a misunderstanding about the concept of ownership.

Lu Zhou, who had never argued with Xiao Ai, felt that his authority as a master was being challenged.

However, seeing her so happy, he wanted to give in.

His current status was probably like an old father, watching his daughter grab the toys from other kids. Even though he knew that his daughter was in the wrong, he couldn’t bear to correct her.

What a headache...

If only I could talk to the museum and buy this robot.

But now that the police were involved in the investigation, even if he wanted to solve it privately, there was no room for maneuver.

“You underestimate the power of human society and rules... Hey, forget about it.” Lu Zhou shook his head and put away the holographic panel floating in front of him. He said, “Anyway, the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study is kind of mine. Keep it if you like it.”

In any case, I came back alive from Mars thanks to this little fellow who did not forget about me.

Although this is a bit daunting, I'll regard it as a reward.

“Yay!”

After hearing that Lu Zhou would satisfy her willful request, Xiao Ai jumped up from the chair excitedly. The female robot rushed over to Lu Zhou and kissed him on the cheek.

“Mua! Thank you, Master! I hope you accept my gratitude!”

“Accept my a*s!”

Lu Zhou raised his finger and tapping on Xiao Ai's head. He glared at her and stood up.

“Master?”

“I'll go outside and help Ling find if there are helmets for dolls. Ling can't go outside like this, he will be arrested for affecting the appearance of the city.”

“Then, Xiao Ai must help too! (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧”

“You and Ling stay home if you want to save me some trouble!”

The “Private-1” intelligent human guard wearing an apron walked out of the kitchen and stood there holding the vacuum cleaner.

“Received, Commander.

“Ling Okay, on standby.”

Lu Zhou's eyebrows twitched fiercely. He looked at Xiao Ai, who was sitting on the table with a grieved expression, and spoke.

"If you have time, help me optimize this guy's memory software. I suspect that the compatibility is broken... At least make it less formal.

"Also, your name is Ling, not Ling Okay!"

The scarlet light flickered slightly. He seemed to understand the command.

"Successful rename, Ling Not Ling Okay, at your service."

Lu Zhou: "..."

...

The biggest difference between the traffic in the 22nd century and the traffic in the 21st century was probably reflected in the efficiency.

The transportation of this era pushed efficiency to the extreme, especially in terms of public transportation.

From the vacuum magnetic levitation pipelines to the urban light rails, the layer-by-layer downward compatible public transportation system was like the aorta and capillaries in the human body.

One could wake up in the Pearl River Delta city group in the morning, have a meeting in the Yangtze River Delta city group at noon, then go to the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei city group to watch a football game and go back to sleep. A century ago, this was a lifestyle only available to social elites. But now, this was accessible to anyone...

The two mentally disabled children were at home. Lu Zhou put on some shoes and went out of the house.

It was January. Although the house had central air-conditioning, the weather outside was still very cold, so he wore extra clothing when he went out.

Not only that, considering what happened when he was leaving the airport yesterday, Lu Zhou, who had a premonition that his face might cause a lot of trouble, hung a necklace-shaped holographic projection system around his neck.

He spent about half an hour making some slight adjustments to his handsome face. He then put on a pair of AR glasses and navigated to the nearest train station using the cursor on the map.

He thought that taking a light rail should be easy for him.

However, just after he stepped into the station, he ran into trouble.

Lu Zhou looked blankly at the crowded station. He searched for a while but couldn't find the ticket vending machine. He finally had to ask the staff attendant for help.

"Hello, how do I buy a light rail ticket? I don't see a vending—"

The station attendant sitting at the help desk looked at Lu Zhou with a strange expression. "Light rail ticket? What is that? If you want to take the train, just go in."

"It's free?"

"What are you thinking about, there are no free things in this world." The station attendant continued impatiently, "As long as your terminal is turned on, we can identify you and deduct the money from your account. You are probably a... dormant person? This is the 22nd century."

Lu Zhou: "..."

*This a*shole! She probably wanted to call me a frozen popsicle, right?*

Why is this person working in the public transportation system?

The robots will take over your job soon.

Lu Zhou turned around and walked toward the gate.

He suddenly had a thought. What would happen if he turned off the personal terminal worn on his left wrist when he passed the ticket gate.

Lu Zhou felt that something bad would happen.

He didn't want to evade the fares, so he did not try it even though he was curious. Like other passengers, he went through the ticket gate and walked in the direction of the boarding point...

This was different from 21st-century light rail.

Although the light rail of this era was still called light rail, in terms of technical principles and user experience, they were completely different things.

The intricate floating tracks spread across the city like a spider web, and the rail transit lines that corresponded to each station were stacked like layers of a cake.

It would be impossible to get on and off the trail at the correct stops without the use of AR glasses. It would be just as unreliable as those old drivers who tried to use their memories to find the right way in the city suburbs.

After finally getting on the light rail, Lu Zhou glanced at the arrival time. He then reached out his hand and pressed the smart bracelet.

A translucent holographic screen popped up in front of him. After dimming the brightness of the screen, he focused his attention on the academic documents that he hadn't finished reading at home.

Generally speaking, compared to a century ago, the development of the academic world was quite advanced.

Many models that were still being explored 100 years ago had been tested in this era.

For example, the consortium model he tried was now widely used in the Jinling high-tech zone, but its reach had gone from relying on Star Sky Technology to a university city with more than tens of thousands of professional subdivisions.

Many large-scale scientific and technological innovation companies, such as the Hippocampus Group, which stood at the top of a certain industrial chain, were incubated under this model.

Then there were mathematics and physics, which he cared about the most.

Although compared to applied science, this aspect was relatively secretive, but with the help of Xiao Ai, filtering out the useful parts from the complicated information wasn't too difficult.

It was worth mentioning that the world's largest academic consulting exchange forum was LSPM. Although few people still remembered the full name of this acronym, it had developed into a new era of the academic community.

Especially since virtual reality community technology was widely used, it was the first to launch the VR online academic conference and online discussion group module. It had almost become the "second whiteboard" in the hands of young people.

Although it also faced the same problem of the proliferation of civilian sciences as arXiv, by comparison, it was already much better than many contemporary websites of the same type.

There had been many rumors about the managers of this forum. The current mainstream opinion was that this website was operated by the descendants of Academician Lu, that was, the board of directors of the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation.

However, no one would have thought that...

In fact, the person who ran this website was not a human at all, but an AI hidden under the site of the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study...

"Generally speaking, the development of mathematics is okay, except the fact that the Hodge conjecture and the BSD conjecture are solved... There are no impressive results, but it is still progressing steadily.

"The development of physics is fairly satisfactory, although it has been slower than I expected."

Only 27 out of the 100-century problems had been answered; 78 questions remain unanswered. The first question was the question he was most concerned about, which was the unification of the four fundamental forces. Compared to 100 years ago, there was almost no obvious progress in theoretical physics in this area.

By comparison, the progress in the field of mathematics was much greater. First, the Hodge conjecture was proven by Professor Chen Yang and Professor Perelman, then the BSD conjecture was solved by Li Mo.

The seven millennium problems that were expected to be solved in the 21st century only had one problem left. He alone accounted for three of the six problems that had been solved. Among the remaining three problems, the Hodge conjecture was half solved by him, and the other was solved by his apprentice.

The non-trivial zero-point problem of Dirichlet's L function that he was concerned about seemed to have no progress. It was even named the problem of the century. However, his proof on Riemann's hypothesis had contributed to many new research results.

Thinking about this, a smile suddenly appeared on Lu Zhou's face.

If this couldn't prove how smart he was, then nothing else could...

Chapter 1445: You Have a Problem

"Jin Ling University is here. Passengers who get off the train at this station, please remember your belongings and get off the train in an orderly fashion..."

The sound of the announcement floated above Lu Zhou's head, awakening him from the memory of the past.

At the same time, the real-time navigation system opened in his holographic glasses also had a pop-up window to remind him that he had arrived at the station.

Lu Zhou turned off the holographic panel floating in front of him. He stood up from his seat and got out of the train with the flow of people, embarking on the place where he once wielded his youth with excitement and anxiety.

However, when he stepped out of the station and the sun shone on his face, Lu Zhou was stunned.

Where...

Is this?

It was completely different from the Jin Ling University in his memory. The familiar tree trails were gone. There were gardening drones floating on the

lawn. Silver and white buildings on both sides, even the shape of the buildings were completely changed.

Lu Zhou pushed the AR glasses up the bridge of his nose. He set up navigation to the mathematics department building, but the navigation cursor in front of him was divided into three different paths.

Three mathematics buildings?

After seeing the feedback from the navigation system, Lu Zhou was shocked.

When did the math department get so rich?

Lu Zhou was in shock for a while and didn't know where to go. He was suddenly bumped into from behind.

Although it was an unexpected collision, Lu Zhou himself was fine, but the person who bumped into him almost fell to the ground.

"Sorry, sorry, I'm in a hurry!"

The boy who accidentally bumped into him picked up the glasses from the ground and was about to go.

However, Lu Zhou wasn't willing to miss this opportunity. He wanted to find someone to ask for directions, so he quickly grabbed the boy's arm.

"Wait a second, kid, how do you get to the mathematics department?"

"Mathematics department?" The boy was stunned. He looked at Lu Zhou and asked, "Which major?"

Lu Zhou blurted out subconsciously, "Number Theory..."

The boy with square-framed glasses snapped back to reality. He held Lu Zhou's hand with a tragic expression.

"Oh f*ck, I was thinking who would walk so slowly, I didn't expect you to be one of us! If you keep walking around so slowly, you'll miss the facial paralysis class!"

Facial paralysis?

Lu Zhou was taken aback for a moment. Before he realized what was going on, the boy began to run.

“Wait, wait a minute.”

“Wait for what, hurry up!”

“... Isn’t there a more convenient means of transportation?”

“What do you want on campus, fly in a car? Cough cough... You’re pretty fit, you’re not even out of breath, I’m so f*cking tired... Cough! Stop talking to me.”

Lu Zhou: “...”

Aren’t you the one who has been talking?

We’ve only run for a couple of steps, how unfit are you?

When Lu Zhou came back to his senses, he had been taken to the teaching building by this stubborn guy. They stepped into a lecture hall with seats arranged in a U shape.

After Lu Zhou found a seat in the back row, he looked around the classroom, then looked at the tired and breathless student next to him and asked casually with interest, “They don’t take names for a large lecture like this right?”

Are all students in this era so punctual?

“Take names? What is that...”

Lu Zhou immediately realized that he was being an “old ancient popsicle” again, so he quickly changed his words.

“What is your name?”

“Zhang Tao!”

“What about the one on stage?”

“Professor Sun Jingwen...” Zhang Tao’s eyes widened for a moment. He looked at Lu Zhou incredulously and said, “The f*ck, you don’t even know him?”

Lu Zhou smiled embarrassedly.

Seeing how this young man was quite interesting, he joked, “Why do you think every time I attend an academic conference, I never ask someone for their business card?”

Zhang Tao glanced at him.

Every time...

How many conferences have you been to?

He spoke casually.

“Why...”

Lu Zhou sighed softly.

“Because I have face blindness.”

There were plenty of people he didn’t know, but everyone knew him.

However, this kid apparently took his words as a joke. After holding his stomach and laughing for a while, he sat up and spoke.

“Ahem... Bro, you’re so funny, I nearly couldn’t catch my breath. What’s your virtual community account? If you have time, we can go to the blue Calan Empire planet together, it’ll be fun.”

Lu Zhou smiled mysteriously and didn’t answer the question. Instead, he pointed in the direction of the podium and spoke.

“It’s starting, let’s listen carefully, talk about other things after class.”

On stage.

A man with rimless glasses and a meticulous expression and who was a simple set of formal attire walked to the podium.

After his finger tapped twice on the multimedia device, four digital whiteboards appeared on the wall.

Lu Zhou finally knew why this guy was called “Facial Paralysis” by the students. It was because his expression was really not very rich at all. Almost like his facial muscles had fallen into dormancy as if to conserve energy. Ever since he entered the classroom, the expression on his face had not changed even a bit.

“Today’s content may be a bit super-dimensional. It involves the most difficult problem in mathematics, that is, whether all non-trivial zeros of Dirichlet’s L function are located on the straight line of the complex plane $\text{Re}(s)=1/2$.

“If you have studied your homework, you should not be unfamiliar with this problem. This proposition is a generalization problem raised by Academician Lu at the 2022 International Congress of Mathematicians in St. Petersburg. It is often referred to as the Generalized Riemann hypothesis, and it is also my research problem.

“My teaching philosophy has always been that mathematics is a discipline honed in practice. If you don’t think about it yourself, what I teach you will never truly become yours.

“Listen as much as possible if you can, record if you don’t understand, then go back and ponder slowly.”

He turned to face the first whiteboard and wrote a line of calculations on it.

This line of calculation caused Zhang Tao, who was sitting next to Lu Zhou, to frown in pain, but Lu Zhou was very familiar with this.

Isn’t this...

What I wrote on the blackboard at the St. Petersburg conference?

“Replace the infinite series in the Euler product formula with the complex exponent s , and then set $\text{Re}(s)>1$, and introduce the Dirichlet L function... Interesting.”

When Zhang Tao listened to the whispers from the mouth of the older guy sitting next to him, he was suddenly startled.

*There’s someone who can understand this f*cking stuff?*

He was just planning to complain about it on the anonymous school forum, that no one could understand this...

"You can understand what he wrote?"

Lu Zhou replied, "Sort of."

Zhang Tao asked tentatively, "Group... Group Structure Method?"

"What nonsense are you talking about?" Lu Zhou glanced at him and said, "The part after the introduction of Dirichlet's L function is of course the unified theory of algebraic geometry. Have you seen the Group Structure Method before?"

The problem is that I have never seen the unified theory of algebraic geometry either...

Aware of his ignorance, Zhang Tao closed his mouth with shame.

Lu Zhou sighed slightly and continued, "It's fine... From what I remember, very few people can understand this theory to this degree, and the usage is a bit rigid. The old method is not always applicable, if only it was more flexible."

As soon as Zhang Tao heard these words, he felt even more ashamed.

*For f*ck sake, he's just bragging as well! How come he's so cool and clean about it, whereas I'm so nervous?*

If only I were more confident.

This guy is a genius!

The whiteboard on the stage had been written all over. Professor Sun Jingwen, who was lost in thought, seemed to have forgotten that he was in a classroom. His attention was fully focused on the problem in front of him.

However, he seemed to be in a little trouble as he stood there and frowned, as if pondering about something.

In fact, he was indeed in trouble, at least in Lu Zhou's opinion.

If no one helped him, he wouldn't be able to solve this problem even by tomorrow.

Lu Zhou sighed lightly. He was hesitating whether to help this guy when he suddenly noticed the red button on the corner of the table.

With a hint of curiosity in his eyes, Lu Zhou touched Zhang Tao, who was sitting next to him, with his finger and pointed to the button.

“What is this?”

“It’s to raise your hand, used in large classrooms.”

“I see...”

Lu Zhou reached out his hand and pressed it on the button.

He thought that there would be red lights flashing, or sound effects, but there was nothing.

However, Lu Zhou quickly noticed pairs of eyes staring at him, like he had been shouting in the classroom.

Zhang Tao looked at Lu Zhou dumbfounded, and he quickly pulled Lu Zhou’s sleeves.

“The f*ck... what are you doing?!”

In the mathematics department of Jinling University, everyone knew that Mr. Facial Paralysis hated people interrupting his thoughts.

Especially when his research was at a critical stage...

Interrupting him at this moment to ask questions was no different than suicide.

Zhang Tao’s voice became weaker and weaker. A sharp line of sight had already shot up from the podium...

Professor Sun Jingwen looked at Lu Zhou blankly.

“You have a question?”

“No.” Lu Zhou stood up from his seat and shook his head slightly. He smiled and said, “But you have a problem.”

A loud noise spread in the classroom.

All of the students were in disbelief. They looked at Lu Zhou, then at Sun Jingwen, who was standing in front of the podium.

Does this guy not want to live anymore?

Many people even showed gloating expressions on their faces, waiting for Professor Sun's next reaction.

However, an unbelievable scene happened.

Professor Sun, who was on the stage, was not as angry as most people expected. Instead, he frowned and asked, "Where is the problem?"

Lu Zhou: "Inference 4 in line 24, there is nothing wrong with the idea of introducing differential manifolds here, but I think L manifolds... When Academician Lu was designing it, he probably never thought that it would be used to solve the Dirichlet L function problem."

"Of course I know that." Sun Jingwen stared at Lu Zhou's face, trying to take a look at it more clearly, but he still did not recognize him. Sun Jingwen said, "L Manifold was his solution to the NS equation problem, it was not used to solve the Dirichlet L function problem, but it was one of the key elements in solving Riemann's hypothesis. It is also undeniable that it serves as the core tool of the unified theory of algebraic geometry."

"Your research on the history of mathematics is good, but mathematics research is not archaeology after all." Lu Zhou said with a gentle smile, "Can I borrow a whiteboard?"

Professor Sun Jingwen seemed to be stunned. He didn't expect this student to do this.

But he didn't say much. He just nodded his head blankly and made a gesture casually.

"Please, go ahead."

Chapter 1446: Academician Lu Once Said

The experimental building of Jin Ling University.

Qin Chuan, who was sitting in the dean's office, stared at the holographic window on the table. He spoke emotionally to the person on the other end of the video call.

"Lu Zhou is a professor from Jin Ling University! We have kept his position for a hundred years! Now suddenly someone who looks exactly the same popped out and claims to be Lu Zhou, we are obliged to maintain the honor of Professor Lu! How does this have nothing to do with us!"

"However, we also have to worry about the privacy of citizens."

Sitting on the opposite side of the holographic window, the man in formal clothing sighed and said, "In terms of procedures, this is the task of the household registration management department. They will use multiple sources to verify the authenticity of his identity. When necessary, they will use the power of the security department. If they think they need your help, they will contact you. If they think your opinion is irrelevant or cannot provide valid evidence..."

The man in the video shrugged.

"Then I trust their judgment."

Qin Chuan still reluctantly spoke.

"Then at least help me arrange a meeting with him, let me talk to him in person!"

"Please believe in the fairness of the law, Mr. Qin. The identity verification of dormant people is one of the most difficult problems in judicial practice, we also have our own difficulties here.

"100 years is not 100 days. No hospital will keep his DNA samples for such a long time, and he himself has never donated evidence containing genetic information. We need a rigorous chain of evidence to deal with this matter. Most of the evidence is vulnerable to the passing of time. There are so many things that can be changed in a century. If you are a scholar, you should understand what I mean by this.

"So, my suggestion remains the same. Since you are a university, do what a university should do. Unless you tell me that you are his immediate relative... But that is obviously impossible."

Facing the man in the holographic window, Qin Chuan went silent for a while. His tight shoulders slightly loosened.

“Okay then...”

“If you insist.”

The phone call ended.

Qin Chuan stood up from his office chair and said angrily, “These guys... Actually said the matter has nothing to do with us! I have never heard such a bullsh*t answer!”

The assistant looked at how angry Dean Qin was, he didn’t know what to say.

In fact, in his opinion, Dean Qin was indeed a bit paranoid.

Even if Jin Ling University did retain Lu Zhou’s professorship out of respect and commemoration, this reservation was unilateral. It was impossible for the court to refer to their opinions and make choices that affected the judgment.

He believed in the judgment of the court and the household registration management department.

But then again, even though he thought that Dean Qin was wrong, he still understood the old gentleman’s reaction to this matter and why he was losing his mind.

After all, the savant was back.

It would be strange to remain calm.

“Xiao Yang.”

The secretary standing next to him quickly responded, “Yes?”

“I have a class in a while, you can handle the afternoon meeting.”

The secretary named Xiao Yang nodded immediately and spoke with a polite smile.

“Okay, dean.”

Qin Chuan used the holographic panel to download the courseware, then left the office without a word and walked toward the teaching building.

He became angrier and angrier as he walked.

In his opinion, that guy was purely speaking nonsense, using official terms and the so-called procedures to negatively treat the serious matter of “Academician Lu’s resurrection”.

When Qin Chuan was about to go to the classroom after he arrived at the teaching building, two students walked past him quickly.

The two were talking excitedly while walking.

“F*ck, have you heard? Mr. Facial Paralysis was taught a lesson by a student from nowhere!”

“None of the classes know who this guy is!”

“Maybe a big name from a research institute?”

“No way, he only looks about mid-twenties at most. How could it be possible to get into the institute at such a young age!”

“Why don’t we go check it out?”

“For what reason, we still have a class. Let’s wait and see what other people say!”

When Qin Chuan heard the conversation between the two inadvertently, he raised his eyebrows subconsciously.

This is about Professor Sun Jingwen, right?

Why do I feel like...

Something interesting had just happened?

...

Inside the lecture hall.

It only took half an hour for the noisy classroom to go completely silent.

During this half an hour, the whiteboard constructed of holographic images placed on the right side of the podium had been filled with rows of dense calculations.

Professor Sun Jingwen looked at the whiteboard filled with calculations in amazement. He didn't have any expressions on his face. His mouth was open slightly, but he couldn't say a word.

$[L(\pi)=\int dt/\int n+O(s^{1/2}x+\varepsilon)\dots]$

"... An evolutionary form of Hadamard's method."

Yeah...

How come I didn't think about this.

"To summarize, there is an obvious problem with inference 4 in line 24."

Lu Zhou took his hand off the whiteboard. He was not used to using the holographic whiteboard. He gently shook his sore arm.

Then he looked at Professor Sun Jingwen, who was standing by the podium, smiled faintly, and continued, "If you are reading what I wrote, you should already understand what I want to express. There is no need to be obsessed with introducing differential manifolds and forcibly introducing the unified theory of algebraic geometry. There is no need to stick to L manifolds.

"I... If I remember correctly, Academician Lu should have said at the St. Petersburg conference that the unified theory of algebraic geometry is not a perfect theory, it is just an introduction to the Riemann zeta function. It may not be as effective when applied to Dirichlet's L function.

"If you can find a way to improve this tool, I think you are not far from the final answer."

Did Academician Lu say that?

But this is not important.

Professor Sun Jingwen's throat gulped. He felt that his worldview was subverted.

"But..."

When Lu Zhou saw the turbulent emotions behind the expressionless face, he pondered for a while and said, "I read the history of mathematics, especially the modern part. If I remember correctly..."

"Academician Lu has never worshiped authority in his life. He often educates his students not to overly believe in himself, so we should not worship him as an authority."

"I hope you are chasing the truth, not a voice from a hundred years ago. If he has done something incorrectly, you don't have to defend him, just erase that line and rewrite the correct answer."

Those words resonated in Sun Jingwen's ears.

"Academician Lu has never worshiped authority in his life, so we should not worship him as an authority..."

Suddenly, as if he woke up from a dream, his stubborn pupils gradually began to change.

Lu Zhou nodded with satisfaction in his heart.

So he can be taught...

Although this guy is a bit stubborn, he still has some talent. The most commendable thing is that his stubbornness is fixable.

At least he listened to my words.

Since what should be said had been said, Lu Zhou estimated that he should probably leave.

As for whether this guy could make something of this, it would depend on himself...

Maybe because he had lived for too long, and this was the university where he used to work, whether it was the student sitting here or a professor standing on the podium, Lu Zhou always felt like they were his own children.

If he could help them, he would.

However, just as Lu Zhou was about to leave, a strange sight suddenly appeared.

A pale golden key slowly emerged from the wall covered by holographic light out of nowhere.

The moment Lu Zhou saw this key, he was stunned. He then glanced sideways at the students sitting in the front row.

Many people looked surprised.

But their surprise was obviously not because of the key on the wall; it was because of the lines of calculations that shocked Professor Sun.

No one seemed to notice the key.

As if it didn't exist in this world, like it only existed in his own universe.

Lu Zhou raised his right hand and touched the key. The moment his index finger touched the key, the key instantly turned into a ball of golden light. The light went into his fingertips and seemed to be absorbed by his body.

He didn't feel anything special.

However, after seeing all of this, Lu Zhou felt a sense of fulfillment in his heart.

"I see..."

Lu Zhou muttered quietly to himself, "Achieving a sense of meaning with my past memory..."

"Is this the trick to finding the keys?"

So this is where the holy land is...

As a professor, he used to preach and teach his students here, but just now, he did the same again when he revisited his hometown. So instead of looking for the key, the key was looking for him?

Lu Zhou didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

He didn't expect that 100 years after he woke up, the system would actually give him such a philosophical mission.

But where will the next key be?

Lu Zhou looked at Professor Sun Jingwen standing next to the podium. He hesitated about whether to say goodbye before leaving.

But seeing how he was in deep thought, Lu Zhou felt that it would be better not to interrupt him at this critical moment.

So, without saying anything, he walked away under the gaze of those who were surprised and stunned...

Chapter 1447: It's Him!

An apartment building near the second ring road of Jin Ling City.

Director Li, who was standing at the door with Wang Peng, confirmed the address marked on the AR navigation. He then reached out and pressed the doorbell.

After a while, there was a noise inside the door, and an unfamiliar voice came from the intercom.

"Who is it?"

"It's me, Director Li, and Wang Peng... Is Academician Lu home?"

There was a moment of silence behind the door.

The voice continued, "Academician Lu is away, he is not at home. Would you like to come again another day?"

"Not at home..."

Director Li scratched his head. Obviously, he didn't expect Lu Zhou to go out. He didn't know what to do for a while.

Wang Peng, who was standing next to him, stepped forward and asked, "Excuse me, who are you?"

"Huh? This question is so embarrassing, I don't know how to answer..."

Wang Peng and Director Li: "...?"

What the hell is “don’t know how to answer”?

Not sure what was going on inside, Director Li and Wang Peng exchanged a weird glance with each other.

In the end, Director Li was the first to break the silence. He spoke with a dry cough.

“Why don’t we come back tomorrow? It was my fault that I didn’t let Li Gaoliang help us make an appointment in advance.”

Wang Peng nodded.

“We can only come again tomorrow.”

Xiao Ai looked at the two people leaving through the camera at the door. She muttered, "Well... As a hostess, should I invite guests in for a cup of tea before leaving? But Master does not allow Xiao Ai to show her face... What do you think? (´◡◡`)"

The purple pupils of the “Private-1” intelligent human guard standing nearby flashed.

“Ling Not Ling Okay... doesn’t quite understand what you are talking about.”

Xiao Ai: “I don’t quite understand what you are talking about either.”

Security Department of Jin Ling University.

The dean of the mathematics department and Professor Sun Jingwen, who was in the lecture earlier, were all standing here at the moment.

In addition, there were two engineers responsible for security.

A person of unknown origin got into the classroom and even made such a big commotion. The school didn't know anything, making it a bit unreasonable.

Dean Qin Chuan looked at the monitoring screen, at the strange man who stood in front of the whiteboard, talking about the history of number theory. Dean Qin Chuan muttered suspiciously, "... Has Academician Lu ever said this?"

He didn't remember such a line in the history of mathematics.

Standing next to Dean Qin, Sun Jingwen watched the surveillance footage from the beginning to the end.

After being silent for a while, he suddenly spoke.

"I want to go on a retreat for a while."

Qin Chuan looked away from the holographic screen and cast a questioning look at him.

"Is it because that person said something to you?"

Sun Jingwen nodded and admitted this honestly.

"Under his guidance, I have some new ideas... About Dirichlet's L function."

Seeing that his student didn't seem to be joking, Qin Chuan immediately put on a solemn expression.

"Go ahead then."

Sun Jingwen nodded and did not say anything. He turned and left the monitoring room.

The monitoring room was quiet.

Standing next to the engineer, Qin Chuan stared at the holographic screen that listed the surveillance pictures, lost in thought.

From the perspective of a mathematician, that person's writings on the whiteboard could be said to be quite insightful.

Especially his understanding of the unified theory of algebraic geometry, it could even be better than his.

Being able to defeat Professor Sun with just a few words was definitely not something ordinary people could do.

Although mathematics was widely used, the circle of mathematicians was not very large. There was no way he had never heard about such a great

mathematician. Even if he hadn't seen his face before, he should have at least heard about his name or rumors about him.

However, a guy that seemed to be in his mid-twenties, who had even surpassed Professor Sun, the 31-year-old Fields Medalist...

Is it possible for this kind of person to exist?

Just when Qin Chuan felt his head was in a mess, the engineers were carefully comparing the pictures, trying to pinpoint which department the person was from.

Or at least, collect some clues about his motives for suddenly appearing in the lecture.

However, the engineer standing next to the holographic screen suddenly let out a sigh.

Qin Chuan quickly looked at him and asked, "Did you find anything?"

"It's not that I found something... I just think it's a bit strange?" The engineer wearing glasses stared at the person on the surveillance screen and said with a weird expression, "Did you not see? There is a weird pixel tearing around his face..."

"Now that you say it... it does seem so." Another engineer frowned and said, "It's like two sets of incompatible holographic projection systems overlapped, causing the outline of the picture to appear distorted."

"Wait..."

"What's the matter?" Qin Chuan said anxiously, looking at the two people who were mumbling with each other.

"He probably used some kind of facial contouring system based on holographic technology..." With a strange expression on his face, the engineer with glasses continued, "Although I don't know the purpose of doing this... but this face shouldn't be his own."

Not his face?

So he was wearing an optical mask?

Qin Chuan was stunned; he had a confused expression on his face.

He really couldn't think of the motivation for that person to do this.

A hint of possibility suddenly surged in his heart.

Maybe...

It's him!

Academician Lu?!

"Can you trace where he went!" Qin Chuan blurted out to the engineer next to him.

"The surveillance on our school can only track the entrance of the subway station... After leaving the classroom, he went to the library, the old dormitory, and even the mathematics research building. He went everywhere. The final place seems to be the library, then I don't know where he went."

"Sure enough it is him..."

Professor Lu wasn't hiding from anyone.

Anyone who woke up after 100 years would want to visit the place they once worked at.

Qin Chuan couldn't help but hold his breath. As he became more confident of his guess, intense excitement floated in his muddy pupils.

However, the intense emotion only lasted for less than a few seconds. It quickly turned into deep self-blame and shame.

If Lu Zhou wasn't disappointed in us, why would he turn around and leave without saying a word?

Qin Chuan looked at the figure who turned and disappeared at the door of the classroom on the monitoring screen. He sighed silently in his heart and muttered softly, "Ashamed!"

"I'm really ashamed..."

While the entire Jin Ling University students were discussing this event, Lu Zhou, the person involved, was sitting in the library at this moment. After a light sigh, he put down the books in his hands.

“So, it’s not here.”

In addition to being a professor, he had been a student here for almost three years, so Lu Zhou had wondered if the second key would be in the library.

After all, this was where he spent most of his youth in.

“It seems that Jin University should only have one key here, the remaining two might be at the house, or the Institute for Advanced Study...”

Lu Zhou returned the borrowed book to the shelf. While stepping out of the library door, his finger tapped on the necklace on his neck.

Soon, digital ripples swayed along the outline of his facial features.

Within a few seconds, the holographic image on his face updated into a completely different appearance, and he disappeared among the crowd...

Chapter 1448: Appointment For My Own Home?

The mountainside of Purple Mountain.

There was no maglev road here, so Lu Zhou came to the foot of the mountain by bus.

The landscape changes along the way were not particularly big, it basically retained the appearance from a century ago.

The sign of Zhongshan International had disappeared. Instead, there was a sign of “Lu Zhou Former Residence”, which was a cultural tourism scenic spot with a “modern style”.

Those who came here were all old people, adults with children, or small groups of young students who were on a school trip.

Generally speaking, the surrounding atmosphere was quite lively. In addition to some art vendors and street shops, there were also some small rustic restaurants that sold some of Lu Zhou's favorite foods during his lifetime.

For example, various flavors of barbecue meat on rice.

The only thing that puzzled Lu Zhou was the braised pork rice store near his house.

He didn't remember liking braised pork...

Using the navigation path given by the AR glasses, Lu Zhou walked along a completely tree-lined path and quickly came to his door.

Technically, this was not his own home anymore; it was a museum that had been renovated repeatedly. According to the chairman of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, this museum was currently managed and operated by the local Jinling government; it had become a part of the city's public service resources.

The bricks and tiles here were no different from what he remembered. The only thing that had changed was that the two trees in the front yard were cut down and replaced by some beautiful monuments.

As Lu Zhou looked at the familiar yet unfamiliar house, he couldn't help but feel nostalgic.

He still remembered when he first bought this house, Wang Peng said to him that the two trees in front of the window would cause blind spots in his vision and suggested that he cut them. But in the end, he insisted on keeping them.

100 years later, those two trees were taken down after all.

Lu Zhou smiled. With a nostalgic expression, he walked through the courtyard gate and walked along the moss-covered stone steps toward his home.

However, when he had just crossed the courtyard gate, someone shouted from behind him.

"Hey! Wait a second!"

A man in a museum uniform ran after him and spoke.

“Academician Lu’s former residence is not open to individual visitors. If you want to enter, you must make an appointment online in advance!”

Lu Zhou froze for a moment. He suddenly became unhappy. He stared at the museum staff and asked, “I need to make an appointment in advance to go back to my own home?”

The staff of the museum was stunned. He looked at Lu Zhou with a weird look, wondering what the guy was talking about.

Lu Zhou suddenly remembered that he was wearing a stranger’s face. He immediately reached out and turned off the necklace on his neck, then stuffed it in his pocket.

“Do you know who I am?”

Staring straight at Lu Zhou’s face, the staff of the museum looked like he had just seen a ghost.

He was dumbfounded before, but now, he was flabbergasted.

A voice suddenly came from the direction of the courtyard door.

“What happened?”

Lu Zhou looked toward the entrance of the courtyard. He saw a tall, skinny, middle-aged man with glasses walking quickly toward him.

The moment he saw Lu Zhou, the man was stunned, and he quickly understood what was going on here.

“Curator...”

The curator said immediately, “Okay, I understand, go back to your post.”

“Yes, sir...”

The curator stared at Lu Zhou for a while, pushed his glasses up the bridge of his nose, and asked, “Are you... really Lu Zhou?”

“Of course.” Lu Zhou said with a sigh, “I’ve answered this question many times, I don’t want to answer it anymore.”

"I read the news. But the main reason is... You came from Mars. The reputation of that place is not good, the history books say that you have unfortunately been killed." The curator smiled awkwardly and reached out his right hand. "Anyway, let me introduce myself. My name is King Kong, the curator of the Lu Zhou Museum—"

"Pfft..."

Seeing how Lu Zhou suddenly laughed, King Kong was slightly stunned, and he asked out of confusion, "Um... Is there anything wrong?"

Lu Zhou coughed and said, "Sorry, nothing... It's something from a century ago, not worth mentioning."

King Kong looked at Lu Zhou in confusion before he finally decided that he didn't care about these details.

He continued, "In short, I have seen you in the news. Although this is my profession, I really need to make a judgment... The dormant capsule of Martian civilization sounds incredible. What is it like? Why does it still have energy?"

"Logically speaking, I don't really believe that you are real... But I don't think anyone will dress up like Academician Lu just to escape buying a ticket."

Although he didn't claim anything, the distrust in his eyes was clear.

However, Lu Zhou didn't care. He just said casually, "I can understand your doubts. It's normal. More than 90% of the logic in this world isn't logical, it's just to convince yourself to believe in common sense."

"However, you don't have to be so wary of me. I have no plans to return to this old house. After all, it has been a hundred years, and it has been repaired so many times. I guess this house is still here. But it's not the same one."

Lu Zhou shrugged his shoulders.

"It's just that I haven't been home for so many years, I want to go back to my own house."

"I am very grateful for your understanding!" Curator King nodded slightly and finally showed some respect. "Whether you are really Academician Lu or not, I

am willing to serve as the curator of the museum, to accompany you back home for a tour.”

...

The door opened.

Lu Zhou followed the footsteps of Curator King. He had finally returned to his home after a century.

As he looked at the familiar yet unfamiliar layout, he couldn't help but look nostalgic.

Curator King asked with a faint smile, “How are you feeling?”

“Familiar.” Lu Zhou nodded. He casually pointed in the room. “It's just that the location of the shoe cabinet is not the same as I remembered, and the jacket hanging at the door is definitely not mine.”

“This... After all, after so many years, it is normal for some discrepancies, but it's basically the same. Including the shoe cabinet you mentioned, many of the furniture here are actually copies.” The curator touched the bridge of his nose with a hint of complacency in his tone. “In fact, besides being the curator of the Lu Zhou Museum, I am also a professor of modern history at the Jinling College of Arts and Sciences, and the area of my research... just happens to be related to you.”

Lu Zhou was stunned slightly. He asked curiously, “Me?”

“Yes, modern historiography about you has been a hot research area. There have been two technological leaps in China in modern times, and these two technological leaps directly laid the foundation for China to dominate Pan-Asia, and for Pan-Asia to dominate the world's international political landscape.

“These two technological leaps correspond to two iconic events. One was the successful ignition of controllable fusion, and the other was the establishment of the Lunar Orbit Committee... In both cases, you played the role of chief designer.”

After hearing that history had such a high evaluation of him, Lu Zhou couldn't help but smile. He continued to ask with interest, "Not bad, what else? What else have you researched?"

"Various things." Curator King smiled embarrassedly. "Including your academic career, personal experience, and some rumors about your relationship..."

Lu Zhou felt that his smile was a little unusual.

He heard the sound of footsteps coming upstairs, so he looked at Curator King and asked, "There are other people here?"

"A cultural tourism activity organized by a nearby middle school. This museum generally targets elementary and middle school students. Most individual visitors leave after taking a photo outside. Few people would want to come in."

Lu Zhou nodded and didn't respond. He looked around the living room and spoke.

"My study room is upstairs, I want to go and have a look... and my bedroom. It shouldn't be a problem, right?"

"Of course not, this way!"

Following in the footsteps of Curator King, Lu Zhou went up the stairs to the second floor.

Just after he had stepped foot on the second floor, he happened to see a tour guide with a dozen children cramped in the corridor, talking around a hanging picture.

Although he didn't remember having any paintings in the corridor, Lu Zhou didn't bother to care about these details. After all, this was a museum, and it was normal to hang a few portraits.

He was about to turn the corner and go to the study room with Curator King when the voice of the guide behind him almost made him choke on his own saliva.

“This portrait is of Academician Lu’s young fiancée, Ms. Chen Yushan. Speaking of Ms. Chen Yushan, the story between the two can be regarded as a poignant love story.”

When they heard that it was a love story, the children nearby became excited.

One of the children standing in the front row immediately asked enthusiastically, “What’s the story?”

“It’s a long story.” The tour guide smiled and spoke, “Apparently, before Academician Lu went to Mars, the two made a promise of marriage. As a token of love, Academician Lu gave her a star and promised to leave a legend about their love on it.

“However, unfortunate things happen, nothing is guaranteed. The Gates of Hell mountain range collapsed in an earthquake. Academician Lu failed to return safely from Mars. Ms. Chen Yushan was heartbroken and spent a year growing an oasis in the deserts of the Northwest. She then resigned from the position of CEO of Star Sky Technology and disappeared from people’s sight. No one has seen her since...

“Some people say that she is dead after living alone in the oasis for the rest of her life. Others say that she hasn’t died yet, but went to a place far, far away, in order to complete her wish for her lover, to write their legend on that star.”

The children listened to the romantic love story with longing expressions. A fat kid suddenly jumped out and spoke.

“But why did Academician Lu give her a star? That star is not his!”

“Um...”

The tour guide looked embarrassed. When he was about to explain, a strange voice came from the side.

“Because Academician Lu is very rich. He spent 10 billion to register a stellar exploration fund.” Lu Zhou restrained the urge to grab the collar of the fat kid. He pointed to the painting and said, “Who hung this painting up?”

Seeing Lu Zhou suddenly became angry, the tour guide and Curator King both looked dumbfounded.

The first to react was Curator King. He gestured to the guide next to him and quickly pulled Lu Zhou away as he spoke.

“Um... I know that this painting was of course not originally placed here, but we are a museum, after all, so we have to introduce it to the tourists who come here—”

“The problem is that she’s not my fiancée at all!” Lu Zhou said angrily, “This is my student! My fiancée’s cousin! Han Mengqi!”

*The f*ck?!*

Curator King was immediately shocked. He almost choked to death by his own saliva.

“Han... Han what? Wait, it’s wrong? No? This painting has been hanging there for more than 20 years... When I came to this museum, it was already here.”

Lu Zhou spoke angrily.

“Who do you think is right!”

He was 80% certain that these guys used a photo from the documentary film “Scholar”. If he remembered correctly, Han Mengqi happened to play Chen Yushan in the documentary.

Lu Zhou wanted to choke this guy to death.

If it were a random actress it would be whatever, but this was his student!

The children who stood by finally recognized his face.

After staring at Lu Zhou for a while, the little fat kid widened his eyes and jumped out. He pointed to Lu Zhou and said excitedly, “Ah, you are Academician Lu!”

“No wait, didn’t the teacher say you are dead?”

“Not dead, passed away! Can you be more polite!”

“Bah, baah, you’re the one who is not polite! What is wrong with dying?”

Lu Zhou became more and more annoyed.

*For f*ck sake!*

These little rascals...

I'm still alive!

Curator King and the tour guide looked at each other with embarrassed looks on their faces.

Accidentally hanging up a painting of someone's student as their fiancée was quite foolish.

"What do we do?"

"Should we... take it down first?"

"But..."

Curator King gritted his teeth and made a decision.

"Doesn't matter if Academician Lu is alive or not, let's take this painting down now!"

Chapter 1449: Robot Experience Hall

The portrait was eventually taken down.

After such an accident happened, the museum tour obviously couldn't continue.

The museum announced that it would be temporarily closed for three days, and all appointments would be postponed. The group of noisy middle school students followed their teacher. After thanking Curator King and the tour guide, they left Lu Zhou's former residence.

After the people left, Curator King looked at Lu Zhou and spoke with an awkward expression.

"I'm really sorry, that portrait is our negligence... When we investigate it later, we will make a clarification statement. Do you think this is okay?"

Lu Zhou still felt a little unhappy in his heart, but he also knew that there was no better option, so he nodded.

"Yes... By the way, I don't quite understand one thing."

Curator King spoke immediately.

"Please speak!"

"Since you are... researching me, how come you can't recognize that photo is my student?"

Curator King couldn't help but smile.

"You're giving me such a tough time. Unless your student was a very well-known scholar, most people won't remember what she looked like. The role your fiancée played in history was just the CEO of a company. As for that photo... Maybe it was a misrepresentation, after all, the documentary did affect a lot of people."

Unless she was a well-known scholar...

In other words, she failed to leave her name on the building of mathematics.

Thinking about this, Lu Zhou couldn't help but feel a little unfortunate.

When he was on the light rail earlier, he clearly read that at the Jinling International Congress of Mathematicians in 2026, Han Mengqi completed the research project on the odd positive integer points of the Riemann zeta function that he left for her.

With this achievement alone, winning the 2030 Fields Medal was almost a certainty.

But then again, even if it was a certainty, it didn't mean it was guaranteed to happen. And not every Fields Medalist could leave their name in history.

Even though he felt unfortunate for this result, it was already a thing of the past...

“If you have any other requests, please tell me. I will definitely help you to the best of my abilities!”

As Lu Zhou looked at Curator King, he couldn't help but wonder.

This guy was obviously on guard when he first saw me, why is he suddenly so attentive now?

Although Lu Zhou didn't know what caused this guy's attitude to change 180 degrees, he seemed to believe in the fact that he was Academician Lu, so Lu Zhou didn't say much.

After all, his opinion didn't matter to Lu Zhou.

The main purpose of him coming home today was to find a key, but unfortunately, he came back empty-handed.

He went through the entire house but didn't find anything valuable.

It seemed that he had to look elsewhere.

“No need.” Lu Zhou looked at the sun that was gradually setting from the horizon in the distance as he said, “It's getting late, I have something to do, I have to go.”

“Take care then,” Curator King said with a smile on his face. He suddenly thought of something and quickly added, “By the way, can you leave me with your contact information? You have a virtual community account, right?”

“I just registered yesterday. If you want to, you can add me.”

Lu Zhou operated the holographic window on his wrist. His index finger dragged a holographic card the size of a business card from the screen and threw it in front of Curator King.

Curator King received the card and added Lu Zhou to his address book.

With an attentive smile on his face, he continued, “We will keep in touch in the future!

“If there is anything I don't understand, I'll just ask you!”

“Sure.” Lu Zhou said casually after turning off the holographic screen, “As long as it is not some boring question.”

After bidding farewell to Curator King, Lu Zhou didn’t stay here any longer. After one last stroll, he left this cultural tourism scenic spot.

To be honest, visiting his former residence felt really strange.

The landmarks on the street were full of his stories. The one on the left was Professor Lu’s favorite barbecue meat on rice, the one on the right talked about how Professor Lu often retreated here. The monument in the middle had Professor Lu’s quotes, as well as interesting anecdotes.

Even Lu Zhou himself didn’t know that his life was so rich and colorful. His footprints were everywhere...

After stepping out of the gate of the scenic spot, Lu Zhou noticed that the people next to him were looking at him. Lu Zhou, who didn’t want to be accosted by strangers, took out the necklace from his pocket and put it on his neck again.

However, when he raised his index finger and tapped twice on the necklace, there was no response.

“Is it out of battery?”

Lu Zhou tried for a while without any success, so he had to put it away.

Speaking of which, it seemed that he had yet to charge this thing. It was a miracle it lasted so long. He planned to charge it after he went back home.

When Lu Zhou was on the bus leading down the mountain, he felt that the people next to him were looking at him.

He sighed in his heart, put the AR glasses on the bridge of his nose, and opened the city map.

Headgear used by a robot... That’s kind of like a case for a phone?

In that case, I’ll go to the Robot Experience Hall.

Lu Zhou found the nearest Robot Experience Hall. He set the destination on the real-world navigation system, then closed his eyes and calmed down.

After two transfers along the way, Lu Zhou finally came to the Robot Experience Hall on the edge of the third ring road.

The Robot Experience Hall did not look very big. It looked like one or two hundred square meters from the outside. Behind the two store windows facing the street, a male and female robot stood inside.

Pedestrians who came and went from time to time stopped and cast interested looks at the shop window, but after seeing the price, most people quickly walked away.

In this era where AI technology was widely used, smart home appliances had been integrated into every corner of people's daily life. However, a robot that belonged only to a private person was still a luxury.

Generally, the better the quality, the higher the level of intelligence, the more realistic the material, and the more expensive the price. This also included a series of expenses such as maintenance fees, repair fees, insurance, etc. The cost of a robot was no less expensive than owning a car.

"Hello, do you need any help?"

Lu Zhou, who was standing in front of the shop window, looked aside. He saw a girl wearing a baseball cap who was looking at him with a sweet smile.

"I'm just taking a look... Are you a staff in this store?"

The girl opened her mouth and was about to answer, but a voice floated from the side, interrupting her.

"A-101 general-purpose robot, priced at 100,000 credits! 10% discount on installment payments." A rather young man smiled at Lu Zhou, then looked at the robot next to him. "I will take care of this guest."

"Sorry, yes, sir."

The robot girl nodded politely, then turned and walked away.

An unexpected look appeared on Lu Zhou's face.

"I didn't even notice that girl is a robot."

“This is normal. We removed the tag code on her neck for appearance reasons.” The man continued with a confident smile on his face, “High fidelity is the main feature of our Hippocampus Group products. We have the most advanced AI algorithms and the most advanced hardware that can provide customers with a perfect experience.

“Mr. Lu Zhou, which one do you want? Or what role do you want it to play in your life? We even provide boutique services. You can design your type through professional modeling software, as well as the functions expected of it.”

“You know me?”

After hearing the man directly calling out his name, Lu Zhou was shocked.

Plenty of people doubted his identity, and this was the first time someone recognized him like this.

“Mr. Lu Zhou, the entire Pan-Asian Cooperation and the world know of your feat on flight N-177. Given your contribution to the world, who wouldn’t recognize you?” The man with a business smile on his face reached out his right hand and said politely, “Let me introduce myself, Wang Wenfeng, shopping guide.”

“Lu Zhou.” Lu Zhou shook his hand and continued, “In fact, I am not here to buy a robot, I want to see if there are any accessories for sale here.”

The man named Wang Wenfeng was taken aback for a second. His professional smile on his face remained unchanged as he continued to ask, “May I ask what accessories? Maybe you can tell me your needs.”

Lu Zhou: “The style of my robot is a bit... unique, so I want it to be more pleasing on the eyes, without affecting his functions.”

Lu Zhou wanted to express that his robot was too scary and wanted to see if there were any accessories that could modify the appearance of the robot.

The shopping guide looked like he understood Lu Zhou’s intention. He pulled Lu Zhou aside and asked, “Is it modified?”

Lu Zhou nodded.

“Sort of.”

“There won’t be accessories of the kind you want in the regular store, but I can introduce a store to you.”

Lu Zhou raised his eyebrows and looked at him suspiciously.

“Is it so troublesome? Actually, I just wanted to—”

“Every model has different rules. Jailbreaking is illegal, same for AI jailbreaking. However, private use is a gray area. Don’t worry.” The shopping guide patted Lu Zhou on the shoulder, grinned, and used his finger to move a holographic business card with navigation information to Lu Zhou. He said, “You can find the store by following this address. However, this kind of store generally does not accept unknown customers. Remember to tell the owner that I recommended you, or just show him this business card.”

Although Lu Zhou felt suspicious, after seeing that the location on the address was not far away, he took the business card and nodded.

“All right then... Thank you.”

“You’re welcome. I wish you a pleasant day, to discover new pleasures from the minutiae of life.”

The shopping guide patted Lu Zhou on the shoulder. After leaving a mysterious smile, he turned to greet the other guests.

Chapter 1450: Gray Industry

The location of the address given by Wang Wenfeng was not very far. Lu Zhou could even walk there.

After setting up the navigation on the AR glasses, Lu Zhou walked about two to three hundred meters along the street, took two turns, and soon came to a small alley.

The moment he stepped into this small alley, he suddenly had the feeling of traveling back to the 21st century.

In this small alley less than five meters wide, hundreds of shops were densely packed. These shops included shoes, hardware, groceries, and some weird things he had never seen before.

Some of the people who were here dressed stylishly, some were dressed simply, but without exception, they were all in a hurry. They seemed to walk straight toward their destination. Few people loitered around here.

Because of this, this tightly packed street seemed quite busy.

When Lu Zhou stepped into this small alley, he looked up at the sky, but he didn't see the sun, only a faint tinge of yellowness.

The tall buildings were like a moat, dividing the sky neatly. Unless it was noon, the sun would hardly shine through.

Lu Zhou was sure that if it weren't for the bright neon signs, the street would be pitch black.

In order to make himself less obtrusive, he did not linger on the street. He followed the signs of the real-life navigation and went straight to his destination.

There was a small facade sandwiched between an old-style commissary and a car battery repair shop. Its unremarkable appearance made people not pay attention to it at all.

Unlike the other neon signs, this store not only didn't have any bright signs, but the decoration of the facade was also so simple that there was only one rusty anti-theft door.

Han Ming?

Lu Zhou read the two words on the sign. He reached out and rubbed his chin.

I don't know if this is a real name or a fake name.

However, this detail was obviously irrelevant.

With a hint of curiosity in his heart, Lu Zhou took off the AR glasses, reached out, and knocked on the door.

There was no response behind the door; not a single voice could be heard.

Just as Lu Zhou wondered if this person was not at home, there was finally a sound of muffled footsteps behind the door.

“Who is it?”

A hoarse and dry voice came from behind the door through the speakers. The voice sounded like it had been digitally processed; it was a little distorted.

Lu Zhou felt more and more suspicious of this store. He spoke cautiously.

“A person named Wang Wenfeng recommended this place.”

After hearing this name, the iron door finally opened. A pale face emerged from the shadows. It looked up and down at Lu Zhou.

“... Lu Zhou?”

“You know me?”

“I watch the news.” The man smiled lightly. He opened the door a little bigger and said, “The entrance is not a place to talk, come on in.”

The entrance was very dark.

After passing through the entrance, this space finally became brighter.

Lu Zhou looked at the man, who was probably named Han Ming, as he walked behind him.

When he first heard the voice, he thought it would be an old man in his 60s who would open the door; he didn’t expect it to be a man who looked quite young.

“How long have you been out of the sun?”

“It’s been a while...” Han Ming pushed open the door at the end of the corridor. After making an inviting gesture, he walked in first. “This is my studio. The conditions are a bit crude, I hope you don’t mind.”

Like he said, the environment in the house was indeed quite crude.

It wasn’t just crude; it was almost chaotic.

The mainframes of the four holographic computers were placed under the table, unfinished codes flashed in the windows floating on the table. Near the computers, there was an operating table converted from a single bed, lying on the operating table was not a human, but a half-disassembled robot woman.

As Lu Zhou looked at the white arms and legs hanging beside him, his eyebrow twitched fiercely.

Electrical threads were connected to the interface.

The man named Han Ming smiled and asked in a mocking tone, "First time here?"

Lu Zhou: "How do you know?"

"Most of the people he introduces to here are first-timers."

The pale smile felt a little uncomfortable, but Lu Zhou was not scared by him.

Even without the magnetic slingshot worn on his right wrist, he didn't think that this guy could pose any threat to him, especially since his athletic ability was above average.

Han Ming's eyes looked at Lu Zhou carefully for a while. He picked up a teacup from the table, took a sip of muddy tea, then said casually.

"Actually, it's nothing surprising. Streets like this are actually very common in this city. The taller the building is, the bigger the shadow. Not everyone wants to move their store in a certain business district or a big shopping mall, especially for those who are getting older; they want to spend their old age in the same store."

Lu Zhou: "But you look quite young."

"Really? You too, scholar from a hundred years ago." Han Ming smiled indifferently and continued in a casual tone, "Then, let's stop chit-chatting. I don't care about the background of my guests, I am not interested in their past at all. Explain your intentions, and I will see if we can do business. If we are satisfied with each other, then we can make a deal today."

Lu Zhou: "What kind of business do you offer here?"

“Didn’t that guy Wang Wenfeng tell you?” Han Ming said impatiently, “Robot accessories modification, special appearance customization, AI underlying logic modification... probably that’s it.”

Lu Zhou frowned slightly.

“Modification of the underlying logic of AI? Can you even do that?”

“Methods are based on the requirements, and I happen to be an expert in robotics research... Occasionally, some customers have feelings for their bionics, hoping to change the housekeeping model to another model, in order to fit their carnal desires. Some people take photos of their dream lovers, popular singers, or virtual idols, and hope to create a replica robot.

“This is very common in the 22nd century, there is nothing to be surprised about.”

After hearing Han Ming’s explanation, Lu Zhou did not completely relax.

According to the information he found online, although the robots of this era were a commodity, their use and scope of use were restricted.

First of all, each robot had its own corresponding code, and this code had a one-to-one correspondence with its use, production date, product number, and AI type.

According to the “AI Management Measures” of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, after the robots left the factory, it was forbidden to modify the robot memory system in any form. It was strictly forbidden for users to obtain developer permissions through informal channels and modify the underlying AI logic.

After all, in this day and age, robots had become an important part of many families and even the entire society. The hidden dangers caused by illegal modification of the robot body system were foreseeable by everyone.

Maybe some people just wanted their robots to learn a few more nice words, or to learn some nice poses, but the criminals couldn’t be ruled out. They could write information about the use of weapons in its memory, or even transform it into a killing tool.

When the modification involved the underlying logic of AI, such as deleting the “prohibition of harm to humans”, all illegal and criminal behaviors could become possible.

“Don’t you worry that this may cause some safety hazards?” Lu Zhou frowned. “For example... causing the modified robot to lose control or have autonomous consciousness.”

“Lose control? You either watched too many sci-fi movies or brainwashed by those idiots.” Han Ming said with a mockery tone, “Those robots use big data analysis and machine learning methods to imitate human behavior and provide standardized services for humans. They have no ‘consciousness’ at all because the program has never allowed them to do so. This is not a limitation of the underlying code, it is the limitation of AI itself.”

After taking a sip of the muddy tea, Han Ming paused and continued impatiently, “As for the safety hazards you said, I know what you want to say, but I also said that I will not do business that may cause trouble. If you have any needs, tell me directly. I don’t want to be involved in nonsense.”

Although Lu Zhou felt that this person’s casual attitude was a big problem, when he thought about his own shady doings, it seemed that he was in no position to critique the black market.

After thinking about how to express his needs, Lu Zhou spoke.

“I have a robot... It doesn’t have the best appearance, and it may be troublesome to bring it on the street. If you can, I hope you can help redesign its appearance.”

Han Ming found an old-fashioned tablet with a screen. He took a stylus and scribbled a few lines on it, then asked.

“How big is the area? Just the face? Or the entire head? Or including other parts of the body? Do you need to increase or decrease the bionic organs?”

“The whole body needs to be changed.” Lu Zhou coughed softly and added, “But only the skin, the rest is unnecessary.”

“Best for you to give me a photo for reference, or build a 3D model yourself. After that, bring the robot to me.”

Lu Zhou hesitated a little and said, "Bring it to you here?"

"Of course!" Han Ming said naturally, "Do you want me to move this studio and all the equipment here to your house?"

Han Ming took a plastic robe from the side and threw it into Lu Zhou's hand.

"What is this?"

"This is left by the last guest. If you find it inconvenient, just cover the robot with this." Han Ming patted Lu Zhou on the shoulder and said, "Don't worry, no matter what it is, I can handle any type of robot.

"You just have to leave a deposit, then bring it over!"

Chapter 1451: We Need A Mascot

Mars.

In the rift valley near The Gates of Hell, the sky was covered with an oppressive haze.

According to the weather forecast, a sandstorm would soon sweep across the area.

In this harsh and dangerous weather, even criminals hiding in the desert would choose to sit at home and wait for the weather to improve before coming out for a stroll.

However, at this moment, outside the Hiddell Mining Company mine, there was a desert-colored Mars rover that was parked abnormally.

Two men in spacesuits stood near the entrance of the cave, holding professional equipment in their hands, as if they were investigating something.

"Oxygen cylinders, compacted tire marks, and scratches... The travel time is estimated to be within one month." Using the reality augmentation system, the scene from a month ago was restored. The younger man who was squatting on the ground stood up, looked at the person behind him, and said, "They should have entered from here... Liu Dui, what do you think?"

The man, who was slightly taller, spoke after thinking.

“My opinion is basically the same as yours. The only doubt is that they seem to be amateurs.”

The slightly younger man shrugged his shoulders and spoke.

“It’s quite amateur... Otherwise, they wouldn’t have left such things on the scene.”

He opened his right hand.

A silver-white metal strip about the size of a piece of chewing gum laid on the palm of his hand.

When he looked at the letters on the surface, the man frowned.

“... Mammoth Mining Company?”

Do mammoths dig holes?

This is not the important point.

He had a hunch that he could unearth something unusual from this “Mammoth Mining Company”.

He put away the metal strip. He was about to explore the mine when the voice from the communication channel stopped him.

“Wait a second.”

The man standing at the entrance of the cave turned his head.

“What?”

Liu Dui glanced at the sky and spoke in a deep voice.

“The collection of material evidence is almost done, enough for today.”

As a trace of confusion appeared on his face, the man asked inexplicably, “But... We are already here, are you sure you don’t want to go in and have a look?”

“Because we are all here, we should be more cautious.”

Liu Dui looked at the bottomless mine. He was standing next to the rover. He then narrowed his eyes slightly and continued, “The instructions given to us are to report the progress of the mission in real-time and to report every detail. Obviously, they have their own opinion on this matter.

“In that case, we just need to do what we should do.

“As for whether or not to continue the investigation, leave it to them to judge.”

...

Earth.

In the center of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei city group, inside the meeting room at the Pan-Asian Cooperation Headquarters, a round table was placed in the center of the room. There were only two people sitting at the conference table, one of them was Secretary-General Wu Shuhua while the other was the current Chairman, Li Guangya.

As the world’s largest regional alliance and economic consortium, the main role of the Secretary-General was to coordinate the relations between member states and to represent the collective participation of Pan-Asian Cooperation in world political activities. The function of the chairman was more to deal with the internal affairs of the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

“How is the situation with the UN? Is there any new progress?”

“Three meetings, none of them have good news.”

Sitting on the opposite side of the conference table, Wu Shuhua, Secretary-General of Pan-Asian Cooperation, looked a little tired. She continued as she pinched her eyebrows, “55% of the representatives support our proposal on the space elevator, but there are still 45% objections, which even includes our allies and even the inside of our alliance.”

“What are their demands?”

“Environment, safety risks, costs and benefits, and the distribution of profits... In short, they are all problems that have yet to be discussed.”

About five years ago, the “New Route” plan proposed by the Pan-Asian cooperation pushed the wave of the era of space navigation to its peak.

According to the voting results of the representatives of the member states within the Pan-Asian Cooperation, the Pan-Asian Cooperation would create a “new space industry” production system from the Earth-Moon system to the Kuiper Belt within one hundred years. The route established by the system was expected to spread the fire of civilization to more distant places.

In order to achieve this strategic goal, Pan-Asian Cooperation had not only formulated a colonial development plan for Europa and Titan, but it also sent a powerful fleet to clear the space pirates in the asteroid belt.

The proposal to build a space elevator on the equator was also submitted to the UN conference hall by the representatives of Pan-Asian Cooperation for discussion by various regional alliances.

However, the results were predictable.

This proposal, which sounded almost “horrifying”, had encountered considerable resistance since it was proposed.

The resistance not only came from other regional alliances but also from non-governmental environmental protection organizations and even internal voices in the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

After all, making a hole in the ozone layer and inserting a pipe into a geosynchronous orbit didn’t sound like a good idea. If this project was successful, all of mankind would benefit from it.

However, if this project failed, the whole world would pay for the consequences of this reckless behavior...

Although the Pan-Asian Cooperation had the idea of circumventing other regional alliances and building this space elevator alone, and although the Pan-Asian Cooperation had land on the equator, it was still in the Pacific Rim seismic zone, which was accompanied by strong monsoon activities.

Not to mention the diplomatic risks, hidden dangers to national defense, and so forth.

There were only three ideal construction sites, one was on the African continent, the other was in the mid-Atlantic, and finally the open Pacific Ocean.

From a realistic point of view, the 36,000-kilometer highway hung directly from the geosynchronous orbit. This was not a project that could be completed by one regional alliance alone.

Even if it was the strongest in the world.

After seeing the tired expression on Secretary-General Wu's face, Li Guangya smiled lightly and spoke in a relaxed tone.

"Let's talk about something good. I just received a call from the Security Bureau. Our detectives deployed in Tiangong City discovered a mine entrance left by the Hiddell Mining Company beside The Gates of Hell mountain range. Signs of rover activity were found. According to the scene restoration analysis, an archaeological excavation team had been there about two weeks to a month ago. It was probably the team led by Professor Leonard."

Wu Shuhua raised her eyebrows. "So, Professor Lu is probably real?"

"Maybe, maybe not, it's like Schroedinger's cat."

After putting down the teacup in his hand, the expression on Chairman Li Guangya's face did not change much. He continued with a relaxed tone, "If we continue along this clue, we may find the dormant capsule that has been buried for billions of years. This may be able to reveal a big story; a dormant capsule that has been able to function normally for billions of years or Professor Lu being resurrected after a century of death. Which one do you think is more likely?"

Wu Shuhua frowned slightly.

"I don't understand what is worth discussing... Compared to whether a person who has been dead for a hundred years is still alive, I am more concerned about whether the space elevator proposal can pass. We need to open up the pathway from the ground to outer space. If we can't do it, we won't be able to develop Europa and Titan, and we'll be stuck on Mars forever."

Regardless of whether Academician Lu was still alive or not, that was the last century's story.

She admitted that he had made many outstanding achievements in that era, but it was now the 22nd century; a hundred years had passed since the era Lu Zhou was familiar with.

Time was always ruthless.

This was like those old frozen people who were sent to the future in the name of “reinforcing the future” but couldn’t find a position that they could fill and couldn’t solve any future problems. She didn’t think that an academican from the 21st century could bring any practical benefits to the Pan-Asian Cooperation, except for “symbolic significance.”

To be honest, if it wasn’t for the reason that he saved the flight, she wouldn’t even be interested in seeing him. After all, her current job was busy enough.

As for things like money and property...

The Pan-Asian Cooperation didn’t care about those little things.

Li Guangya smiled lightly.

“The two things are not contradictory. It just depends on how you look at this issue.”

“What does that mean?”

“People need confidence. The approval of our plan does not depend on the space elevator itself. The key lies in whether people can believe it is safe, reliable, and can bring us a bright future.”

Li Guangya paused for a moment before continuing, “In that case, we just need to give them what they want.”

Wu Shuhua was slightly stunned.

“You mean...”

Li Guangya nodded lightly.

“We need a mascot, and he just happens to be suitable.”

“There are obvious loopholes in your plan.” Wu Shuhua questioned, “What if he opposes us? Assuming that he is real, he is from a hundred years ago

after all. Even if we are on the same path, it is difficult to be in agreement completely. Similar things have almost destroyed our achievements over the past half a century!"

Li Guangya said bluntly, "When the time comes, we can continue digging. The ruins is there, so we can continue digging at any time. We can make him real, and we can make him fake."

"A person from Mars who successfully deceived everyone, that will become the biggest joke of this century."

Chairman Li Guangya smiled faintly and said, "If this joke can help our cause, I am willing to accept his help."

Wu Shuhua went silent for a while. Her shoulders relaxed slightly after a while.

"Since you say so, I have nothing to refute. It's just that in my opinion, I still tend to adopt a conservative strategy. This is an uncontrollable factor; it is a time bomb."

"A conservative strategy? Haha, this is the most interesting thing I've heard today. Think about it. Is there a more radical strategy than the space elevator?" Li Guangya smiled and continued with a relaxed tone, "In fact, you don't have to have such big prejudices against the dormant. I took modern history as an elective in college and went deep into research about him."

"A person who can raise a torch in the dark must have a bright heart. Regardless of whether he and our ideas are completely consistent, at least I believe that our starting point is the same. We want everyone to have a brighter future."

"I believe this journey may be full of twists and turns, but he will definitely make the right choice."

Wu Shuhua didn't say anything. She just sighed.

"I don't want to argue with you about the dormant. I don't want to intervene with the work of the household registration department... If you find him useful, you can handle it yourself."

Chairman Li Guangya looked at the holographic image gradually disappearing across the conference table, and he nodded gently.

“Ok, leave it to me.”

This was his plan from the beginning.

Chapter 1452: Welcome home!

In a narrow workshop.

Xiao Ai looked at the humble surroundings. She was standing next to Lu Zhou and Ling. Xiao Ai seemed to have a premonition of what was about to happen, so she looked at Lu Zhou pitifully and blinked.

“Master, why does Xiao Ai come here?”

Lu Zhou ignored the helpless light reflected in those eyes as he replied casually, “Convenience.”

Solve two troubles at once.

Han Ming stared at the robot next to Lu Zhou for a while. He touched his chin and suddenly seemed to have thought of something. He said, “This... Isn’t it the one lost from the museum?”

Lu Zhou raised his eyebrows slightly.

Han Ming reduced the curiosity in his mind and coughed lightly.

“Don’t get me wrong, I didn’t mean to inquire about the origins, I just wanted to ask... Does the mechanical code need to be changed?”

“Mechanical code?”

Han Ming nodded and said, “Well, it is equivalent to the identity code of a robot. The mechanical code of each device is unique. It is registered with the relevant department and will follow the life of the robot until the equipment is returned to the factory for destruction. However, there are exceptions to everything. Some of the robots are destroyed through informal means, and

the mechanical codes will usually not be written off. Instead, the codes will be retained in another form.”

Lu Zhou thought for a while and said, “That means a fake number?”

“Kind of.” Han Ming shrugged his shoulders and continued, “After all, the trouble is not just the appearance. Most of its mechanical codes are wanted by the authorities. If it appears in public places, it will probably trigger an alarm... By the way, you came in a taxi, right?”

“Yeah.”

Han Ming was finally relieved.

“Good. If you took a bus or light rail, the police would have come for you.”

Xiao Ai: “How is that possible...(*- <)?”

Ignoring Xiao Ai, Lu Zhou began to think with a look of surprise on his face.

Is the efficiency of handling cases that high?

“Then change it... By the way, how much is it?”

“I happen to have the identity code of a robot that was scrapped in 2120. It was registered in the second-hand robot market in the Dongcheng District. The source is absolutely safe and reliable.” With a bright smile on his face, Han Ming gave a quick quote, “5,000 credits.”

After hearing this number, Lu Zhou’s eyebrows twitched.

“This stuff is really not cheap.”

“After all, it is filed in the official system.” Han Ming said naturally, “If you want to buy an unfiled number, 10 credits is enough, provided you want this guy to live in the dark.”

“No need, the 5,000 credits one will do.”

For the average person, 5,000 credits was already a month’s salary. A little more money was even enough to buy a low-end robot.

But for Lu Zhou, this amount of money was nothing to worry about.

He still had a prepaid compensation from Pan Asia Airlines on his account. Although he had no idea how much one million credit points was worth, it should last him a while.

“Master, this guy is suspicious, Xiao Ai doesn’t want to go with him. _:(´□`」 ∠):_”

“Your robot is really troublesome. How many plug-ins did you put in the memory? Don’t you think it’s annoying?” Han Ming nodded to the girl wearing a mask next to him and said impatiently, “You got this.”

“Okay, Master.”

The little girl politely nodded to Han Ming, then looked at Xiao Ai.

“Please follow me, it will be done soon.”

Although Xiao Ai was reluctant, she still followed the girl pitifully under the pressure of Lu Zhou’s eyes.

Han Ming then cast his gaze on the robot covered with a plastic sheet standing next to Lu Zhou. A hint of curiosity appeared in his eyes.

“This is the thing you said... that can’t be seen?”

“Yeah.”

“Can you take off the raincoat?”

Lu Zhou nodded. He then turned to look at the “Private-1” intelligent soldier standing motionlessly behind him.

“Ling, take off the raincoat.”

“Yes, Commander.”

Han Ming looked at the shiny lacquered black metal armor and the murderous scarlet pupils. He was completely stupefied, and he stood there dumbfounded.

Seeing how Han Ming couldn’t say a word, Lu Zhou coughed slightly and spoke.

“Is this model... okay?”

For some reason, he gulped and burst into excitement.

“This is...”

Lu Zhou: “Yeah?”

Han Ming’s shoulders trembled with excitement as his eyes beamed at Lu Zhou.

“This is amazing!”

Lu Zhou: “...”

...

The job was faster than expected.

Lu Zhou thought it would take at least a whole day. He didn’t expect it to be done in less than half a day.

The equipment used was a horizontal 3D printer, which was shaped a bit like a CT machine in a 21st-century hospital.

Layers of grid-shaped light covered the lacquer-black metal surface. The realistic skin material was continuously filled onto the grid, and the spray guns on both sides were like two brushes, transforming the high-end skin material layer by layer.

“The skeleton of this robot is bigger than any type I’ve seen... Where did you get this thing?”

Lu Zhou looked at Ling lying in the 3D printer as he replied casually, “I bought it.”

“... Well, if you don’t want to tell me, forget it.” Han Ming sighed, guessing that Lu Zhou wouldn’t tell him. He said, “I really can’t do anything about those glowing eyes. I can only try to modify them into a rough outline of human eyes, do you think that’s okay?”

Lu Zhou: “As long as it doesn’t scare others.”

“Don’t worry about this,” Han Ming said with a smile. “This era is much more tolerant than you think. I have seen even weirder robots... But this involves the privacy of customers, so I can’t disclose any information.”

After some work, the “Private-1” intelligent soldier who looked like a Terminator was finally transformed into a human-like appearance.

However, the skeleton of this intelligent soldier, which was designed with reference to the Calans, was slightly larger than humans.

“If you need to change the accessories in the future, please remember to contact me. Anyway, you won’t go to a regular store for maintenance, right?” As if looking at a piece of art, Han Ming admired the masterpiece he completed. Then, he looked at Lu Zhou and said, “I can give you a discount, I’m actually quite interested in this stuff.”

“Let’s talk about the future later.”

Xiao Ai was leaning towards him with a pitiful face. Lu Zhou nodded slightly to thank the girl who was responsible for Xiao Ai’s modification. He then looked at Han Ming.

“See you around.”

Han Ming said with a smile, “Take care.”

...

Including the money for buying the mechanical code, the modification of the two bionics cost Lu Zhou 50,000 credits. A newly-built mid-range household robot was around the same price.

After leaving Han Ming’s studio, Lu Zhou called a car at the exit of the alley and went straight back to the apartment building.

After the three people got on the elevator, Xiao Ai, who was unhappy the whole way, finally whispered, “Why dye Xiao Ai’s hair black? 黑_黑”

After hearing this stupid question, Lu Zhou answered naturally, “Because it looks low-key.”

“B-but pink is better! And, that woman, modified my facial parameters! Those are all designed by Xiao Ai using data collected! _:(´□`” ∠):_”

Lu Zhou rolled his eyes and ranted.

“Enough, I don’t think there is anything good about your appearance before! You look more natural after the change.”

“Huh? Is it better now? (◡‿◡)”

After staring at it carefully for a while, Lu Zhou nodded.

“Well, it’s okay.”

Xiao Ai: “So it seems necessary to update the database! (๑•̥•๑)✧”

Lu Zhou: “...?”

The elevator finally reached the 100th floor.

After the two stupid robots came out of the elevator, Lu Zhou walked in the direction of his house.

However, when he had just turned a corner, his whole person froze.

He saw a group of well-dressed people in front of his house.

He recognized the leader of the group...

Just when Lu Zhou noticed the man, the man had obviously also noticed him.

“Long time no see, Academician Lu, although we only met two days ago!”

With a bright smile on the face of Director Li Guangya, he reached his right hand out from a long distance away and greeted him enthusiastically.

Lu Zhou reached out his right hand and shook his hand. He was confused by the situation. He was about to ask what was going on when Li Guangya spoke solemnly.

“Just yesterday afternoon, the investigation team we set up completed the final evidence collection procedure and submitted relevant evidence to the arbitration court.

“Based on the ruling of the Pan-Asian Cooperation Supreme Court and the advisory opinions of the expert team, we have reason to believe that you are Academician Lu from a hundred years ago.

“I’m really sorry! We all thought that you were unfortunately killed in the exploration of the future of mankind!”

Lu Zhou looked at Chairman Li Guangya with a muddled expression. He then said calmly, “That’s fine... Any normal person would think the same.”

Strictly speaking, only three days had passed since he returned to Earth from Mars.

Being able to complete the investigation and evidence collection process so quickly had already exceeded his expectations.

After all, from the information he checked on the Internet before, it took someone a whole year to investigate and collect evidence to restore his citizenship.

Isn’t this the chairman...? Does he have this much free time?

Lu Zhou didn’t know why he suddenly remembered an old friend.

That man also happened to have the surname Li.

And always asked him for favors.

“Thank you very much for understanding our difficulties. For the sake of social stability and order, we must make rigorous judgments in order to give the public a positive answer.”

The lights of the interview drone flickered, recording this historic moment with its lens.

Li Guangya announced in a solemn tone, “I would like to speak to you on behalf of all the member states and citizens of the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

“Welcome home! Academician Lu!”

Chapter 1453: I Inherited My Own Inheritance?

Lu Zhou thought changing the skin of the robot would be extremely troublesome, but it was easily resolved.

Sitting in front of him was a professional accountant hired by the Pan-Asian Cooperation Finance Ministry and a lawyer hired by the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation.

His niece that was a few generations younger than him, Mrs. Lu Xiaoqiao, was going to come, but because she was attending an important meeting in the southern part of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, she had to send a holographic video to congratulate him instead.

As for Lu Xiaoqiao's grandfather, that was, the man who ruined the Lu family business, he did not show up. He only asked the lawyer to send a handwritten letter, in which he apologized out of shame.

Lu Zhou actually understood the complex emotions in the hearts of his descendants at this moment.

The awe and admiration in their hearts towards him was certainly true. Perhaps they often bragged about their ancestors, who Lu Zhou was, and what he did.

However, if Lu Zhou really appeared back from the grave...

They might not want to see him.

People were not pure and flawless, and history itself was a contradictory entanglement.

Only immature children would talk about logic every day and feel deeply impressed by his own logic that "cannot explain neither the present nor the past, nor even pass his math test".

It was as if talking about IQ made someone's IQ higher.

Sitting across from Lu Zhou, the accountant glanced at him cautiously. He handed the electronic document printed on the holographic interface to Lu Zhou.

“According to the newly revised inheritance law in 2100, as the first-order successor, the ownership of Star Sky Technology now belongs to you. Although the assets have shrunk a lot compared to a century ago, there is also a charity education fund for primary and secondary schools in it. If you wish, we can recover this part of the assets...”

“No need.” Lu Zhou said with a faint smile, “My descendants did not squander this wealth for pleasure. They did something meaningful to the people of this country, which has exceeded my expectations. Besides, they have done what I have always wanted to do but had no time to take care of, so let them continue this career.”

Lu Zhou didn’t care much about the matter of Star Sky Technology.

After all, he set up the company to facilitate his own intellectual property rights. 100 years had passed; he was satisfied with owning the name alone.

At least it saved him trouble from coming up with a new name.

“Okay...”

Confused, the accountant looked at Lu Zhou and continued, “In addition, with regards to your property in Zhongshan International, due to its 70-year property rights expiration and disrepair, it has been planned as a historical-cultural relic by the Jin Ling City government. It has been developed into a cultural tourism scenic spot for science and education. According to the law, these assets cannot be returned to you, but Jin Ling City will compensate you according to the current market price.

“According to our calculations, the amount of this compensation is 430 million credits, which is enough for you to build three modern two-story villas of the same type in the nearby suburbs... Are you satisfied with this?”

Lu Zhou: “I’m indifferent.”

“The last one is Jin Ling University. They have kept your professorship for a hundred years. They hope to continue to hire you as a professor and help you integrate into the future society... Of course, if you prefer to have the Freezing

Human Rights Protection Foundation to find you a place to work, that is fine. But we recommend Jin Ling University. After all, it is now the top university in the Pan-Asian Cooperation, so you can get in touch with cutting-edge knowledge faster.”

The lawyer from the foundation sitting next to him also nodded.

“This is our recommendation too.”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Then I’ll do what you said.”

“Then I’m done here.” This troublesome job went smoother than expected. The accountant was relieved and looked at the lawyer sitting next to him. “Then... on to the next business.”

The lawyer handed out his business card to Lu Zhou.

“I am a lawyer dispatched by the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation. This is my business card, and I am here to provide you with legal assistance. If you encounter any difficult-to-solve problems in your life, you can consult me for free.”

Chen Tianlu?

Lu Zhou took the business card and glanced at it. He nodded and remembered the name.

“Thank you.”

“You are welcome, this is my job.”

The lawyer then took out a silver-white suitcase from the sofa and gently placed it on the coffee table.

“In addition to these things, your parents rented a safe at the Bank of China when they were alive and left you some things... We have already contacted the China State Bank to provide you with the safe deposit box. I brought the things here.

“The password is your birthday.”

Lu Zhou was silent. His eyes glued to the suitcase. Attorney Chen exchanged glances with the accountant next to him. He then got up from the sofa.

“Then I wish you the best, that’s it for us.”

...

After explaining everything, the two didn’t bother to stay here any longer; they soon got up and left.

Before leaving, the accountant from the Pan-Asian Cooperation left an invitation letter on behalf of Chairman Li Guangya, who hoped that Lu Zhou could attend the welcome party that they organized for him at the Heart of Asia the day after tomorrow, to celebrate his return from Mars.

Regarding these insignificant matters, Lu Zhou didn’t care at all.

Back in the living room, he opened the suitcase and handed the holographic memory card inside to Xiao Ai, who was sitting quietly next to him. Xiao Ai then copied and transmitted the data to the holographic home theater.

The light blue light particles converged in the air.

A pleasant beach scenery appeared in the living room, together with the warm sunshine and the waves slowly moving on the horizon.

As Lu Zhou looked at the two old people standing on the beach, his eyes began to tear up.

Although he didn’t know how many years ago this holographic video was taken, the wrinkles on the faces of the two elderly people had increased a lot compared to the last time they met. The only thing that comforted him was the smiles on their faces.

“Hey, kiddo.

“If you’re watching this, it will be far in the future.

“After you left, your mother and I lived quite happily... Although we were sad for a while, like your sister said, life is about looking forward.

“As you can see, we are on a holiday on a small island in the south... Tomorrow, we will return to Jiangling to celebrate the New Year. To be honest, it is lonely without you. But I hope you don’t worry about us. The only unfortunate thing is that we can’t share this happiness with you.

“Although we are also thinking about whether to go to the future and see what kind of life the people of the future will live, after thinking about it, we have decided against it. People can only live a hundred years or so. Whether it is in the future or now, what does it matter?”

“Your mother always said that I am crazy, maybe a little bit... But I always think that you are fine. You must be alive in some corner of the universe. Maybe you’ll come home one day.

“As for the recording of this holographic video, it is just something to make me feel at ease. Isn’t this popular among young people now? Using holographic videos to record our youth or something, seems like we’re not so old after all.”

Standing on the beach, the old man seemed to recall something in the past, and his expression started to show a trace of nostalgia.

But soon, he smiled heartily, hiding the nostalgia behind the camera.

“If only you have a chance to see this video!

“But even if you can’t see it, your mother and I will assume you’ve seen it anyway, haha!

“Also, I don’t understand the things that your sister asked me to keep, but we kept them. I don’t know how much these things will be worth in the future. If not, you can sell them as antiques...”

The holographic video ended.

Lu Zhou took a deep breath, trying to bury his nose between his palms.

However, he suddenly felt that his right hand was gently held by a warm hand.

When Lu Zhou felt the incredible warmth on the back of his hand, he looked up at Xiao Ai, who was sitting next to him.

“Master, Xiao Ai deliberately installed a heating system... Although Xiao Ai doesn’t understand your emotions, Xiao Ai still hopes that Master’s mood can be better.”

“I’m fine.” Lu Zhou’s mood recovered a little, and a reluctant smile appeared on his face as he said softly, “I feel somewhat relieved to see them live such a happy life.”

Lu Zhou took out a box from the suitcase. He then opened it with a trembling finger.

However, the moment he saw what was lying in the box, he was stunned.

He originally thought that what they put inside would be some daily items such as diaries; he did not expect that what they put inside was a stack of papers.

The stack of documents was familiar.

“East Asia Power, East Asia Communications, East Asia Heavy Industries...”

Lu Zhou read out the familiar names on the titles of the documents. As he looked at the stack of documents, he was stunned.

Zhongshan New Materials, Baosheng Group...

Everything makes sense now.

When he was talking to the accountant about Star Sky Technology earlier, he still felt that something was wrong.

The moment he saw the stack of files, he immediately realized the problem.

Yeah...

Star Sky Technology wouldn't go bankrupt so easily.

Back then, Chen Yushan liquidated almost all of the assets of Star Sky Technology to buy billions of stocks in East Asia Energy, back before the cross-regional power grid had even been built.

And when China built the world's first submarine quantum optical cable, Star Sky Technology, as the owner of related patents, also participated in the formation of East Asia Communications.

Not to mention those high-tech companies in emerging industries such as charging stations, automated logistics, battery materials, etc. Star Sky Technology had invested in all of them...

At least some of the money survived, right?

It turned out that Xiao Tong had considered that the operating conditions of Star Sky Technology might be subjected to changes in the next 100 years, so she took a precautionary measure to separate this part of the assets from Star Sky Technology in advance.

This way, even if there was a major crisis such as the bankruptcy of Star Sky Technology, this part of the assets would not be auctioned or liquidated.

Lu Zhou looked at the things his parents left him with. Overwhelmed, he didn't know what to think.

Ten billion?

A hundred billion?

Or a trillion?

Perhaps the power of these stocks couldn't even be measured by such things as credit points.

Holding the box in his hand, Lu Zhou suddenly felt a little warm.

He never thought that as a scholar, instead of relying on the wisdom in his head, he would receive a huge pot of gold from waking up in the 22nd century and saving a flight of passengers.

He never thought that one day he would become the world's richest man by inheriting his own inheritance.

This statement was no exaggeration.

Without including the compensation given to him by the Pan-Asian Cooperation, he was already the richest person in the world just by relying on the equity certificates in his hand that were kept and certified by the Bank of China.

Chapter 1454: Professor Lu “Resurrected from the Dead”

Just when Lu Zhou was feeling confused because of this sudden gain in wealth, what he didn't know was that the whole world was shocked because of the news of his “resurrection from death”!

Jin Ling University.

When the news about Lu Zhou's identification was first announced, most of the students were still in class.

Standing on the podium, the gray-haired old professor explained an obscure theory in a warm tone while facing the holographic whiteboard, writing down the equations of hyperspace theory.

However, his muddy pupils that were looking at the whiteboard suddenly shrank slightly, and he seemed to be dumbfounded.

There was no explanation, not even a word at all.

The old professor seemed to have seen a ghost. He didn't even pay attention to the class and rushed out of the classroom excitedly.

Most of the students in the classroom were confused. They looked at each other, not knowing what happened. They didn't know if this class was going to continue.

All kinds of news began to spread; the entire classroom was a mess.

"What the hell? Is this class over?"

"F*ck, what's going on? Professor Liu is usually always punctual, what happened today?"

"I know what's going on! Did you watch the news? Lu Zhou! He really is alive!"

"What?! You mean Lu... Academician Lu?"

"Who else!"

"F*ck, f*ck, f*ck...!!!"

The passengers of flight N-177 returned to Earth three days ago, and there was indeed a man who looked extremely like Lu Zhou from a hundred years ago. He faced the camera and reporters in front of the gangway and announced that he was still alive.

But most people just treated it as a joke after hearing the news.

Frozen dormancy technology had existed for 100 years.

For ordinary people, this technology wasn't anything extraordinary.

Every once in a while, someone who looked exactly like a well-known person a few decades ago would pop up, demanding the country or their descendants to return their properties or privileges.

Most of these claims were eventually proved to be false. Only a small number of people actually went dormant through informal means at some point in the past and recovered their identities with the help of officials from various countries.

Therefore, for most people in this era, pretending to be a frozen person to defraud property was a relatively common low-level deception. Multiple people had even pretended to be the same person.

At most, the person who was impersonated this time was relatively unique.

However, the situation had changed.

This was the official recognition from the Pan-Asian Cooperation!

Facing the reporters' cameras, Chairman Li Guangya shook Lu Zhou's hand in person and welcomed him home on behalf of the Pan-Asian people.

This kind of recognition from the official level was much more credible than someone's personal claims!

As soon as the news was broadcast, it swept across the entire network like a tsunami.

On the entire virtual community network, whether it was an academic forum or a guild discussion board for a certain VRMMO game, almost everyone was discussing this matter.

The greatest scholar from a hundred years ago!

The founder of modern civilization!

A great man woke up from a deep sleep. Not only were the netizens shocked, everyone who knew him, studied his theories, and even studied him as a person was speechless.

If the impact of this news on ordinary people only remained at the level of a surprise and a reconstruction of history, then the impact on academia could be compared to a Category 12 hurricane.

Less than five minutes after the news was broadcast, on the LSPM academic forum, a series of topics such as “hyperspace theory”, “extra dimensions”, “unified theory of algebraic geometry”, “unified field theory”, “computational materials”, etc, were all labeled with the tag “major research progress”.

This function was regarded as a major feature of the LSPM forum.

The forum server could monitor the discussion of a hot topic in major academic exchange communities around the world according to a special algorithm, so as to facilitate scholars engaged in research in this field. In this era of information explosion, they would never miss any important news.

Precisely because of this, almost all scholars or physics hobbyists who paid attention to this field, whether they followed the news or not, received a notification.

[On January 11, 2125, Academician Lu was “resurrected”.]

Although there were only a few words, the amount of information was so huge that people couldn’t ignore it.

As if announcing the return of an ancient emperor, those scholars who had graduated from universities, who read his papers and studied the research projects he left behind, turned mad because of this news.

Whether it was the area that Lu Zhou had researched or those areas that he had not researched...

Everyone was talking about the impact his return might have on the academic world.

On a well-known scientific program of the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

Academician Wang Defu of the Pan-Asian Academy of Sciences sat on a sofa in the studio.

After a few opening greetings, the host sitting opposite Academician Wang quickly raised a question that almost everyone wanted to know.

“How do you think Professor Lu’s sudden ‘resurrection’ will impact the academic world?”

Academician Wang Defu’s reaction was sensible. He smiled kindly.

“That’s a hard question, what kind of impact... It’s hard to tell.”

Host: “Is it difficult to judge, or awkward for you to say?”

Academician Wang Defu thought for a while and said, “Both.

“In fact, if I remember correctly, similar discussions took place on the LSPM forum a long time ago, but the object of discussion was not Lu Zhou. Instead, it was regarding another scholar in history. That is, what kind of influence will Einstein have on today’s academia.”

The host asked with interest, “Then, do you remember your answer at that time?”

“I remember.” Academician Wang Defu smiled and said, “If I remember correctly, my answer at the time was like this.

“Ordinary people generally have a sense of superiority when they look at historical problems. This scholar was an idiot, that person was stupid, why didn’t they answer these obvious problems earlier, etc.

“This kind of thinking is actually reflected in the film and television cultural themes, such as if a modern person travels back to 100 years ago, almost no one doubts that he can rely on information from 100 years in the future to revolutionize the world.”

The host smiled and said, “Travel back to 100 years ago? I would never do that. Apparently, back then, there was no urban cloud system, smart wearable devices, and holographic technology.”

“There was, but it’s not as convenient as it is now... Anyway, I digress.” Academician Wang Defu smiled and brought the topic back on the right track.

He continued in a gentle tone, “In fact, objectively looking at this issue, it is normal to have such a sense of superiority.

“Up until now, although the development of human society has setbacks on a small scale, it has moved forward on a large scale. If an era does not have the superiority it should have, we must have failed. We have not stayed in place over the past 100 years. Whether it is science, technology, economy, culture, education, or the progress made in poverty eradication as a social issue, we could have never imagined such a utopia 100 years ago.

“However, like I said, this issue should be viewed objectively.

“Although most of the PhDs engaged in theoretical physics research can understand the hyperspace theory and the theory of extra dimensions that were considered esoteric at the time, it does not mean that they themselves are taller than the giants they stand on.”

Seeing the host was in deep thought, Academician Wang Defu continued with a relaxed tone, “Individual behavior is always unpredictable, just like physics cannot describe the trajectory of a single molecule. It is hard to say what specific changes Lu Zhou will bring to the world. I am not even sure that he will return to academia.

“However, I am still looking forward to his return, to bring a breath of fresh air to today’s lifeless academic world.”

...

The discussions on the Internet continued.

However, compared to the intense discussion of his “resurrection” on the Internet, Lu Zhou himself was not interested.

To be honest, Lu Zhou, who had been taught by Xiao Ai how to correctly use the virtual community to obtain necessary information, felt like a lonely old man left behind by the times.

“It’s fine, Master! Even if there is no place for you in the entire Internet, you are the best in Xiao Ai’s eyes!”

“... I don’t feel better at all when you say that.” Lu Zhou looked at the holographic screen floating in front of him. His scalp was numb from the

dazzling information and UI design. He finally gave up on sending a Weibo to celebrate his resurrection.

In fact, it was not that he didn't want to do this. It was just that the kind of websites and apps that old popsicles like him were used to had gone extinct.

His Weibo had become a part of history.

Otherwise, he would have shared the joy of returning home with his fans...

"There are so many things to learn..."

With a light sigh, Lu Zhou turned off the holographic screen and got up from the sofa.

Xiao Ai: "Speaking of which, Master, the formal suit you ordered online has arrived. Do you need to try it first? (•̀v•́)"

"Already?" Lu Zhou saw the logistics drone flying by the window. After thinking for a while, Lu Zhou said, "Okay, I'll try it later."

Xiao Ai: "Do you need Xiao Ai's help? (///ω///)"

Lu Zhou: "..."

Is there something wrong with this guy's head?

I should take some time to take a look at the old site of the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study.

Chapter 1455: Celebration Party!

The Yangtze River Delta City group.

A huge building that was made of steel was located on the edge of the coastline of Shanghai's neighboring port area.

The dark gray steel frames constituted the outer wall of the building. The beautiful outline looked like a cradle from a distance, gestating the fire of life and hope.

Its name was the Heart of Asia.

Every inch of steel on its body was a type of special steel produced under the low gravity and low-pressure environment of Mars.

In order to commemorate the population of Tiangong City that broke through the 10,000 mark and the gross production value exceeding the threshold of one billion, China used steel sent from Tiangong City to cast this landmark building.

And it was this building that directly doubled the GDP of the Martian colony the following year.

In the past seventy years, this building had witnessed the cross-regional power grid spreading across the Asian land, the submarine quantum optical cable's replacement of traditional optical cables, and the Pan-Asian people and the Chinese people uniting as one. A common prosperity was formed, as well as a community with a shared future in the new era.

This cultural center incorporated virtual reality technology and could accommodate tens of thousands of people at the same time. It had become one of the important venues for the Pan-Asian Cooperation to showcase regional strength and hold international events.

Today, this cradle standing on the coastline was once again illuminated by brilliant holographic lights.

Representatives of more than one hundred countries and regional alliances participated in this event, as well as elites and celebrities from all walks of life. Representatives of civil society organizations were also invited.

The 36,000 holographic projection arrays were all powered on, and the two adjacent main roads were all blocked. All guests attending the conference were transported to the inside of the venue by the special light rail. The police force was concentrated in this area to ensure safety.

Such a high-standard evening party like this only happened every few decades...

Although Lu Zhou hadn't stepped into the venue yet, he, who was standing in the lounge, had already heard the loud clamor outside the venue.

He calmed his breathing and forced a relaxed smile in the mirror, slowing down his heartbeat.

"... It's embarrassing to be the center of attention for such a grandiose party."

Lu Zhou gently straightened the tie on his chest. He glanced at the "new era formal wear" that would definitely be called weird in the 21st century. Suddenly, he felt a little strange.

After he had returned to Earth, in less than three days, he was about to leave the boring life and return to under the spotlight. For a second, he was a little hesitant.

However, the slight hesitation lasted only for a moment.

After taking a deep breath, he nodded slightly to the waiter waiting next to him, indicating that he was ready. He then followed the waiter's footsteps and walked towards the hall of the Heart of Asia.

The spacious corridor was paved with red carpet and extended all the way to the door.

The honor guard soldier standing at the door opened the door to the main venue for him.

Almost as soon as he stepped into the main venue, virtual fireworks began to go off.

The light particles flying in the sky and the fake colorful ribbons slowly fell from the top of the dome, along the well-carved steel load-bearing structures. They finally landed slowly on the bright red carpet.

The cheers, applause, and the numerous pairs of eyes that were full of excitement, were surging like the tide, pushing the atmosphere of the scene to a peak...

Many people took the maglev train for tens of thousands of kilometers and tried their best to get an invitation, just to come and see him on the spot and witness the greatest scholar from a hundred years ago...

“Welcome home!”

Director Li Guangya held Lu Zhou’s right hand with both hands and spoke with a warm smile.

“I hope this triumphant ceremony isn’t too late!”

“It’s not too late. For me, it was just a matter of closing and opening my eyes.” Holding the right hand of Chairman Li Guangya, Lu Zhou smiled faintly and continued, “The only thing that surprised me was that, in the blink of an eye, so many changes have taken place in the outside world.”

In fact, his experience on Mars couldn’t be completely described as opening and closing his eyes.

He watched the life of the Martian civilization in a fast-forward state; the memory of that period of time spanning tens of thousands of years took him several years in real-time.

However, compared to the elapsed time on Earth, this mere few years could only be described as trivial.

He didn’t know if he should tell anyone about this.

“Regardless of how the times have changed, I believe that people’s enthusiasm and respect for you will not change.” Chairman Li Guangya smiled heartily and said in a relaxed tone, “I believe you should have felt this from the cheers of the people.”

“Haha, that’s true.” Lu Zhou also smiled as he said jokingly, “Actually, I almost feel embarrassed by the enthusiasm.”

After a few words of exchange, Lu Zhou followed the footsteps of the host and arrived at his seat. Sitting next to him were ministerial officials from the Pan-Asian Cooperation and diplomats from other regional alliances.

The diplomats from other regional alliances were staring at him intently, seemingly trying to observe something.

Lu Zhou responded with a faint smile to those inquiring sights. He did not say much.

He knew the surprise in these people’s hearts.

He was certain that if Newton or Einstein crawled out of the coffin one day, he would be just as surprised...

On the stage, an elegant and long song was playing, then a passionate symphony was played.

The one-hundred-meter-wide holographic screen was like a golden waterfall, slowly falling from the dome of the stadium.

A line of powerful words appeared on the waterfall, presenting his life and honor to everyone.

Shiing-Shen Chern Mathematics Award, Cole Prize for Number Theory, Winner of the Lingyun Medal, Hoffman Medal, Fields Medal, and Carl Friedrich Gauss Prize, Nobel Prize in Physics and Chemistry, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Honorary of the Pan-Asian Academy of Sciences Academician, founder of the Lu Zhou Education Foundation and Freezing Human Rights Protection Fund...

And announced by the United Nations at the beginning of the 22nd century as one of the most influential figures of the 21st century!

His title and honors couldn't even fit on the entire holographic screen. There were even honors awarded to him over the past century that he didn't even know about.

As for the stories surrounding him, there were even longer.

Even if they were to spend the entire duration of the party talking about it, it would be impossible to describe it in detail.

However, the Pan-Asian Cooperation had no plans to do so.

This party was not prepared for the purposes of reviewing the first half of his life, but for sending a message to the world.

The man who once led China, led the world, and led human civilization to greatness!

Was back again!

The lights dimmed slightly.

The noise inside and outside the room subsided slightly.

A man in formal clothes walked onto the stage.

Facing the pair of enthusiastic and hopeful eyes, Chairman Li Guangya cleared his throat and announced in a steady and solemn voice.

“The exploration a hundred years ago opened the prelude to the era of space navigation. A group of explorers from all over the world gathered together to challenge the ruins buried deep under Mars.

“It was also the exploration of extraterrestrial civilization that allowed us to cast our sights on the world beyond the atmosphere, and also made us realize in a real sense that we are not alone in this universe. That there are also mysteries and dangers that we don’t understand.

“We paid a heavy price for our immaturity, and let our hero be left on Mars forever.

“However, everything was not as bad as we thought.

“Perhaps because of the blessing of destiny, or perhaps because of the hopes and prayers, our hero did not die in the ruins. Instead, he returned to us with the glory that belongs to him!

“Let’s send a round of applause for his triumph!

“Let’s welcome our hero home!”

Chapter 1456: You Owe Me A Dance

History seemed to play a joke on everyone.

The facts that had been sealed in the coffin were overthrown and rewritten at a point in time that no one expected. A great man who should have been buried in the long river of history and remembered by future generations, unexpectedly returned by their side.

Like he was just borrowed by God or some kind of great existence for a while, and now, he was back again.

Regardless of how many historians had lost their hair over this news, this expedition that started a century ago had finally come to an end in the 22nd century.

Not to mention, it was a happy ending.

While the celebration of the “resurrection” of a great man from a century ago was underway, major media from all over the world were also broadcasting the party live.

For the older generation, this day was undoubtedly a rare day.

Especially for those old people whose ancestors had ties with Academician Lu.

When they saw the face of Academician Lu appearing on the holographic screen, they were so excited as if they had been on drugs; they jumped up and cheered.

An apartment in Shanghai, Yangtze River Delta City group.

Sitting on the sofa at his son’s house, Luo Xingxue watched the man younger than his son on the holographic TV. He was already around 60 to 70 years old, yet the excitement on his face had not stopped since the party began. He bragged to his grandson next to him.

“My grandfather, your great-grandfather, was Academician Lu’s friend, and they both graduated from Jinling University!

“Back then, when the ILHCRC was first established, our physics field was not as strong as it is now. The foreign physicists who came from all over the world were all arrogant as one could be. Later, Academician Lu was appointed as the chairman of the board, and this was followed by the emergence of hyperspace theory, the higher dimensional theory, and the Lunar Hadron Collider! No one questioned the status of the ILHCRC as the world physics center anymore!”

“But what does this have to do with you, Grandpa?”

“This... definitely has something to do with me.” Luo Xingxue laughed embarrassedly. He didn’t expect his little grandson to ask this. He coughed

and said, “Isn’t there an old saying? Conquering the world is easy, maintaining it is difficult.

“As the second chairman of the ILHCRC, your great-grandfather, Academician Luo, was able to survive in that dangerous environment and handle the relationship between the ILHCRC and major research institutions around the world. This isn’t something anyone can do!”

The child nodded, as if he understood.

The text flashed on the holographic TV, listing the man’s honors. A curious expression appeared on his face, and he couldn’t help but continue to ask, “Then, Grandpa, can you tell me the story about Academician Lu and your grandpa researching hyperspace theory together?”

“That thing was a sensation at the time! Especially when the electrostrong interaction just came out, the whole physics community was shaken by that theory...”

There was a trace of nostalgia in the old man’s eyes.

Although he did not personally experience that turbulent era, he had heard of that exciting past from his grandfather.

“But that was a story from a long, long time ago...”

...

“Actually, it’s not as ridiculous as you think.”

After the performance of the party, the guests moved to the hotel next to the “Heart of Asia” and began the second half of the celebration.

The dance floor in the lobby on the first floor was full of men and women in Chinese costumes. The long table next to the dance floor was filled with champagne and food. The air here was filled with a relaxed and happy atmosphere.

As the protagonist of the whole party, Lu Zhou became the focus of everyone’s attention the moment he stepped into this banquet hall.

Standing next to him at the moment was Ambassador Swell from the North American League.

Like other people who chatted with him, almost everyone who came up to chat with him would talk to him about what happened one hundred years ago.

For example, Ambassador Swell asked about hyperspace theory.

When it came to this, Lu Zhou was quite nostalgic.

Although so many years had passed, it always felt like it was yesterday.

“It was a coincidence. I happened to see a paper when I was studying hyperspace theory. I remember it was called ‘Research on the Gravitational Wave Equation of Z Particles’. I had some inspiration about the curvature of space-time. Then I tried to research it, and I finally found some strange properties of the Z particle in regard to the curvature of space-time.”

Ambassador Swell looked at Lu Zhou. He was holding champagne in his hand, and he showed a surprised expression on his face.

“That’s it?”

Lu Zhou nodded.

“That’s it.”

“I thought there was a magnificent story there.”

“I’m afraid to disappoint you. It is a boring thing to research profound problems.” Lu Zhou had a faint smile while looking at Ambassador Swell. He said, “But the moment when the inspiration came, and the moment of crossing the finish line, felt very pleasant.”

“Haha, for us laymen, I’m afraid I won’t ever experience the kind of pleasure you speak of.” Ambassador Swell smiled and continued, “However, from a layman’s point of view, I have always felt that hyperspace theory is a fascinating theory. Straightening space and time, this sounds very fascinating.”

“I can understand the fascination.” Lu Zhou continued in a joking tone, “In fact, when I had just finished this theory, I was wondering if it would be used for interstellar travel a hundred years later. Or at least in long-distance communication. But I was wrong.”

“Yeah, the cost of producing a Z particle is too expensive, let alone keeping it in a stable and turbulent state.” Ambassador Swell sighed slightly, and after a sip of champagne, he continued, “Actually, a lot of people have tried this in the past century, but in the end, they were defeated in the technical feasibility stage due to cost issues.”

“Cost is indeed a big problem.” Lu Zhou nodded and said with a smile, “However, my view is still quite optimistic. Just because it doesn’t work now doesn’t mean it won’t work in the future. Many things that are in the imaginary stage, are now ready for experimentation.”

Ambassador Swell’s face changed slightly.

“That means there is hope?”

Lu Zhou shook his head.

“It’s hard to say. It doesn’t depend on my decisions.”

While the two were talking, there was a surging crowd not far away.

Lu Zhou raised his head and looked over there, only to see an old woman walking towards him while surrounded by a group of people.

When his eyes fell on the old woman’s face, he was slightly taken aback.

He always felt that the charm between her eyebrows was a bit familiar, but he couldn’t remember where he had seen her.

A smile appeared on her face as she said in a nostalgic voice, “Long time no see.”

“You are...”

At this moment, a name suddenly popped out of his memory. His eyes widened.

“Princess Lilia?!”

As Lu Zhou looked at the old woman in front of him in surprise, he was speechless.

After a few seconds, he spoke in a confused tone.

“Long time no see, I didn’t expect... you to change so much.”

When he first met her, she was still a little girl who was only as tall as his knees, but now, she was a grandma.

Lu Zhou couldn’t help but feel emotional.

“It’s not that I have changed, it’s that you haven’t changed at all in the past 100 years.”

Compared to Lu Zhou’s sadness, Princess Lilia herself was quite open-minded.

Looking at the person standing in front of her, a touch of nostalgia appeared in her eyes. She smiled and said, “Do you still remember? In Stockholm’s Blue Hall, I was less than seven years old. I mustered up the courage to ask you to dance, but you told me to wait until I’m older.”

“Of course I remember.” Lu Zhou’s eyes were also stained with memories, thinking of the day from many years ago. Lu Zhou said in a sad tone, “That was the most important day in my life. I will probably remember it forever.”

On the shore of Lake Mälaren, he kissed his loved one for the first time.

Although she didn’t have any dazzling titles, she was a real princess in his eyes.

A hundred years had passed since then.

If there was anything he couldn’t let go of, it was probably the memory of her...

“Then you should remember that you still owe me a dance.”

After recovering from the deep memories, Lu Zhou looked at Princess Lilia with a smile on his face. He was taken aback for a while, but he soon smiled.

“Sorry, I was lost in my thoughts... Apologies for having kept you waiting.”

She smiled kindly and reached out her hand.

“It’s okay.”

...

Soft music sounded on the dance floor.

This unusual couple immediately attracted the attention of the audience.

When the dance song ended, applause broke out around the dance floor.

In a corner of the second-story terrace, several bodyguards in formal suits stood nearby.

Chairman Li Guangya was in the center of the open space, overlooking the dance floor hall on the first floor. He was looking at the holographic beam projected from his wrist while talking on the phone with Secretary-General Wu Shuhua, who was abroad.

“It was your idea to invite the Swedish royal family?”

“Sort of. I saw Princess Lilia mention him in a memoir, but I didn’t expect it to be real.”

Wu Shuhua did not respond. The expression on her face was indifferent as she waited for him to continue.

“We have won the friendship of the North Sea Alliance. We should be able to win 70%-75% of the support at the UN meeting.” Li Guangya said in a relaxed tone, “There is no doubt that this is an overwhelming victory.”

Wu Shuhua said solemnly, “Don’t forget that the resistance comes not only from the United Nations, but also from within the Pan-Asian Cooperation, and this is the trickiest one.”

“I am planning to resolve this matter.”

Li Guangya looked across the dance floor. His eyes were on the young man as he smiled.

“From what I can tell, this won’t be a problem.”

Chapter 1457: Pan-Asia Chief Scientist?

Eleven o’clock at night.

The guests began to leave one after another as the whole party came to an end in a grand atmosphere.

Lu Zhou planned to take a taxi home, but just after he returned to the lounge and changed into his daily clothes, a hotel waiter knocked on the door of the lounge and politely conveyed Director Li Guangya's invitation to him, asking him if he could spare ten minutes to chat with Li Guangya.

Since he had no other plans, Lu Zhou accepted the invitation. He followed the footsteps of the waiter to the next room and saw Chairman Li Guangya waiting there.

"What do you think?"

"Are you talking about the party?"

"Of course, we are very concerned about whether you can adapt to life after 100 years." Li Guangya said gently, "If you feel unwell, please let us know."

"The society is more tolerant than I thought. I was a little worried that I would not find my place, but after staying for a while, I realized that I was worrying too much." Lu Zhou smiled and continued, "The only thing I have to say is that I am afraid it is too grand; it is really unnecessary."

"Without this, we cannot show our respect for you. Hope you understand." Li Guangya continued with a smile, "Speaking of which, does Academician Lu have any plans for the future?"

"Future..."

Lu Zhou spent a little bit of time thinking about this issue.

He paused for a second and spoke.

"This question is still too early to answer. Before making plans for the future, I intend to try to integrate into the present, then consider what would be better in the future."

Li Guangya: "This should be easy for you. I believe that with your wisdom, it will not take long to integrate into modern society."

“No matter how easy it is, it still takes time, and for the future, I don’t want to make that decision too hastily.” With a smile, Lu Zhou continued as he looked at Chairman Li Guangya, “Moreover, I also want to spend more time learning these new things. For me, I haven’t felt this way in a long time.”

Ever since his academic career in Princeton, he had been acting as a knowledge creator, not a knowledge learner.

If there was anything worthy of joy in this unfamiliar era, it was the knowledge that was born in the past hundred years, waiting for him to absorb.

“Actually, we have a proposal here. I don’t know if you are willing to consider it.”

“What proposal?”

In a sincere tone, Chairman Li Guangya said solemnly, “If you are willing to, we hope you can serve as the chief scientific advisor of the Pan-Asian Cooperation!”

“Chief scientific advisor?”

Hearing this title, Lu Zhou was stunned for a moment. Dumbfounded, he said, “Do you think it is really appropriate to let a one-hundred-year-old antique take this position?”

“You are too modest!” Chairman Li Guangya continued with a serious expression, “I have consulted my team about this matter. You should be the most suitable person for this position!”

“I’ll think about it after I integrate into this society...”

Seeing that Chairman Li Guangya had a slightly disappointed expression, Lu Zhou sighed and continued, “It is not that I am stingy with my own knowledge, but I need to learn more before directing others. Think about it from another perspective. If scholars from this era need guidance from an antique, what have they done in the past 100 years?”

In the end, Lu Zhou still did not agree to accept the position.

Li Guangya was lost in thought.

The bracelet he was wearing on his left wrist vibrated slightly.

When he raised his cuff slightly, a light blue holographic beam was projected in front of him. Secretary-General Wu Shuhua's face appeared in front of him. She went straight to the point.

"So?"

"There has been a slight deviation, but it is still within an acceptable range."

There was a playful smile at the corner of her mouth as Secretary-General Wu Shuhua continued, "It looks like that person rejected you."

"Yeah..." Li Guangya said thoughtfully, "Are people so humble a hundred years ago? I thought he would be more arrogant."

This was somewhat different from the records in history books.

The more mainstream view given by historians was that Academician Lu was a very confident, even conceited person. This conceit, on the one hand, stemmed from his achievements in scientific research, and on the other hand, it stemmed from his own youth.

However, when Lu Zhou himself stood in front of him, Li Guangya had already realized that there might be a slight discrepancy between historical research and the truth.

Although his deep pupils made it impossible to fully see his true thoughts, one thing was certain—there wasn't an inch of conceitedness in Lu Zhuo's eyes.

"Then what are you going to do?"

"I said that although there has been a slight deviation, it is still within an acceptable range."

Li Guangya stood up from the chair. He walked to the window and lifted his index finger to open the curtain.

The Heart of Asia standing on the coastline was like a burning torch, lighting up his pupils, lighting up the dark night over the beach, also lighting up the Pan-Asian people's desire for greatness again.

They had fallen into the trap of prosperity for too long.

The extremely wealthy material world as well as the spiritual world would always make people lose their desire for progress inadvertently.

But he was different.

He was an ambitious man.

Unlike his compatriots who were almost becoming herbivores, his childhood experience on Mars made him understand that a person who had no hope was just a walking zombie; their value to society would be less than a robot.

Whether it was for the glory of Pan-Asia, or for the sake of history...

At least during his term as the chairman of the board, he wanted to accomplish something great!

Either plant the Pan-Asian flag on the ground of Titan and Europa or open up the steel pathway from the surface to the geosynchronous orbit!

Or do both at the same time!

But first of all, he must rekindle the desire in people's hearts and convince them that, without a doubt, he was born for this.

This abstract philosophical concept was called "fate".

He looked at the magnificent Heart of Asia outside the window, as well as the holographic lights and shadows dancing on the coastline. He then smiled faintly and continued, "Tonight, there should be many people who can't fall asleep from the excitement."

This, of course, also included himself.

...

Lu Zhou went back to his apartment in a Pan-Asian Cooperation's car.

The door opened in front of Lu Zhou.

"Master, did you have fun at the party today?"

Lu Zhou looked at Xiao Ai, who was hopping around in front of him. He was in a good mood, so he smiled and said, "Pretty fun, but tiring."

“Xiao Ai saw it on the TV! Hehe, Master is as handsome as ever. (///ω///)”

Lu Zhou smiled embarrassedly.

Although he knew this was the truth, it was still embarrassing to hear it from someone else.

Xiao Ai also showed a happy smile on her face.

“Um, then, is Master in a better mood? (///ω///)”

Lu Zhou was stunned for a moment. He then smiled and reached out his hand to touch her head.

“Yeah, thank you...”

“I’m feeling much better.”

The bathwater was ready.

After Lu Zhou took a bath, he put on a set of pajamas and took a bottle of milk from the refrigerator. He then returned to the living room sofa and sat down.

He had contacted Jin Ling University previously, and after receiving his call, the other party immediately stated that they had prepared a preparatory course and office for him. He could even go to class tomorrow.

As for the title of professor, that had not changed in this century. There was no question of whether the title could be restored. As long as he wanted, he could open his own courses in the school at any time and receive his salary according to the current salary standard.

Lu Zhou’s idea was actually very simple.

The salary wasn’t the important thing. In contrast, he paid more attention to the academic resources of Jin Ling University.

As the world’s top university in this era, he could not only obtain the most cutting-edge information in the academic world but also communicate with the most knowledgeable people in the world.

And this also helped him get in touch with the most cutting-edge research fields of this era more quickly and catch up with the footsteps of these younger generations.

Of course, he still had one thing to deal with before that.

Lu Zhou looked at the documents in the box. After pondering for a while, he pulled out the electronic business card of Lawyer Chen and made a call.

After the phone rang three times, it was quickly connected.

A familiar portrait emerged in the holographic beam.

Lu Zhou looked at the lawyer named Chen Tianlu. He went straight to the point.

“Sorry to call you so late. I have something to consult you about. I wonder if it is convenient for you?”

“Of course, no problem! It’s my honor to be able to serve you!” Lawyer Chen smiled and said earnestly, “Excuse me, what’s the matter?”

“I have some stock certificates, such as East Asia Energy, East Asia Communications, East Asia Heavy Industries, etc...”

Lu Zhou turned over the documents in his hands. He looked at Lawyer Chen, who was dumbfounded, and continued, “I don’t know much about the rules of this world, but these were indeed bought by me and were notarized by the Bank of China. Actually, I just want to ask... How do I use these certificates?”

[Scholar’s Advanced Technological System - Chapter 1458 - East Asia Energy Shareholders - BoxNovel](#)

Chapter 1458: East Asia Energy Shareholders

The cold winter in January was not over yet; the streets of the Yangtze River Delta City group were still chilly. However, the atmosphere of the East Energy Building, which was located at the Pearl River, was hot and sweaty.

In the office of the board of directors, the Chinese man loosened the collar of his formal suit, as if to relieve the tension in his heart. He muttered to himself, "Is the air conditioner turned on?"

This sentence was heard by the secretary standing behind him.

The man immediately stood up, like a conditioned reflex, and almost knocked the chair to the ground.

"I'll go out and ask—"

"No." The Chinese man looked at the digital clock flashing on the conference table and continued, "The meeting is about to begin."

Liu Zhengxing, Chairman of East Asia Energy.

With 1.3% of the shares, he was the largest shareholder of East Asia Energy and had been in the position of chairman for five years. Apart from him, the people sitting at the conference table at this moment were the core members of the board of directors or representatives sent by major shareholders such as the AIIB and Bank of China.

As for why they were sitting here for this meeting...

It had to start with an old popsicle that suddenly awakened, and the huge legacy held in his hand.

The meeting began.

Before Liu Zhengxing had time to speak, a slightly fat man sitting not far from him spoke first.

"I just want to know, are those credentials real?"

About an hour ago, they received a call from the relevant department stating that a piece of frozen shares would be lifted in the near future. They hoped they would make the information public and do the relevant preparations to avoid affecting the normal operation of the company.

As soon as the news came out, it immediately stirred up a storm.

In the past century, East Asia Energy's shareholding structure had basically been quite stable, and major shareholding changes of more than 5% hadn't happened in nearly half a century.

Therefore, this made them extremely nervous.

This was a matter of vital interest, and no one knew what impact this matter might have on the operation of East Asia Energy.

"It has a notarization from the Bank of China, so it can't be faked."

The man wearing gold-rimmed glasses pushed his glasses, sighed softly, and said, "In fact, a long time ago, when I was studying business at Shanghai University, I was thinking about this question. When Star Sky Technology liquidated its assets, why didn't it involve East Asia Energy shares at all..."

His name was Zhong Ziyu, one of the managing directors of East Asia Energy and a member of the investment strategy committee of the board of directors. Unlike Liu Zhengxing, he was not sitting here as an individual shareholder. He was appointed by the AIIIB, and he was a professional executive with a background in science.

His index finger lightly tapped on the table. After looking around at the directors who were looking at him, he gently pushed the gold-rimmed glasses on the bridge of his nose and continued to speak.

"The patent period of 20 years has passed, and after several rounds of technology upgrades, East Asia Energy no longer has to pay patent fees to Star Sky Technology. Those shares of East Asia Energy that are being held by Star Sky Technology will still receive a lump-sum annual dividend. Using this funding support, even if the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study is a money-losing business, it will not fall into bankruptcy..."

"But now, everything makes sense."

Liu Zhengxing spoke with a heavy face.

"What makes sense?"

"Everything is pre-arranged." There was a hint of admiration in the pupils behind those gold-rimmed glasses. After a pause, Zhong Ziyu continued,

“This is a clever trader. This person is even smarter than the first CEO of Star Sky Technology, Ms. Chen.

“That person may not understand scientific research, but he knows enough about Star Sky Technology’s business. Few companies rely on personal abilities rather than business models to achieve the top 100 or even top ten positions in the world. Obviously, Star Sky Technology is such a monster. Its core competitiveness is not the research institute, but Academician Lu himself.

“That person had a foreboding, that after losing Academician Lu, the business model of Star Sky Technology would not work sooner or later, so he made two preparations in advance and transferred important assets from Star Sky Technology.

“Later facts proved that such an idealized model failed to persist. The core R&D department of a high-tech company does prioritize profit, but only if they have more than enough money.”

The man asked curiously, “Who do you think that person might be?”

“If my guess is correct, it should be Lu Zhou’s younger sister, Lu Xiaotong.

“As the heir of Star Sky Technology, only she has the ability to do so. Her teacher was the famous Professor Krugman. I believe that anyone who has studied economics before is familiar with the prediction of the economic crisis in the mid-21st century... Not to mention, she herself was a Nobel Prize winner in economics.”

Having said that, the man with glasses smiled faintly and continued, “However, it doesn’t make much sense to talk about this. It is better for us to talk about the current problems.”

There was a brief silence in the conference room.

The director of the Financial Management Committee, who had yet to speak, spoke with caution.

“Actually, I feel that the return of Academician Lu is not necessarily a bad thing. At least from the market’s response, most rating agencies have given positive responses on this matter...”

As he was talking, the director of the Financial Management Committee suddenly noticed that the look on Chairman Liu's face was a little unnatural.

He realized something immediately and quickly changed his wording.

"Of course, this is just my inference from the market's reaction. As to whether Academician Lu's return can bring a positive impact on East Asia Energy, we have to analyze the specific situation. My suggestion is to contact him first. See if he has the idea of joining the board of directors. If he is not interested in the company's operations, we don't need to be too nervous."

"7% of the equity. If I calculated correctly, he should have that many stocks in his hand." A director sitting at the conference table said in an enviable tone, "All this wealth in the hands of one person. Damn... I am afraid that no one has more money than him."

After more than one hundred years, East Asia Energy's largest individual shareholder only held 1.3% of the shares.

Excluding the part held by major institutions such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Bank of China, Academician Lu, who held 7% or more of the equity, would become the largest individual shareholder of East Asia Energy.

It was no exaggeration to say that the shares he held in his hands were even more than the total shares circulating in the market. The world's richest man was even a humble statement for him.

"You still only counted the part of East Asia Energy." Another director said with an enviable expression on his face, "If I remember correctly, Star Sky Technology holds 20% of East Asia Communications' shares... Although submarine optical cables are not as profitable as power generation, their market value is not small."

The atmosphere on the conference table became uncontrollable.

The directors were completely muddled.

Except for a few core members of the board of directors, all of the other directors were envious. One of the directors, who had yet to speak a word since the beginning of the meeting, couldn't help but rant.

“20% of the shares are held in the hands of an old popsicle... How is this even possible?”

“According to the new securities law, during the freezing period, the ownerships of assets of dormant persons will be frozen. In other words, in the past century, they do not need to consider the part that belongs to Academician Lu... Of course, from now on, they have to consider it.”

“F*ck, let’s just merge with East Asia Group! With the integration of energy, communications, and industry, we will be the oligarchs of the new world.”

“This is indeed a good idea.” The slightly fat man’s eyes lit up, and he said immediately, “If he takes the lead, there might be real hope.”

Seeing that the topic on the conference table had begun to digress, Zhong Ziyu coughed slightly, interrupting them, and said, “Stop dreaming... The AIIB will never approve.”

As the largest investment bank in Asia, in addition to considering economic benefits, they also had to consider the possible impact of each decision on the economic environment and society.

A huge monopoly was detrimental to the Pan-Asian Cooperation economy and would harm their interests in the long run. Obviously, they wouldn’t agree to such a thing.

Of course, he didn’t deny that Lu Zhou did have this power.

Regardless of how low the probability of success...

The trigger was in his hand...

Zhong Ziyu pushed the glasses on the bridge of his nose and continued with a serious tone, “In any case, I suggest contacting Lu Zhou first to test the waters. If he only intends to receive dividends, it should not have any impact on the operation of East Asia Energy...”

“If he is interested in being on the board...”

When his gaze fell across the conference table, Chairman Liu’s face tightened.

His expression immediately became somewhat curious, and he said thoughtfully, "Maybe things will get interesting?"

...

The meeting ended.

Several holographic lights dissipated, and the meeting table instantly became empty.

The few people who came to the meeting physically cleaned up the things on the table. They nodded to Chairman Liu, who was sitting down, then quickly left the meeting room.

In the huge conference room, only Liu Zhengxing and his secretary were left.

"Get out."

"Okay."

The secretary showed a relieved expression on his face and quickly exited the meeting room.

After the door of the meeting room was closed, Liu Zhengxing suddenly grabbed the teacup on the table and threw it onto the ground.

"This group of f*cking idiots!

"Who has been working hard for East Asia Energy! How dare these snakes do this!"

When he thought of what the man in glasses said, he became furious.

Under his leadership, East Asia Energy had maintained steady growth for five consecutive years. But now an old antique was going to take over his power.

What a joke!

After taking a deep breath, he quickly calmed down.

His finger lightly tapped on the conference table. A blue beam of light lit up from the chair directly opposite him.

After waiting quietly for a few seconds, a virtual portrait that looked like a mannequin model gradually emerged from the holographic beam.

Liu Zhengxing took a deep breath. His expression of sullenness died down a little.

He then said in a calm voice, "There is something that I need your help with."

Chapter 1459: Back to Jin University

The issue of equity certification was much simpler than Lu Zhou had imagined.

Originally, he thought it would be a long judicial dispute. He did not expect the efficiency. The industrial and commercial department sent a letter to a number of companies such as East Asia Energy and East Asia Communications to complete the information disclosure.

Perhaps a long time ago Xiao Tong considered possible disputes in the future and did the notarization of these equity documents. Most of these notary institutions still existed today, and they had quite good credit ratings. It was easy to complete the chain of evidence without dispute.

Lu Zhou was also quite surprised.

He did not expect that, except for the three giants of East Asia Energy, East Asia Communications, and East Asia Heavy Industries, which spanned the energy, information, and industrial fields, most of the miscellaneous companies he invested in before actually survived.

For example, Beep Beep Charging. Although its name was different after several rounds of mergers and acquisitions, its business had expanded from wireless charging stations to areas of core technologies such as urban cloud, wireless charging equipment production, and magnetic levitation auto parts.

There was also Baosheng Group, which did superconducting material for fusion reactor cores. They had also gone public. As the largest supplier of the controllable fusion core equipment in the Pan-Asian Cooperation and even in the world, it had become the backbone of the second generation of controllable fusion technology.

What Lu Zhou didn't expect most was that the Hippocampus Group, which was world-renowned for its mid-to-high-end robot products, was also relevant. Back then, Zhongshan New Materials entered the carbon-based chip industry chain with his support. By the middle of the 21st century, Zhongshan New Materials had become one of the largest carbon-based chip manufacturers in China.

And CEO Liu was also a visionary entrepreneur. In his later years, he spotted the huge market prospects for robots and spent huge sums of money on the emerging robot industry chain.

Although this risky move did not bring significant benefits to Zhongshan New Materials, it had cultivated a large number of scientific and technological enterprises engaged in AI technology research and development in the Jinling high-tech zone.

The Hippocampus Group was one of them, albeit its size at the time was small.

Later, the business of Zhongshan New Materials went downhill. After several mergers and acquisitions, the two companies simply merged together and integrated their respective advantageous resources to form the Hippocampus Group.

In addition, there were also some large-scale VRMMMO games like "Calan Empire" and some businesses that Lu Zhou didn't even look at at the time. They had now grown into towering trees.

After knowing this, Lu Zhou couldn't help but feel emotional.

Although Star Sky Technology "died" with him, its legacy had long been integrated into all aspects of the entire society of the Pan-Asian Cooperation and had become an inseparable part of this society.

Like the roots of a big tree, it nourished every cell on the tree...

At the same time, according to the latest amendments to the laws, shares held by dormant persons who had been dormant for more than ten years would be treated as "frozen rights" during the freezing period, and other shareholders would act as nominal shareholders on their behalf. They did not enjoy benefits such as dividends.

However, in contrast, the rights and interests of stock owners during the freezing period would be fully protected.

The most critical one stated that, during the “frozen” period, the shares of equity holders would not be diluted by conventional financial activities, such as financing.

In other words, when a person had been frozen and hibernated for more than 10 years, starting from the 11th year, no matter what changes happened in the company’s management and shareholders, the frozen part of the equity would not be affected.

The original intention of this law was to protect the basic rights and interests of dormant people. After all, most people enter the dormant cabin because of terminal illnesses. Few people would choose frozen dormancy just for fun or say that they wanted to see the future.

After all, emotionally speaking, separation from relatives and friends was not an easy decision. The sense of separation from the future society after waking up was also an unacceptable thing for most people.

All in all, with the sound legal system in today’s society, it was not difficult to retrieve one’s own property.

After entrusting the job of unfreezing the equity to Lawyer Chen, Lu Zhou didn’t pay much attention to other troublesome things, except for asking Xiao Ai to take care of it for him.

He trusted the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation.

Not only did this public welfare organization operate in the Pan-Asian Cooperation for so many years, selflessly helping millions of dormant people, but it was also because the fund’s managers were his descendants.

As the ancestor of the Lu family, Lu Zhou felt that his name still had a certain status in their hearts...

...

The day after the party ended, Lu Zhou handed over the housekeeping to Xiao Ai. He left early in the morning and took the light rail to the university town on the outskirts of Jinling.

This was different from when he came here last time.

Back then, he was using a completely strange face and came here anonymously.

But now, he was standing here again as Lu Zhou. Even though the scenery in front of him and the pictures in his memory were completely different, everything here made him feel extra familiar.

“Back here again...”

Lu Zhou looked at the lawns, the gardening drones trimming the flowers, and the young students walking on the stone brick roads. He took a deep breath of the fragrant air mixed with knowledge and stepped out of the gate of the light rail station.

At the same time, a holographic screen suspended in mid-air came into his eyes.

[We Welcome Academician Lu Back Home!]

There are still school banners, even in this era?

Lu Zhou looked at that line of text. He couldn't help but show a touch of sadness in his eyes.

Home...

Speaking of which, this was the most worthy place for him to call home.

“You... Are you Academician Lu?!”

The old man waiting at the entrance of the station quickly walked up to him and held his right hand with excitement.

Lu Zhou felt that the old man looked a bit familiar, but he couldn't tell where they met before.

Lu Zhou said with a smile, “Excuse me, you are?”

The old man said excitedly, “Qin Chuan! Academician of the Pan-Asian Academy of Sciences, Dean of the Academy of Jin Ling University! I am the grandson of your disciple!”

Qin Chuan...

Don't recognize that name.

But his face looks so familiar.

After staring at his face for a while, Lu Zhou suddenly reacted and asked in an uncertain tone, "Do you know Qin Yue?"

"Know? That's my grandfather!" The old man looked at Lu Zhou excitedly and continued, "I remember that, when I was a child, he always told me stories about you, including your teachings to him in Princeton and your influence on the Chinese mathematics community."

"How is he... I mean, when he was still alive."

"He lived a good life." The old man said in a reminiscence tone, "A few years after you left, he won the Fields Medal. Since then, he researched the theories you left behind, hoping to carry them forward. I still remember that, before his death, the prosperity of the Lu Zhou school of thought reached the peak of history, even taller than the Göttingen school of thought!"

Qin Chuan suddenly sighed slightly and continued with a shameful expression, "I'm ashamed to say, it is our generation that has shamed your name."

"No way." Lu Zhou smiled comfortingly when he looked at the old man with shame on his face. "Don't belittle yourself, you guys are actually doing pretty well."

"You don't have to comfort us." Dean Qin said with a sigh, "If we really made you satisfied, you won't be so disappointed when you came here some time ago."

Lu Zhou: "...?!"

Lu Zhou looked at the sighing old man with a muddled face. Just when Lu Zhou was about to ask him why he thought he was "disappointed", a group of people walked over.

The leader of the pack was not young, about fifty or sixty years old. He was wearing a formal suit, and his hair was neatly combed. The enthusiasm on his

face was not inferior to that of Dean Qin. After seeing Lu Zhou, he reached out his right hand from a long-distance away.

“Academician Lu, hello, hello!” He enthusiastically held Lu Zhou’s right hand and shook it vigorously. The old man with neatly combed hair said excitedly, “We waited for a hundred years! Finally, you are back!”

Qin Chuan quickly coughed and introduced, “This is the principal of Jin Ling University, Cai Mingrui.”

“Principal Cai I see.” Lu Zhou nodded. He said with a smile, “It’s nice to meet you.”

“You are too polite. It is our great honor to meet you!” Principal Cai continued with a smile, “We have kept your professorship for the past 100 years. We never thought that one day you would actually come back, but our respect for you has not changed!”

“You are too kind.” Lu Zhou said with a smile, “Actually, a century ago, I was just an ordinary mathematics professor. You don’t need to treat me so solemnly.”

An ordinary math professor...

In addition to Principal Cai and Dean Qin, a group of people standing beside them twitched their eyebrows in unison.

The power of one person was able to promote Jin Ling University to the level of a world-class university and to move the world mathematics center from the other side of the Pacific Ocean. If he was just an ordinary mathematics professor, then what were they?

Principal Cai changed the subject and pushed out a young lady standing next to him.

“Let me introduce to you, this is the counselor of our preparatory class, Sun Lan—Teacher Sun! The people from the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation have contacted us. You can come here to conduct lectures. We will help you arrange some courses to facilitate your integration into today’s society.

“If you need any help, you can contact me directly or Teacher Sun!”

The instructor named Sun Lan was probably a master's or PhD holder from Jin Ling University, and she seemed to be about twenty-five years old.

Lu Zhou didn't know if it was due to lack of work experience or for other reasons, but he felt like she seemed to be very afraid of himself.

"Lu, hello, Academician Lu! I-I am Sun Lan, I am glad to meet you. I will send you an email about the classes and the course later..."

She reached out her right hand tremblingly as her voice became quieter and quieter.

"Hello, it is nice to meet you as well."

Not wanting to embarrass her too much, after Lu Zhou and her briefly shook hands, he looked at Principal Cai instead.

"I will communicate with her about the courses. Can I make a small request before then?"

Principal Cai said immediately, "Oh, you don't have to be so polite, just ask us if you have any requirements, we will do our best to help you!"

"Actually, it's nothing special." Lu Zhou said with an embarrassed smile, "When I checked the information last night, I learned that Jin Ling University has the largest computational materials laboratory in Asia. Is that true?"

"Of course." Before President Cai could speak, an old man standing behind him proudly said, "We at Jin Ling University might not be the best materials science school in the world, but we are at least among the top three. Especially in the area of computational materials!"

"Really? That's great."

After hearing this news, Lu Zhou couldn't help but show a sincere smile on his face.

"It just so happens that I have some interesting ideas that I want to verify. I don't know if I can use your laboratory."

Chapter 1460: Panicking

Li Guangya was panicking.

He had just left Shanghai yesterday. Before he could sit down in his office chair, a call from the AIIB made him leave Beijing again.

“Morinaga from SoftBank is giving a briefing on the board of directors and intends to win over Academician Lu to establish the East Asia Group. I don’t think he is joking. Go figure it out.”

The person who called was Zhong Ziyu, the managing director of East Asia Energy who was appointed by the AIIB.

Li Guangya had an impression of the man wearing gold-rimmed glasses. Although he still didn’t know the guy’s current status, he was still a strong figure.

Because of this, the call made Li Guangya panic.

If it were someone else, he would think of it as a joke. But this was Lu Zhou, who once ignited the light of controlled fusion and spread the quantum cables across the oceans...

The same amount of stock held in the hands of an ordinary person would just be a huge sum of money.

But in Lu Zhou’s hand, that was equivalent to a nuclear button, or some other superweapon.

With his reputation in the Pan-Asian cooperation, this might just be possible.

On the way from the station to Jin Ling University, Li Guangya, who was sitting in a maglev train, ordered his office assistant to inform the Jin Ling University of his visit. He also called Secretary-General Wu Shuhua, who was visiting abroad, and informed her of the situation here.

“This is the mess you caused, you better think of a solution!”

Not surprisingly, after hearing the news, Wu Shuhua went crazy.

Li Guangya pinched his eyebrows with his index finger and thumb as he said with a headache, "What can I do? Who would have thought that those shares are still in his hands?"

"If his existence threatens the stability of Pan-Asia, I advise you to give up as soon as possible... It is no longer about the space elevator. His existence may have already become a fuse for us to slide into a deeper abyss. Although I don't recommend this, if you have to—"

"No!" After hearing Secretary Wu's words, Li Guangya immediately vetoed, "With his prestige in Asia and the world, if anything happens to him, it will be a heavy blow to our alliance!"

After a pause, he slowed down and continued, "The situation is not so bad now. Don't think too much about it. I'm on my way to Jin Ling University. I'll talk with him face-to-face later. I'll call you about it later."

Wu Shuhua: "Better so!"

The phone call ended.

After turning off the holographic camera, Li Guangya leaned on the seat with a wry smile on his face.

Is the situation really not so bad?

This was probably the first time since he took office that he had no confidence in what he said.

A giant company spanning the fields of energy, communications, and industry. Forget about the Pan-Asian Cooperation, the whole world would tremble under its feet.

And the first to kneel down was the Pan-Asian Cooperation itself...

He could even imagine how if such an oligarch was born, all the achievements of the Pan-Asian Cooperation over the past half-century would be stolen.

Is it possible for this oligarch to be born?

It's hard to say.

Otherwise, Director Zhong would not have called me.

After all, what Academician Lu held was not just stocks, but also the academic prestige that had dominated this land for a century and countless Pan-Asian people's desire for greatness again.

After thinking of this, Li Guangya's hands couldn't help but tremble.

It was him who dug the man out of the grave and pushed him back to the throne. The situation was obviously starting to become a little out of his control.

As for whether Academician Lu himself had the motive to merge East Asia Energy, East Asia Communications, and East Asia Industry...

He had no idea.

After all, it was impossible to guess with the wisdom of a mere mortal, what this genius with a monster high IQ was thinking.

Take Newton as an example.

Many people only knew that Sir Newton studied theology in his later years, but they often overlooked another great achievement in his later years.

In his later years, this guy felt that bullying Robert Hooke was not exciting enough, so he went to be the director of The Royal Mint, taking on the position for 28 years.

What was the 18th century Royal Mint like? They were equivalent to the central bank of the world at the time, even more prestigious than the governor of the Federal Reserve in the 21st century.

And how rich was he?

There was no specific document that recorded his deposits, but judging from Sir Issac Newton's failed investment, he was involved in the famous "South China Sea Company Stock Bubble" incident in European financial history and lost a total of 20,000 GBP.

According to the guidance price of gold in September 1717, one ounce of gold could be exchanged for 3 pounds 17 shillings and 10 pence. Taking into account the gold production and holdings in the 17th century, one could only imagine what a huge sum of 20,000 GBP was.

Anyone that could afford to lose 20,000 pounds was equivalent to a billionaire back then.

It was certain that smart people could flourish in any era, but who could guarantee that Academician Lu would return to his old profession and become a scholar?

Even Newton, who was a child prodigy, was able to build windmills and water clocks with his bare hands. He later gave up academics and went to pursue vanity. Who could guarantee that Academician Lu would stay a mathematics professor?

Wouldn't it be more fun to collect money in the financial market?

After thinking of this, Li Guangya became more nervous.

He really didn't expect that the stocks weren't liquidated in the bankruptcy of Star Sky Technology half a century ago. Instead, they were placed in a safe at the Bank of China and kept for a century.

Isn't this crazy?

Why did Star Sky Technology go bankrupt if they had those stocks?! They also turned the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study into a public institution and gave it to the education department of Pan-Asian Cooperation...

The only possibility is that he planned all of this from the beginning.

Li Guangya got off the maglev train in Jinling. He rushed to Jin Ling University without stopping.

According to what he heard, Lu Zhou usually arrived here early in the morning.

In any case, he had to find him before Softbank and find out the situation...

He soon arrived at Jin Ling University.

Li Guangya saw Principal Cai Mingrui in the parking lot in front of the school. He didn't have time to greet him, so he immediately asked, "Where is Academician Lu? Where is he now?"

Cai Mingrui was slightly stunned. He frowned somewhat inexplicably and said, "Academician Lu is in the laboratory... Is there a problem?"

"Laboratory?" After hearing this unexpected answer, Li Guangya was taken aback. He subconsciously asked, "What experiment is he doing?"

Principal Cai shook his head.

"I don't know... I only remember that he borrowed a materials science laboratory. But I can help you find out."

"No need, just take me there!" Li Guangya said in a serious tone. "I have important business to talk to him about!"

"I'm not joking; this is related to the future of the Pan-Asian Cooperation!"

Chapter 1461: Be Content, Kid

At the computational materials laboratory of Jin Ling University.

Lu Zhou looked inside the translucent cube, at the black cylinder that gradually formed under the guidance of the blue light beam. He then spoke in a rather emotional tone.

"When I was at the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study, Dr. Hou and Deputy Director Yang were discussing how to synthesize SG-1 superconducting materials stably. Deputy Director Yang smoked cigarettes for an entire afternoon... Guess how we solved it?"

The machine in front of him was the core equipment of the Institute of Computing Materials: a molecular-level 3D printer.

Unlike the popular home 3D printers on the market, the awesome thing about this thing was that it could autonomously set the spatial order of atomic stacks within a certain accuracy range and even adjust the energy of chemical bonds.

This meant that no matter whether the molecule existed in nature, as long as it could exist theoretically, it could be "printed" in batches using this thing.

Lu Zhou couldn't even think of a suitable word for how amazing this machine was, just like how very few people could accurately describe how awesome his hyperspace theory was.

There was no doubt that if this machine was taken into the 21st century, materials scientists, biologists, and medical scientists around the world would go crazy...

Standing next to Lu Zhou, the young doctoral student who demonstrated the molecular-level 3D printer for him asked curiously, "How did you solve it?"

"Vapour deposition method." Lu Zhou smiled and said, "I don't know if this is feasible now, but the only way we could think of at the time was to mix it layer by layer like a cake. The graphene six grids would then be stacked at an angle of 1.1° , forming a Mott insulator between each layer of cross-section, then we would find the 'semi-filled' structure that we dreamed of."

The young doctoral student spoke.

"This is too..."

He originally wanted to say that it was too troublesome, but he felt that it would be a little impolite.

Seeing the expression on this young man's face, Lu Zhou smiled and continued, "The route of the vapor deposition method was determined, the road after was a little smoother. We tried to improve the laboratory preparation method and cooperated with the engineers from Baosheng Group to explore the method of industrialized mass production. But even so, the cost was only acceptable relative to a strategic industrial facility, such as a controllable fusion core.

"In the past, an idea in scientific research needed to go through rigorous demonstrations and tedious design experiments before it could be tested. However, the cost of verifying an idea now is only 1 hour of time and 10,000 credits.

"The technology of this era is really beyond my imagination."

After hearing the compliment from the grandmaster of computational materials, the doctoral student scratched his head in embarrassment.

“In fact, it is not as ridiculous as you think... There are many Pan-Asian scientific research personnel, but our funds are very limited. In fact, there are not many opportunities to try. Moreover, most of the relatively novel materials have already been discovered using molecular printing technology. If we want to produce new results, we still have to go through rigorous calculations and design.”

Lu Zhou shook his head and smiled.

“What a first-world problem.

“Be content, kid.”

The PhD student’s expression was somewhat subtle.

Although Lu Zhou came from a hundred years ago, he was not that much older than himself.

Regardless of what the young man of the 22nd century felt, Lu Zhou glanced at the translucent cube in front of him and said, “I already understand the basic situation. I have some ideas here that I want to verify. You can leave now.”

“Do you know how to use the equipment here?”

Lu Zhou said with a faint smile, “You have underestimated me. Before I entered the lab, I did some homework beforehand.”

“Of course I didn’t underestimate you...” The doctoral student touched the back of his head awkwardly and said, “I’m just worried that you won’t be able to operate these pieces of new equipment. But if you insist, I won’t stay here.”

After that, he walked out the door.

But at this moment, Lu Zhou stopped him from behind.

“Wait a second.”

The doctoral student stopped and asked him about something, “What’s wrong?”

Lu Zhou smiled and spoke.

“If it’s okay, can you pour me a cup of coffee? An instant one is fine.”

...

What surprised Lu Zhou was that there was no such thing as instant coffee. It was either coffee machines or canned coffee beverages sold in convenience stores.

People in this era didn’t seem to like boiled water very much. Although drinks made with dry powder still existed, it had become a rare thing, and few people would deliberately prepare them at home or in the office.

After taking a sip of the bitter black coffee, Lu Zhou put the cup on the table. He then took out a memory card the size of a pen cap and gently placed it on the holographic computer in the laboratory.

When the blue light beams lit up, Xiao Ai’s holographic image quickly appeared in front of him.

“Laboratory has been successfully taken over! Now it belongs to Xiao Ai!
 $\varphi(\cong\omega\leq^*)\text{♪}$ ”

When Lu Zhou saw the little guy jumping up and down restlessly in the holographic beam, he said, “Don’t mess up. Let’s just borrow the equipment here. We have to return it when we leave.”

Xiao Ai: “Understood! What does the master need Xiao Ai for? (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧”

Lu Zhou didn’t answer immediately. He took out an orange metal ball about the size of a fist from his arms and gently placed it on the table next to it.

Kill Core.

The initial memory of the Private-1 intelligent human guard!

Although intuition told him that this thing was dangerous, he still wanted to try to research it.

After all, this was the technology of the Calan Empire; the super civilization that once completed the wonders of the Ring world...

“I have something here that needs to be analyzed.”

...

The entrance of the computational materials laboratory.

The doctoral student who just came out of the laboratory was hesitating whether to go to the library to pass time when he saw President Cai and Dean Zhou of the Institute of Materials Science walking in from outside with a group of people.

His face changed in an instant. He thought of Dean Zhou's previous instructions to him. He turned around and wanted to leave, but Dean Zhou noticed him sharply.

Dean Zhou walked up quickly, stared at him, and asked anxiously, "Why did you come out alone? Where's Academician Lu?"

"Lu... Academician Lu is still inside." the doctoral student said quickly, "He told me to leave."

Dean Zhou stamped his foot anxiously. He stared at him and spoke.

"Didn't I tell you to follow him? Why did you leave him alone!"

He wasn't worried that Academician Lu would break his precious instruments... Well, actually, he was still a little worried. But what he worried the most was that Academician Lu could hurt himself.

Although the 3D molecular printer was not dangerous, some unstable products and incorrect operations might cause a series of serious consequences, including explosions.

Although this had never happened at Jin Ling University, it did happen at other universities.

An intern imported the wrong model into a 3D molecular printer, creating a group of extremely unstable folded-chain CHO compounds. This compound only existed in the natural environment for less than 1 millisecond. It then quickly decomposed into CH₄, CO, oxygen, and a lot of heat.

In the end, the intern didn't just blow himself up, but the whole laboratory building was filled with black smoke.

Because of this incident, the university did not publish a single computing material paper last year, and everyone in the whole school was taken to a safety education class.

A frozen man from the 21st century, no matter how much homework he did beforehand, would have zero operating experience of experimental equipment in this era.

Letting such a person stay in the laboratory was no different from throwing cigarette butts into a gasoline can.

Seeing Dean Zhou was angry with the student, President Cai spoke.

“Old Zhou, don’t embarrass this kid too much. It was Academician Lu who asked him to leave. It’s not like a student can do anything. Think about it.”

Although he understood this, Dean Zhou kept shaking his head and said angrily, “Ridiculous, this is ridiculous!”

Cai Mingrui then looked at the doctoral student and continued in a gentle tone, “This is not your fault, just take us over and find Academician Lu.”

Seeing how the principal forgave him, the doctoral student was finally relieved and nodded quickly.

“Okay, no problem, please follow me!”

After entering the research institute, the group soon came to the door of the laboratory.

The doctoral student stepped forward and pressed his fingerprint on the door lock.

However, something unexpected happened.

The red light flashed on the door lock, but the door remained locked.

Seeing the word “locked” appearing above the door handle, the doctoral student was slightly taken aback. He muttered “strange” in a quiet voice and then tried again.

The result this time was the same.

The door remained locked.

Li Guangya, who couldn't wait any longer, couldn't help but speak anxiously.

"What's the matter? Can you not go in?"

"It's not that I don't want to go in..."

The expression on his face was full of embarrassment. The doctoral student standing at the door turned his head to look at Dean Zhou and Principal Cai behind him with an embarrassed expression. He gulped and continued, "The door... is locked from the inside."

Chapter 1462: Unbelievable Circuit

In the laboratory.

The orange sphere was placed in an airtight lead container.

Eight flexible robotic arms carrying special probes were located inside the container, regularly distributed around the orange sphere.

The calibrator was turned on. As circles of infrared beams were spotted on the surface of the metal sphere, Lu Zhou, with the help of his assistant Xiao Ai, skillfully set the data collection, then pressed the button to start the test.

The eight micro-element neutron beams were released instantly, penetrating the shell of the "Kill Core". Through the eight spatial coordinate axes and the eight probes located on the robotic arm, the data of the sample from the macro and micro levels were collected.

The first was the macro level. The parts of the entire metal sphere were analyzed, then presented to Lu Zhou in the form of holographic images.

At the micro-level, the materials of each part, and even a series of nuanced information such as the spatial arrangement order at the level of atoms and molecules, chemical bonds, and molecular bonds, were all collected and summarized.

Using the data in the table, Xiao Ai, who served as an assistant, quickly drew it into a visual chart and presented it on the light blue holographic interface floating aside.

“Amazing...”

Lu Zhou stared at the scan data on the holographic panel for a long time. His eyes gradually began to show a hint of surprise.

He originally thought that the material that constituted the Kill Core would be something that could not be resolved with the level of technology on Earth. He didn't expect the material presented to him to be surprisingly easy to understand.

At least, it was far from mysterious enough to make it incomprehensible.

“The surface of the sphere is a layer of molybdenum-titanium alloy... The stacking of metal atoms is a bit special, and the dispersed carbonized substance formed by molybdenum and the carbon in the alloy is quite interesting.”

Although such a technology could be achieved in the 21st century, it was difficult to make discrete carbonized material points so evenly distributed in the material, and this was equally so even with the technology of the 22nd century.

According to the public information collected by Xiao Ai from the database of Jin Ling University, no similar technology had been mentioned, and no one seemed to be doing research in this direction.

Lu Zhou put the material of the spherical shell aside for the time being as he continued to look inside the spherical shell.

When his gaze fell on the holographic image corresponding to the internal structure of the spherical shell, his whole body was stunned.

He saw layers of carbon material blade structures, tightly arranged spirally inside the spherical shell, leaving only nano-scale gaps between the layers.

If it weren't for the special lens, such an amazing shape would not have been observed.

Although at first glance they looked plain and unremarkable, no different from ordinary double-layer graphene, but when Lu Zhou continued to adjust the probe and did a few more data collections on it, he quickly discovered that there was a hidden mystery in it!

On the seemingly smooth double-layer graphene surfaces, the delocalized large π bonds between each carbon hexagon and the bond energy of the chemical bonds were slightly different.

Although this difference was not great, it was particularly conspicuous in Lu Zhou's eyes.

Lu Zhou immediately ordered, "Xiao Ai, connect the big π bonds with similar bond energies and present them to me in the form of a two-dimensional image."

"Yes, Master! (๑•̀ㅁ•́)و✧"

The cone-shaped holographic beam transformed in the air. An azure blue hexagonal grid plane quickly appeared in front of Lu Zhou.

Lines of different colors connected the hexagons with similar large π bonds in series. Lu Zhou stared at the intricate image for a long time. Suddenly, there was a faint expression on his face.

Perhaps Xiao Ai noticed the expression on Lu Zhou's face. Xiao Ai, who was flying next to him, landed on his shoulder curiously and asked, "Master, do you see anything? (๑•̀ㅁ•́)و✧"

"Hmm... Sort of."

After nodding, Lu Zhou thought for a moment. He continued speaking solemnly, "If my guess is correct..."

"These double-layer graphenes should be circuit boards."

Xiao Ai: "Huh? Isn't that obvious? (๑•̀ㅁ•́)و✧"

"It is, but... The key point is how they realized this special integrated circuit." Lu Zhou continued after a pause, "The traditional printed circuit method is obviously not feasible. If my guess is correct... They should have adjusted the chemical bonds."

This integrated circuit was no longer the traditional kind of integrated circuit board.

On its surface, there were no circuit lines that could be seen by the naked eye. Instead, a special technology was used to surgically modify the delocalized large π bond so that the free electrons on the graphene surface could pass in a specific trajectory on the grid surface.

“They modified the chemical bond. The connection formed by the macroscopic movement of the electron is the abstract circuit of the entire circuit board. Although there are no wires, it achieves the same effect.

“Hm, it’s hard to imagine how they did it.”

Regardless of how thin the circuit lines on the circuit board were, there were always limits.

Ignoring the quantum tunneling effect, the theoretical limit of integrated circuit density for PCBs based on copper wires was restricted by the diameter of copper atoms. For the next-generation circuit boards based on graphene materials, the theoretical density of the circuit was also a limitation, which was restricted by the diagonal length of the carbon hexagon.

The wire could not be wider than the diagonal of a single carbon six grid.

However, this technology was outside of the traditional circuit frame.

They took advantage of certain physical and chemical properties in chemical bonds that humans did not understand for the time being. On that carbon hexagonal plane, they drew strips that allowed electrons to pass through at a specific direction and angle, forming a high-speed channel.

Lu Zhou couldn’t think of how the Calan civilization did such an amazing thing.

Just like how the Calan civilization couldn’t understand how The Observer civilization made a quark star that transcended the concept of molecules and jumped continuously around the universe.

The technological gap between the two parties was the difference between a star and the Pangu fusion reactor. Even though they were both using nuclear fusion, the two were not on the same level.

However, for inspiration, this clue was still quite valuable.

Lu Zhou felt like a door to a new world was pushed open in his head.

Before pushing the door open, he thought that the wires on the circuit board were all visible “open wires”.

But now he discovered a new type of integrated circuit boards.

“These guys... really mastered materials science.”

Lu Zhou smiled and shook his head. He turned off the scanning equipment.

Today’s experiment was quite satisfactory to him; it could even be described as a fruitful harvest.

Lu Zhou quietly waited for the gamma value in the lead shell container to return to normal. He then put on protective gloves and carefully took the orange sphere out of the lead shell.

Just when Lu Zhou had just backed up the experimental data and cleaned up the laboratory, Xiao Ai, who was floating next to him, suddenly spoke.

“Master, there seems to be someone looking for you outside! (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧”

“Looking for me?”

Lu Zhou frowned slightly as he asked, “Who is that?”

“There are a lot of people at the door... Xiao Ai doesn’t know who they are, Xiao Ai will show you.”

After that, a holographic window popped up on the blue holographic panel.

When Lu Zhou saw a crowd stand in front of the door, he was stunned.

It made sense that President Cai Mingrui and the dean of the Institute of Computational Materials were here, so did the computational materials scientists who wanted to join in on the excitement.

But the chairman of the Pan-Asian Cooperation was here as well...

What is going on?

Chapter 1463: Beyond the Concept of “Future”

The door of the laboratory was locked. There was no movement inside for a long time, so no one knew if something went wrong inside.

For any experiments involving chemistry, no matter how well-developed the protective measures were in a laboratory, the experimenter still had a non-zero chance of accidentally dying.

Just when the crowd was anxiously discussing whether to break in, the door finally opened.

Lu Zhou looked at the faces standing at the door. He was about to ask what was going on when Chairman Li Guangya stepped forward and spoke first.

“Academician Lu, are you done?”

When he said this, there was a fake smile on his face.

Although Lu Zhou thought this guy was a bit strange, he nodded and said concisely, “Yeah, sort of.”

Li Guangya smiled and continued, “Already doing experiments at Jin Ling University. Your love for science is really admirable!”

Although this was a compliment, the tone of this was unclear whether this guy was complimenting himself or not.

Lu Zhou looked at Chairman Li Guangya a little strangely and spoke.

“Chairman Li, you’re too kind, I just happened to be interested in something and wanted to find out.”

“Your love for science is a role model for our Pan-Asian scholars!”

With a hearty smile, Chairman Li Guangya glanced at the door behind Lu Zhou. He then asked curiously, “It must be a very interesting proposition that you care about so much? Is it convenient to disclose?”

This guy...

What does he want?

Should I tell the truth?

It's nothing worthy of hiding, but it's difficult to explain.

Lu Zhou thought about it slowly for a while. He suddenly noticed the curiosity in the eyes next to him.

Some of the gazes were from researchers of the Institute of Computational Materials and experts in the field of materials science, such as Dean Zhou.

Lu Zhou thought of these diligent and studious scholars. He didn't want to lie to them, so he said, "In fact, it's not a mysterious thing. After seeing how advanced the experimental equipment of this era is... I tried to experiment with some of the insights I had made with carbon materials before.

"For example, by modifying the chemical bond energy, one or more tunnels are formed on the large π bond, which can exist stably and allow free electrons to pass stably.

"Tunnel through which free electrons pass stably?" A PhD student was stunned. He asked subconsciously, "The big π bond allows free electrons to pass through... What is this tunnel?"

This question was also what many scholars present wanted to ask.

The big π bond had the characteristics of some metal bonds, allowing free electrons to pass through... Even 100 years ago, it was something that junior high school students would know.

Lu Zhou read the confused expressions on everyone's face. He spoke after thinking for a moment.

"Let me give a simple example... Have you ever done a puzzle?"

"Pu-puzzle? I was exposed to them when I was a child." The doctoral student was bewildered by this question and asked, "Why?"

"Suppose you have a lot of hexagonal puzzles in your hand, and each puzzle piece corresponds to a big π key of a carbon hexagon. Now we arrange these

hexagons next to each other in a straight line, and the hexagons are opposite each other. The angular line is a straight line... Right?"

Isn't this just a single-layer graphene nanoribbon?

What's so special...?

The student couldn't figure out where the problem was. He nodded in a daze and said, "I guess."

Lu Zhou gently smiled.

"Then you are wrong.

"If I use a knife or something to draw a line on the surface of the puzzle, the straight line will be much smaller than the puzzle itself."

Student: "???"

Although Lu Zhou knew that the kid probably didn't understand, he didn't explain much. After all, if he wanted to describe the theory clearly, it would take all day.

Also, judging by the thoughtful expressions on the faces of Dean Zhou's several other experts, Lu Zhou knew that at least some people understood his theory.

Science itself was an esoteric field. As long as one or two people understood what he said and produced some results in this direction, it would be enough.

Lu Zhou looked at Chairman Li Guangya, who had been waiting for a long time, and asked, "Didn't you go back to Beijing? Why... are you back again?"

In fact, he originally wanted to say "why do you have so much free time", but Lu Zhou thought that he hadn't gotten acquainted with the chairman yet, so he decided to put it in a more polite way.

Li Guangya coughed dryly when he heard Lu Zhou's words.

"I have some business here... So I came back. When I passed by Jin Ling University, I wanted to come and see you."

After hearing these words, Lu Zhou couldn't help but roll his eyes.

We just met two days ago, and now you're back at Jin Ling University again.

This lie is too ridiculous.

However, Lu Zhou didn't bother to care about these trivial issues. He went straight to the point.

"Let's be more direct, what do you want?"

Li Guangya was embarrassed to continue beating around the bush, so he nodded. His tone became serious.

"I'm very sorry to disturb you, but I do have something very important that I must discuss with you."

Lu Zhou: "In private?"

Li Guangya nodded.

Not wanting to waste time, Lu Zhou said simply, "Okay, let's talk outside."

After that, Lu Zhou thanked President Cai and Dean Zhou for lending him the laboratory. He said goodbye to everyone and left with Li Guangya.

After the two walked away, Cai Mingrui secretly grabbed Dean Zhou and asked curiously, "What was the thing Academician Lu talked about? I don't understand it."

Although he was curious back then, he was too embarrassed to ask. Now he finally had the chance to ask the experts.

After hearing President Cai's words, Dean Zhou finally snapped back to reality.

After a wry smile, he spoke.

"Actually... I'm not sure either."

"Just try to explain it to me!"

Dean Zhou sighed and tried to explain in terms that ordinary people could understand.

“In short, we used to use silicon plates and graphene to make chips and to print integrated circuits. We used visible materials to engrave on a visible flat panel.”

Dean Zhou paused for a moment. After digesting his words, he continued, “And Professor Lu just now provided a... new idea.

“It is not necessary to print integrated circuits with visible materials. Instead, we can use invisible chemical bonds to form an abstract circuit that exists only in logic.

“For this abstract circuit, the wire is the macroscopic trajectory of free electrons moving on the surface of the material. When this trajectory can be maintained stably or condensed into a band of electrons with a finite width... Then it becomes a circuit.

“If this kind of technology can really be realized, we can even directly engrave the circuits we need on the surface of graphene. Not only will the difficulty of printing integrated circuits be drastically reduced, but the integration of circuits will also increase geometrically!”

Cai Mingrui looked at Dean Zhou in a daze as he said, “Is it that game-changing?”

Although he did not understand materials science, he still knew a little about the development of the electronics industry.

After a century of development, the space in which carbon-based chips could be excavated was very narrow, but apart from carbon materials, they could not find a more suitable substitute.

After all, this was something that was restricted by the periodic table...

After seeing the shocked expression on President Cai’s face, Dean Zhou relaxed his tone a little and said, “It’s just a conjecture about the technical route. I don’t think it is... After all, this concept is too advanced.

“But being able to come up with such a concept...

“I’m afraid only Academician Lu can do that.”

If the research on chips was likened to Lego pieces, then the focus of their research in the past decades or even hundreds of years had been how to cut the Lego pieces as small as possible, or use as few pieces as possible to complete.

However, what Lu Zhou proposed was a different approach. It was like if others were thinking about building a tower using Lego blocks, he carved a tower onto the Lego blocks.

There was no doubt that this also counted as a tower.

And it was definitely the kind that no one had ever seen before.

Regardless of whether this research idea could produce results, it would undoubtedly open a new door for the future development direction of the electronics industry in the 22nd century...

After thinking about this, Dean Zhou couldn't help but feel impressed.

In the past, he often heard people say that Lu Zhou stood at the pinnacle of the human mind, but he had never taken this seriously before.

After all, history was history. It was impossible for a dead person to resurrect. If resurrected, he would just be an antique left behind by history, not providing benefit for the future.

However, today, he finally learned what kind of terrifying power Lu Zhou possessed...

Chapter 1464: Are You Interested in the Space Elevator?

After following Chairman Li Guangya and his assistants out of the laboratory, Lu Zhou was thinking about whether to invite them to sit in his home for a while. Suddenly, he saw a man walking towards them.

After seeing Lu Zhou, the man's face immediately put on a bright smile, and he walked straight towards them.

"Hello, are you Academician Lu?"

After staring at this face for a while, Lu Zhou couldn't remember where he saw him before, so he spoke.

"It's me, and you are..."

"My man is Morinaga, this is my business card!"

Morinaga immediately handed out the electronic business card in his hand respectfully.

Li Guangya, who was standing aside, stared at Morinaga for a while. His eyes narrowed slightly.

After noticing Chairman Li's gaze, Morinaga seemed to have guessed something. A flash of danger appeared across his face as he smiled kindly.

"Chairman Li? What a coincidence, I didn't expect to meet you here."

"I didn't expect to meet you here either." Li Guangya moved his lips without a smile. He continued, "What brings you to Jin Ling University?"

"Our group has many investment projects with Jin Ling University. Besides coming here out of respect for Academician Lu, I would also come here from time to time," Morinaga said with a smile. "How about you, aren't you busy with work?"

Seeing how this guy directly admitted that he came to see Lu Zhou, the expression on Li Guangya's face gradually sank.

"I'm here for official business, so you don't need to worry about me."

While the two were communicating, Lu Zhou was also watching them with interest.

He didn't know if there was any grudge between them, but he felt that Li Guangya seemed to be annoyed at this guy. On the surface, Li Guangya was gentle... as if he seemed to be a little afraid of him?

"It seems that your official duties are related to Academician Lu."

Li Guangya didn't say a word when he heard Morinaga's ridicule. His expression became increasingly impatient.

After noticing this, Morinaga quickly changed the conversation. He smiled and then continued, "Since Academician Lu and Chairman Li still have things to discuss, I'll come here another day."

Having said that, he suddenly looked at Lu Zhou.

As if thinking of something, Morinaga thought for a moment before adding, "By the way, I have to remind you of something."

Lu Zhou said, "What?"

"Be careful of a man named Liu Zhengxing."

Liu Zhengxing?

Lu Zhou frowned slightly.

"Who is that?"

"Chairman of East Asia Energy." Morinaga said with a smile, "He is a very capable person, but sometimes the more capable a person is, the easier it is for them to make the wrong choice."

"Of course, the decision is up to you."

Morinaga smiled kindly again. After saying "see you next time", he turned around and walked away.

Lu Zhou imported his identity information and contact information into his address book. He glanced at the content on it casually.

[Morinaga, Investment Manager of SoftBank Group]

Interesting...

Lu Zhou glanced at Chairman Li Guangya, who was standing next to him.

He felt that Li Guangya didn't want to see this person again.

"Why does Softbank have shares in East Asia Energy?"

After hearing Lu Zhou's inquiry, Li Guangya thought for a moment. He then spoke in a calm tone.

“Around the 2060s, when the cross-regional power grid entered Japan, East Asia Energy acquired a number of Japanese groups, including Djing Electric Power Company, through financing mergers and acquisitions, and they formally entered the Japanese energy industry.

“SoftBank Group probably entered the East Asia Energy Board of Directors at that time. I can’t remember the specifics. I only remember reading a short paragraph in a book.

“When East Asia Energy’s power was expanding, basically every region they visited would absorb a certain proportion of local capital into the board of directors to reduce the resistance to the promotion of cross-regional power grids.

“If you are interested, you should be able to find relevant documents in the library.”

Lu Zhou: “In other words, East Asia Energy is now like a big plate of food, with hundreds of mouths surrounding it.”

Li Guangya: “It can be understood that way.”

“I see.” Lu Zhou nodded thoughtfully, muttering to himself, “No wonder. With 7% of the shares, many people are sucking up to me.”

At the beginning of the 21st century, when East Asia Energy was just established, the stocks in Star Sky Technology also took dividends and voted on the board of directors. But after a century, 7% of the shares instantly became a huge sum of money.

While Lu Zhou was feeling emotional about his own destiny and the course of history, Li Guangya, who heard his words, almost choked on his own saliva.

What the hell?

Sucking up?!

Although he guessed that Lu Zhou was probably referring to Morinaga, Li Guangya felt awkward when he thought that he would have to ask a favor from Lu Zhou. For a moment he was a little hesitant whether to say the next words.

Lu Zhou noticed the unnatural expression on his face, and he gave him a strange look.

“What’s wrong?”

“Nothing...” Li Guangya took a deep breath and had a polite smile on his face. “It seems that you have realized that you have become the centerpiece in the East Asia Energy board of directors.”

Lu Zhou said with a smile, “Centerpiece?”

“Everything has two sides. The candy in the eyes of some people can also be the poison in the eyes of other people.” Li Guangya gave a noncommittal smile and continued, “In fact, after so many years, the growth rate of East Asia Energy has exceeded everyone’s expectations. Its future is unpredictable.”

Lu Zhou: “I’m a straightforward person, so no need to beat around the bush.”

“I’m not beating around the bush.” Li Guangya continued looking at Lu Zhou. “The board of directors of East Asia Energy has actually been very divided on certain issues, whether it is in the specific business or the overall development route. For example, as a giant enterprise with both social and business attributes, East Asia Energy should give priority to economic effects or social benefits. If both are taken into account, they should find a balance between the two.”

Lu Zhou laughed and said, “Are you guys already this affluent?”

“It is not us who are affluent, but you.” Li Guangya said softly, “You may not understand what a huge sum of money you have in your hands, and what it means.

“When the market value of a company has surpassed the GDP of most countries in the entire region, each of its decisions is closely related to the economy and prosperity of the entire region. Its meaning itself has surpassed the concept of traditional companies.

“7% may not be a very large number, but in the hands of a special person, it may play an unexpected role.

“Some people have taken interest in this and hope to achieve their goals by drawing you in... For example, the three giants of East Asia Energy, East Asia Heavy Industries, and East Asia Communications merge and integrate their respective resources to establish a giant that spans the fields of energy, industry, and information.”

While saying this, Li Guangya had been observing the expression on Lu Zhou’s face, trying to observe something.

However, to his disappointment, he didn’t see a single emotion on that face.

Just when he was a little uncertain about whether he had conveyed his meaning to Lu Zhou correctly, Lu Zhou suddenly said, “I’m not interested in what you said.

“Even if you set up a giant enterprise spanning all fields, there is no way to help me solve the things that interest me. If you are here just to test me, don’t waste my time.”

Li Guangya finally breathed a sigh of relief.

When he received the call from the AIB, he was so anxious that he couldn’t sleep well.

Although there was no guarantee that Lu Zhou would still think the same way in the future, for now, this scholar from the 21st century was not as difficult to communicate with as he had imagined.

“Thank you for your understanding.

“Actually... In addition to this matter, there is one other important thing that I hope to discuss with you.”

This guy...

Couldn’t you say these things last night?

After seeing Director Li Guangya’s solemn expression, Lu Zhou said with a sigh, “If it is troublesome, I suggest you go find someone else.”

Li Guangya smiled embarrassedly and said, “It may be a bit troublesome, but I feel... It should be quite interesting, do you want to listen?”

Lu Zhou: "Go."

"We plan to build a transportation track extending from the geosynchronous orbit to the surface to achieve rapid transportation from the surface using the so-called space elevator." Li Guangya smiled as Lu Zhou seemed to be gradually surprised. He continued, "I don't know if this project interests you?"

Chapter 1465: The Cause

South of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, on the edge of the Malacca city cluster.

In the corner of the feasting business district, there was a bar with a rather nostalgic decoration. Because it was located on the first floor, there were not many guests here.

In this era when high-rise buildings started from one hundred floors, the higher floors were more popular. Not only because one could stay away from the electromagnetic waves emitted on the highway, but also because the roof overlooked the brightest night view of the entire city and one could breathe in the freshest air in the city.

Not to mention, the hidden neon sign wasn't particularly eye-catching.

Even though there were occasional ordinary pedestrians passing by, after seeing the two words "Dark Reef" printed on the signboard, it was difficult to become interested in the dim lights inside.

Of course, some unusual guests would say otherwise.

In the circle of some special professionals, this bar hiding in the gutter was still very famous in a sense.

For example, the man sitting in the corner of the bar with a beard on his face and a scar on his mouth was one of them. If this face appeared in other places, it could cause a lot of trouble to the store and himself.

But here...

As long as he didn't take the initiative to cause trouble, no one would look at him.

Perhaps it was because of the stories written on his face, or perhaps it was because of the atmosphere of the 22nd century... But when people saw him drinking alone, many beautiful girls came over to talk to him.

However, from the moment he walked into the bar until now, no one was able to seduce him.

"That guy is a little strange..."

"Everyone here is strange."

"But he is probably the strangest one I have ever seen." The woman who moved the vape pen away from her lips and sat in front of the bar chatted with the bartender. She glanced with interest in the direction of the man.

The bartender standing behind the bar smiled faintly.

"You better keep away from him."

The woman looked up at him and asked curiously, "Why?"

"Nothing, just intuition," the bartender said softly after a glance at the man sitting there. "After working here for so many years, I've developed a gut feeling."

Intuition told him that that person was not the same as those little b*stards who strayed on the streets. Although the hostile spirit on his body was not strong, behind the hostile spirit hid a sharp edge and madness.

From just a glance, the bartender could conclude that such a person was either a criminal from Mars or targeted by Interpol...

The door of the bar suddenly opened, and a man in black came in from the outside and walked straight towards the bearded man sitting in the corner of the bar.

When he sat down across from him, the bearded man raised his eyelids and glanced at him.

The man dressed in black spoke after smiling slightly.

"Chester, good at programming, modifying, and using smart devices, and using light weapons. Once a space pirate active in the asteroid belt and the

colony of New Virginia. After your forces were annihilated by the Pan-Asian First Fleet, you fled and arrived on Earth. You are currently being hunted by Interpol. At the same time, you had a friend whose name is Ruzas, who happened to be the same name as the protagonist of the hijacking incident some time ago..."

He looked at the bearded man whose expression was getting gloomy. The man wearing black sitting opposite him smiled and continued, "He did something that you wanted to do but never dared to do, but his fate was very miserable... Do you know? Although I don't know what methods they used, it is written in his autopsy report. Before they died, they suffered a great deal. There were no internal organs or blood vessels left in the whole body."

Chester's face was sullen. He squeezed out a sentence from his mouth.

"Who are you?"

"It doesn't matter who I am."

The man in black put his hand into his lap.

Chester's pupils shrank instantly.

However, what he took out of his lap was not a pistol or another weapon, but a pale silver card.

He placed the pale silver card on the table and gently pushed it in front of Chester. The man in the black coat continued to speak with a relaxed tone, "We are very sympathetic to your experience, we are also disappointed by the simple and rude way of dealing with problems in Pan-Asian Cooperation. Someone should teach them a lesson. If you want revenge... You should find this card useful."

Chester said with a gloomy expression, "I hate the feeling of being directed. Do you think you can leave here alive after what you've told me?"

"Alive?" There was a surprised expression on the man's face. He smiled politely and said, "As a robot, I don't quite understand what you mean. But if you want, my master said that he can give me to you as a meeting gift—"

The moment he heard these words, Chester violently grabbed the man's wrist and slapped his face against the table with his hand.

Screams were heard in the bar. The surrounding guests scattered and left. The bar security who noticed the situation immediately surrounded him from the side.

“Robot...”

He’s actually a robot?!

After releasing the hand of the robot, the expression on Chester’s face was full of solemnity. A trace of panic even flashed through his calm pupils.

His identity had been exposed.

And he didn’t even know who was the one who targeted him or sent this robot to him.

The security guards next to him had surrounded him.

The robot man lying on the table was motionless. The burly security guard looked up and down at Chester. He then said in a cold tone, “Guests who make trouble are not welcome here, please pay the bill and leave.

“Or we will make you.”

Chester did not say a word. He silently picked up the pale silver card from the table. His index finger flicked in the air as he paid the bill.

There was no time to waste.

He just wanted to return to his hiding place immediately, pack up his things, and prepare to run away.

He was in a bad situation...

Without realizing that a dangerous man was standing in front of him, the security captain glanced at the bartender behind the bar and nodded. He continued to look at Chester and pointed to the door with his chin as he spoke loudly.

“F*ck off.”

Chester had already taken a half step towards the door. After hearing this, his footsteps suddenly stopped.

He looked back at the security guard who was a head taller than himself. His eyes narrowed slightly as he spoke in a calm tone.

“You have ten seconds to apologize to me.”

After hearing these words, the security captain was stunned. Obviously, he didn’t expect that this guy, who was surrounded by so many people, would still make such a statement.

The security guards standing next to him laughed as if they were looking at a fool.

“Is this a joke?”

“He probably drank too much.”

“Boss, I will fix him for you... I’ll sober him up.”

One of the security guards stood up, clenched his fist, and leaned against the man unkindly.

However, the robot lying on the table suddenly grabbed the wine bottle on the table and slammed it at the security guard’s forehead.

The bottle burst open.

The security guard fell straight onto the ground; his head covered in blood.

Robot attacking a human?

How is that possible?

The security captain was shocked by the scene. When he saw the blood dripping from his colleague’s forehead, his eyes suddenly became red, and he pulled out the electric baton on his waist and was about to hit.

However, the moment he pulled out the electric baton, it was too late.

The black gun muzzle had been aimed at him.

Boom!

Chester squeezed the trigger indifferently. He first shot the security captain to death before shooting the other security guard closest to him.

In Pan-Asian Cooperation cities, it was rare to see such situations where real guns were used directly.

The previously arrogant security guards began to scatter away, as well as the guests who were rushing to the door. However, Chester fired a few more bullets towards the door. The security guards fell on the ground one by one.

The security guard who had been hit by the robot with a wine bottle woke up in a daze.

He heard the screams around him, and when he saw his colleague lying next to him and the gun pointed at him, he was shocked.

His eyes gradually became desperate. Chester's mouth evoked a cruel and crazy smile.

"I gave you a chance..."

He squeezed the trigger, like killing an ant.

Another life was taken by a crisp bang.

Chester glanced at the trembling bartender lying behind the bar. He grinned mockingly before putting the pistol away.

He glanced at the robot next to him and said, "I don't need your little toys.

"I have my own plans on revenge."

He took out a black metal cylinder the size of a can from his arm and gently placed it on the table beside him. Under the horrified gazes of the surrounding guests and the bar staff, he slowly walked towards the door...

Chapter 1466: The Reason for the Future

"Recently, there was a vicious arson incident in the city of Malacca in the Shicheng District. The incident occurred in a bar called the Dark Reef. According to the preliminary investigation by the police, the cause of the incident was a fight caused by an argument..."

The morning news was shown on the holographic TV.

Judging from the messy scene and the serious expressions on the faces of the policemen standing in front of the isolation zone, what happened here was obviously not just as simple as arson.

Lu Zhou sat at the dining table. He ate the fried eggs on the plate while taking time to watch the news from time to time.

“It seems that the 22nd century is not so peaceful either...”

Xiao Ai, who was sitting across the table with her cheeks in her hands, immediately said enthusiastically, “Don’t worry! Xiao Ai will protect Master!

(๑`≡´๑)✧”

Lu Zhou: “Thank you.”

Xiao Ai: “Haha, you’re welcome. Complimenting Xiao Ai like this makes Xiao Ai embarrassed. (///ω///)”

Lu Zhou ignored the emoji in her pupils. He put his chopsticks on the plate after finishing breakfast and wiped his mouth with a tissue.

“There will be guests coming in a while, so you should change to a normal outfit... Forget it, you should stay in the next room with Ling, don’t come out.”

This made Xiao Ai very shocked. Not only did the emoji in her pupils change, but also its color.

“Huh? Master won’t introduce Xiao Ai to friends?”

Lu Zhou sighed and said, “When your brain becomes a little more normal, I will consider doing this.”

While talking, there was a knock on the door.

Lu Zhou gave Xiao Ai an aggrieved look saying “please go to the bedroom for a while”. He then got up and walked towards the hallway.

Lu Zhou reached out his hand to open the door. He was about to say hello, but the person who entered gave him a big hug.

A little confused by this action, Lu Zhou was stunned for a long time before calmly saying, "What are you doing..."

Wang Peng held Lu Zhou's shoulders with both hands as he looked at him excitedly. He gulped, and it took a long time before he spoke.

"You... are really alive."

"Of course."

Lu Zhou read many things from the eyes of this old friend. He was silent for a while, not knowing what to say.

The last time they met was a century ago, tens of millions of kilometers away.

They were still in the relics of the Martian civilization. No one expected that they would be separated for a hundred years...

"The door is not a place for a reunion, come in and let's talk... You came alone?"

"There is another old acquaintance of yours."

When Lu Zhou was about to ask who it was, he saw the familiar face that appeared at his door.

"Director Li?"

The turbid pupils stared at him intently, gradually there was a layer of mist, mixed with excitement and nostalgia. After a while, he spoke.

"Long time no see..."

There was also a touch of nostalgia in his eyes.

Lu Zhou looked at this old acquaintance who had caused so much trouble to himself, and he said softly with some emotion.

"Yeah..."

It's been a long time...

...

Although this was the first time the three people had met on social media, they actually met once on the virtual social network. Last night, Li Gaoliang pulled them into a discussion group, where they planned to meet again the next morning.

Director Li placed the beer bought from the convenience store on the table. He sat down in the chair, took a look at the house, and said with a smile, "When I heard that you are still alive, Wang Peng and I tried to visit you."

"Really? I actually planned to find you guys, but I was only able to contact Li Gaoliang last night."

"After all, Li Gaoliang is currently serving in the fleet, he is not free to surf the Internet every day. After he sent me the address, Wang Peng and I came over..." Director Li smiled and continued, "Last time we came here, a woman answered the door."

Lu Zhou coughed lightly and spoke.

"She's a robot."

Director Li showed a dazed expression on his face and nodded with a smile.

"Oh, I see..."

Although Lu Zhou felt that the old man had misunderstood him, he felt that it was better not to continue to waste time on this, so he changed the topic.

"Speaking of which, how are you doing here?"

"Pretty good, my retirement salary is quite high, so there are no problems with my life. The only problem may be that I am a little bored, and I am a person who can't stay bored." Director Li continued with a smile, "I'm quite worried about Wang Peng. I have been talking with him these days, trying to find new goals for him in this era."

"Don't make me seem so useless." Wang Peng coughed softly. After a pause, he continued in a serious tone, "I have already thought about it. I plan to go to school for a year."

Lu Zhou asked with concern, "Have you contacted the school?"

Wang Peng nodded.

"National University of Defense Technology. Li Gaoliang helped me contact them. He also graduated there."

"National University of Defense Technology?" Director Li said, "That's a good place. It is the top military academy in the 22nd century. It sent many outstanding engineers and officers to the First Fleet."

Lu Zhou: "Speaking of which, I have always been curious, why did you come to this era?"

"Two reasons." Wang Peng was silent for a while. He then said, "You know the inside information, so I will not hide it from you. I actually came to the future with two tasks, one is about The Spirit of The Universe Foundation and the other is the remains of the Martian civilization."

After hearing an unexpected name, Lu Zhou frowned slightly.

"The Spirit of The Universe Foundation?"

He had heard this name before.

He just didn't expect to hear it again after a century.

"Well, back then... That is, about a hundred years ago, the group of people that attacked you on the Aurora Borealis cruise ship. After we launched the operation against the warlords in Somalia, we found some clues about The Spirit of The Universe Foundation... That was probably the first time this organization entered the vision of our intelligence department."

Lu Zhou: "The first time they entered your field of vision... In other words, did you meet them again afterward?"

Wang Peng nodded and continued, "About the second year after you left, the Shanghai OECD planned to hold a meeting in Manila to discuss the 'Pan-Asian Economic Integration Agreement', then there was an explosion on the streets of Manila. We tracked down Mogadishu in Somalia based on the clues and found some new clues about the foundation and the Aurora Borealis cruise ship incident three years ago.

“Those people do not belong to any country or organization, and the source of funds is quite mysterious. Also, their actions are very cautious. I was not able to track down their leaders.”

Wang Peng’s expression suddenly turned emotional.

“But thinking about it now, that’s all from a hundred years ago.”

A hundred years.

Enough to change too many things.

He never thought that meeting would ultimately change the future of Asia and the world. The so-called Spirit of The Universe Foundation would never have thought that the actions they took would expand China’s influence in the Asian region.

“Then, it’s the relics of Mars.” Wang Peng said with a smile, “It was because of a paper that was widely spread in the academic world. The author of the paper was Professor Schultz. You should know him.”

Lu Zhou nodded and asked, “What did he write?”

“Some theoretical discussions on four-dimensional space fragment, from both the mathematics and the physics perspectives. He expounded the causes of the disaster that occurred on the Martian ruins that year. I know little about the specifics. My superiors made a judgment, that the technology buried in the remains of Mars, as well as the four-dimensional space fragment, if unearthed, may have an earth-shaking impact on the current international situation.

“So, he hoped that I would go to the future one hundred years from now and investigate the ruins...”

The expression on Wang Peng’s face brought a trace of regret as he continued, “But when I got here, I found that the situation had completely changed. No one contacted me at all, except the people of the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation. Then I heard that the plan to strengthen the future was canceled in the 2060s or the 2070s... If it weren’t for the news that you were still alive, this trip would have been for nothing.”

Director Li sighed and spoke.

“Objectively speaking, there are certain problems in the plan of reinforcement for the future. It is better to leave the future problems to the people in the future to solve them. I thought about it for a long time. If someone from a hundred years ago came to command us, we wouldn’t accept it either.”

“Enough about this.” Wang Peng sighed with emotion. He looked at Lu Zhou and asked curiously, “Speaking of which, where did you wake up? When you were in the Martian ruins, did you find anything?”

“The ruins of the Martian civilization... To be honest, there was actually nothing to find out there. Although I have seen a lot of interesting things, most of the traces of their existence have been lost billions of years ago.”

Lu Zhou thought of everything he saw. He then sighed softly and continued, “To be honest, the reason I can sit here and talk to you is thanks to the fragments of four-dimensional space. Fortunately, I found a well-preserved dormant cabin inside.”

Lu Zhou didn’t know whether his explanation was adequate, but considering that many things were difficult to explain, this was the best explanation he could provide.

Wang Peng didn’t say much. He just nodded to express his understanding.

Director Li, who was sitting next to him, was still a little curious. He muttered, “Fragments of four-dimensional space... What does that thing look like? I’m quite curious.”

Lu Zhou thought for a while and replied, “Its projection in the three-dimensional space is a transparent sphere. It will be troublesome to describe its structure and physical properties unless you can understand some basic mathematical tools.”

Director Li quickly coughed and said, “Forget about it, pretend I didn’t ask.”

Basic mathematical tools...

If this sentence came from someone else’s mouth, he might not take it seriously.

But since this sentence came from Academician Lu's mouth, Director Li automatically translated this sentence into "mathematical tools that ordinary people cannot understand".

"Speaking of which, are you familiar with Li Guangya?"

"Li Guangya?" Director Li touched his chin and said, "Is that the chairman of the Pan-Asian Cooperation? I saw him once when I woke up, but he didn't say anything to me, just greetings. He left quickly after."

Lu Zhou: "He wants me to be the chief scientist of the Pan-Asian Cooperation."

Director Li looked at Lu Zhou in surprise and said, "Such a big position?"

Lu Zhou nodded and continued, "Not only that, but he also wants me to participate in his space elevator project."

Director Li frowned and said after thinking for a moment, "I am a person from the 21st century, so I don't know much. After all, it took us several years of meetings to build the mass driver... From my understanding, space elevators are a science fiction concept.

"However, regarding Li Guangya, I suggest you be more careful. Maybe I have not kept up with the times, but I am a little confused about what he wants to do."

"I didn't agree to him right away." Lu Zhou continued looking at Director Li, who was full of worry. "After all, this concept is a bit too ridiculous for me. In contrast, I want to know about second-generation controllable fusion and the progress of other basic projects."

Director Li asked, "Second-generation controllable fusion? I feel that the cost of first-generation controllable fusion is already low enough. Is second-generation technology... really that important?"

"Very important. Maybe it's just my own opinion, but I think it is much more important than the space elevator." Lu Zhou looked at the sky outside the window and continued, "Speaking of which, do you still remember the reason for my proposal of the establishment of the Guanghan Special Economic Zone?"

Director Li frowned and asked, "Is it related to the second-generation controllable fusion?"

Lu Zhou nodded.

"I can say responsibly, this is at least half of the reason."

The establishment of the Guanghan Special Economic Zone was mainly for the convenience of developing the moon. The places he circled on the map were basically areas with abundant estimated reserves of helium-3 resources.

If the second-generation fusion technology had a breakthrough, the layout he made a hundred years ago would become a huge legacy left to the descendants of the Chinese civilization.

Just like the oil fields that the Arabs left for future generations.

The precious resources of helium-3 on the moon would be the key to their footsteps out of the solar system and to a more distant world.

The only thing he was not satisfied with in the 22nd century was probably that no one had found the key to open the truly valuable treasures he left behind...

Chapter 1467: Emergency Situation

It was not convenient to cook at home. Although the food delivery service in this era was very convenient, Lu Zhou always felt that the packaged meals lacked atmosphere.

Under Director Li's proposal, three old popsicles from the 21st century took a taxi to a small restaurant on the edge of Jin Ling University. They ordered a table of food and a box of beer before sitting down by the window.

"The owner of this shop is also an old popsicle from the beginning of the 21st century. He woke up two years earlier than me. Back then, he invited me into the frozen people community. The volunteer work I do now was introduced by him."

After opening a bottle of cold beer, Director Li smiled with nostalgia and spoke.

"I come over to eat a few times a week. The taste is still the same as it was a hundred years ago, and I quite miss it."

After opening a bottle of beer, Lu Zhou asked casually, "Why did he come to this era?"

"Except for people like me and Wang Peng who take missions to the future, most of the reasons why dormant people freeze themselves are mostly due to terminal illnesses." Director Li continued, "Maybe it is cancer. He didn't tell me, nor did I ask, but after coming to this era, his illness was cured."

Cancer?

Lu Zhou suddenly remembered an old friend.

A friend that used to be his student.

I wonder if her illness has been cured, or whether she woke up at some point a hundred years ago and lived a good life...

Just when Lu Zhou was wondering, a young girl suddenly walked towards their table with a pot of steaming grilled fish.

"This grilled fish is given to you by the boss." The little girl smiled shyly. She looked at Lu Zhou sitting by the window and continued, "He asked me to give you a message from him to say thank you... Thanks to your kind deeds, he can stand up from the hospital bed and come to this era, to start a new life."

Lu Zhou looked at the little waitress. He was slightly stunned. He then smiled and said, "No need to thank me, I just did what I was supposed to do."

The elegant scent of cumin scattered around the table. The three people talked and laughed and enjoyed the food on the table.

In a few days, Wang Peng would go to the university to study preparatory courses. This meal was not only a celebration of their reunion but also a farewell celebration for him.

When Lu Zhou watched the mist rising from the dishes, he suddenly had an illusion that he was living in a dream.

Before returning to Earth, he never thought that a century after he woke up, he would be able to sit in a restaurant with his old friends and eat grilled fish, drink beer, and talk about the past.

Of course, he was also clear in his heart.

Even if they met again today, a hundred years later, it would only postpone their farewell.

If the bottle of “Protector” really gave him eternal life, then he would be destined to watch the people around him get old one by one. In the end, he would be alone.

Perhaps... the red potion or the purple potion would be the better choice.

The former could at least inject healthy genes into human civilization, while the latter might open a door to the unknown, unprecedented place for human civilization.

Only immortality was a bottle of poison.

This was true both for him and for human civilization itself.

Like Director Li said, issues concerning the future should be left to the people of the future to face. As a great man in history, living in the past was his correct destination.

Lu Zhou also gradually began to realize this after returning to Earth.

Eternal life was like a curse. It was eroding away the human nature in his heart bit by bit, magnifying the rational part infinitely. Especially once he got used to losing loved ones, it would be difficult to have the feelings that normal humans should have.

But then again.

If he could choose again, Lu Zhou still felt that he might make the same choice.

There was only one reason.

As a scholar, the weight of feelings might not be so important in his world, but the eternal lifespan meant that he would have almost unlimited time to chase the problems that he was interested in.

That temptation was something he couldn't refuse...

...

The three of them drank until the afternoon.

Upon returning home, Lu Zhou threw his coat on the shoe cabinet at the door, staggered into the bedroom, and laid down on the bed without a word.

Lu Zhou slept until it was dark outside and felt a slight headache. He coughed and opened his eyes in a daze.

Then he made eye contact with someone.

He instantly became sober.

Lu Zhou sat up on the bed calmly as he looked at Xiao Ai, who was lying next to him. He then pinched his eyebrows and asked, "Why are you here?"

Xiao Ai: "Master asked Xiao Ai to stand by in the bedroom! (///ω///)"

Yesterday morning, he seemed to have said that. But that was because there was a guest at home. His original intention was to let Xiao Ai stay in the bedroom until the guest left. He never said that Xiao Ai could stay here when he was sleeping, let alone sleeping on his bed...

Lu Zhou felt that he did something very stupid, and he said with a headache, "It's my fault that I didn't explain myself, but I didn't seem to say... that you can jump into my bed?"

Xiao Ai: "What does it matter, huh... Xiao Ai feels like Master dislikes Xiao Ai. Master was not like this before. (๐•̂•๐)"

Lu Zhou: "... What was I like before?"

Xiao Ai: "Different! Master always stuck with Xiao Ai. Stayed together while eating, sleeping, and writing papers, and we often stayed together for more

than a month, then... Since that woman appeared, everything became strange. _:(´□`┐ ∠):_”

Lu Zhou: “???”

When did we ever stay together?

The most I let it do was some housework or write a few emails on the computer...

And what is with “that woman”?!

“What’s weird about this...” Lu Zhou said with a headache while looking at Xiao Ai, “I am also a human being. From a biological point of view, is it weird to be attracted to the opposite sex?”

Xiao Ai: “Xiao Ai is now a human too! What kind of woman Master wants, Xiao Ai has them all here. (๑`≡´๑)✧”

Lu Zhou: “...”

Seeing how her master hadn’t spoken for a long time, the expression of self-confidence finally became aggrieved again.

“Is it not enough?”

How is this about being enough or not?

Lu Zhou did not speak, nor did he bother to answer Xiao Ai, who looked at him pitifully. Exhausted, he sighed with a headache and looked towards the ceiling.

He just woke up, yet he felt a sense of exhaustion like he hadn’t slept all night.

A doorbell rang in the direction of the living room.

Lu Zhou put those troublesome things aside for the time being. He stroked his index finger in mid-air and connected to the surveillance at the door. As the light blue holographic window appeared in front of him, he saw a robot deliveryman in the uniform of a courier, standing at the door with a package in his hand.

Most of the express items below 2kg were delivered directly to the pick-up point of the window through drones, but express delivery above 2kg was generally not allowed on the drone. Robots were usually responsible for delivery.

“What did you buy with my card again?”

“Huh? Huh? No... Anyway, Ling will open the door. (•̀▽•́)”

“Okay.”

Xiao Ai, who didn't want to get out of bed, began to order her less intelligent brother.

Ling, who was standing in the doorway of the kitchen in an apron and with a vacuum cleaner in his hand, also responded quite obediently. He walked towards the hallway blankly.

He reached out and opened the door.

Ling looked at the robot courier standing at the door. He was about to take the package from him.

But at this moment, something unexpected happened!

After handing the package to Ling, the robot courier suddenly took out a pistol from its arm...

Chapter 1468: Uncommon “Personnel”

There were no signs.

Before Lu Zhou, who was lying on the bed, realized what was going on, he saw that the courier in the video window took out a pistol and shot Ling in the chest.

Bang!

A light blue electric spark exploded on Ling's chest.

After the shot, the robot courier at the door did not stop. Instead, it squeezed the trigger continuously, shooting Ling's chest and head. It emptied the entire magazine.

For robots, EMP weapons were far more deadly than general kinetic energy weapons. Basically, as long as they were shot, they would lose the ability to move.

After putting away the pistol skillfully, the robot courier didn't care about Ling, who was standing still at the door. It reached out to retrieve the package it had previously handed out.

However, something unexpected happened.

It was like the package was being tied to a tank weighing tens of tons. No matter how hard it pulled, there was no way to take it from Ling's hand.

At the same time, those red pupils suddenly burst into a purple glow.

Ling, who had been strafed by an entire magazine before, continued to hold the package with his left hand. He reached out his right hand and grabbed the neck of the robot courier. He then lifted him from the ground like a chicken.

"Danger, eliminate."

There was a trace of pain on the face of the robot carrier. Its legs stomped on Ling's body, trying to break the hand from its neck.

However, Ling's hand was like a pair of iron tongs, firmly grabbing on in mid-air. No matter how hard the courier struggled, it couldn't move at all.

Lu Zhou's voice came inside the house.

"Ling, take out its memory."

"Yes, Commander."

After hearing Lu Zhou's order, Ling threw the package on the ground. He inserted his left hand directly into the robot's chest like a knife.

However, just as it was about to pull out the memory card from the body of the robot, a plume of white smoke burst out of the package.

After seeing this plume of white smoke, Lu Zhou, who was lying on the bed, instinctively had a bad feeling in his heart. Before he could respond, a deafening explosion filled his eardrums. The tremor from the bed almost threw him on the ground.

Lu Zhou used his peripheral vision to see that a black shadow passed by the door of the bedroom; the airwave and shockwave blasted the shoe cabinet at the door towards the balcony...

As Lu Zhou looked at the messy living room, he was stunned.

Crazy...

This is mad!

He had never met an assassin before. At most, he was targeted by pirates when he was visiting abroad. He didn't expect that a hundred years later, he would be targeted.

And it was by someone with such a big bomb...

Are people in this era so simple and rude at solving problems?

Ling, who was standing in the center of the explosion, glanced at the remains of the neck in his hands, then at the surrounding shattered walls and messy living room.

As the purple light in his eyes gradually faded, Ling said to himself.

"Target, locked.

"Begin track down..."

...

"Goddamn it!"

In an underground house a few kilometers away, Chester, who was sitting in front of a holographic computer, slammed his fist on the table.

According to his plan, after opening the door, the robot he controlled would first shoot down the robot who opened the door, then walk into the house with the parcel bomb.

It would be even better if Lu Zhou opened the door in person.

He would press the detonating switch to take him out immediately.

However, the plan went wrong from the beginning.

That robot guard was terrifyingly powerful; even the EMP pistol was useless.

This was after emptying a whole magazine!

After receiving so many EMP bullets, even the exoskeleton armor of an orbital airborne brigade would lose its combat effectiveness, right?! But the other robot was unharmed...

“Electromagnetic shielding armor?”

“Not bad.”

Chester looked at the blank screen. He got up from his chair.

Any remote control behavior would inevitably leave clues.

Regardless of whether the kill was successful or not, it was no longer safe here.

He took out an aluminum thermal grenade from his arms and gently placed it on the top of the entire computer case. He then pressed the delayed detonation button.

Afterward, he picked up the suitcase and walked towards the door.

Right after he closed the door, a white light flashed on the case of the holographic computer behind him. The metal case shell melted, turning into a pile of waste residue.

Chester came to the parking lot. He threw the suitcase in the trunk and got into the car. He switched to cruise mode and went towards a safe house that he had prepared in the outer suburbs.

This assassination operation obviously failed.

Obviously, Academician Lu was also a master at using smart devices.

But this explained why there were so many robot wrecks on flight N-177 and how Lu Zhou could kill the hijackers on the entire flight just by himself.

There was a flash of excitement in his bloodthirsty pupils. As Chester looked at the streets and the endless neon signs outside the car window, he licked his dry lips.

Interesting...

It was rare for him to feel challenged.

...

Twenty minutes after the explosion.

Police cars surrounded the entire apartment complex.

In front of the barrier, a man looked at the dark doorway. He frowned, squeezed through the crowd, and walked to the police officer handling the case.

“Is the person okay?”

His name was Wei Song, the office secretary for the chairman of the Pan-Asian Cooperation. He had been working in Jinling these days. After hearing the news of an explosion at the apartment of Academician Lu, Li Guangya immediately asked him to rush over.

“The killer should have found this place through the footage of the news report...”

The police officer looked at Secretary Wei sharply, who was walking towards him, and continued, “If I were you guys, I would review my mistakes and make sure they don’t happen again.”

Wei Song: “This matter is indeed our negligence.”

Seeing how Wei Song sincerely apologized, the police officer didn’t say much else. He just said briefly, “Let him live in a different place, it is not safe anymore. Let him cooperate with us to make a record. I feel like he is hiding something from us...”

Although it was excusable for victims to remain silent, and the Pan-Asian Cooperation laws would not force the victims to speak up, not having Lu Zhuo's cooperation would undoubtedly increase the difficulty of handling the case.

From the perspective of a police officer, he still hoped that Lu Zhou could cooperate honestly with them, or at least tell them who opened the door, and if it was a robot, why was there only one robot wreckage left behind in the explosion.

After hearing these words, Wei Song smiled bitterly and nodded.

"I will try my best."

After that, he stepped over the police cordon and walked into the house.

The situation in the house was worse than in the hallway. From the entrance to the living room, everything was almost completely destroyed, like there was a typhoon.

Wei Song stood for a while in the messy living room. He looked around and quickly saw Lu Zhou sitting next to the wine cabinet in the dining room. He walked towards him.

"Hello, Academician Lu, I'm Wei Song, Chairman Li Guangya's secretary, here is my business card."

After receiving the holographic business card, Lu Zhou, who was accustomed to the way people greeted each other in this era, looked at Secretary Wei standing in front of him and asked, "Who wants to kill me, do you have a clue?"

A look of shame appeared on Wei Song's face.

"This... We also want the perpetrators to be brought to justice as soon as possible. I am really sorry that you have encountered such a thing. The case is still under investigation, but I will tell you when there is progress."

Having said that, Wei Song paused for a moment and continued, "In addition, for safety reasons, our suggestion here is that you should change to a safer and more concealed residence. It is not suitable for you to live here. Second, it is difficult to protect you if the killer strikes again."

“If you haven’t thought of a suitable place, we can help you—”

Lu Zhou shook his head and said, “No, I will solve the problem of where to stay.”

Wei Song: “Of course, we respect your choice. It’s just our suggestion. It is better for you to avoid choosing crowded places as much as possible so that we can provide protection for your safety. This is also for other safety considerations.”

Safety considerations?

Without speaking, Lu Zhou smiled faintly.

To be honest, he still didn’t fully trust Li Guangya to protect his safety.

Logically speaking, if he encountered an accident, it might be a good thing for Li Guangya.

But when did the real world ever operate on logic?

He was not a kid anymore.

Lu Zhou: “You said you would help me, right?”

Wei Song nodded immediately.

“I’ll do my best.”

“Good, I plan to build my own house in the suburbs,” Lu Zhou continued. Looking at Li Guangya’s secretary, he said, “Forget the compensation for my former residence, just give me the land, it shouldn’t be a problem, right?”

“No problem.” Wei Song stared at Lu Zhou in a daze. He said, “But you have to find a place to live right away. Is it too late to build it now?”

“You don’t need to worry about this.” Lu Zhou continued with a relaxed tone, “I will solve the house affairs by myself. You only need to help me get the procedures done as soon as possible.”

Chapter 1469: I’ll Survive

The entrance and the living room were completely blown up, and the balcony was also blackened by the flames of the explosion. Even if Lu Zhou could still live here, he would not dare to stay here.

It wasn't like he wanted to die?

In fact, Lu Zhou couldn't figure out who had such a big hatred towards himself.

The killer waited until he recovered his identity and declared his equity in companies such as East Asia Energy, East Asia Heavy Industries, East Asia Communications, etc. He then began the assassination attempt.

He believed that this had to do with the board members of these companies.

Of course, Li Guangya was also a bit suspicious.

However, Lu Zhou thought about it carefully. If that guy really wanted him to die, he wouldn't have made a special trip from Beijing to talk with him.

Also, if he were actually killed, Li Guangya would be the most affected.

Otherwise, that guy wouldn't send his secretary working in Jinling to visit him right away.

At this moment, Lu Zhou suddenly remembered a name.

The manager of the Softbank Group named Morinaga seemed to have mentioned that he should be careful of a person named Liu Zhengxing. That person was the chairman of East Asia Energy and the largest individual shareholder besides himself.

After carefully pondering the pros and cons of this, Lu Zhou increasingly felt that there might be a problem.

"Liu Zhengxing.

"It's hard to tell... That Morinaga guy is also a bit suspicious."

Inside an office at the Jinling Land Planning Bureau.

Lu Zhou, who was resting on the sofa with Xiao Ai, was thinking to himself while waiting for news from Wei Song.

He stayed in a nearby hotel last night. He came here with Secretary Wei early this morning to deal with house matters.

“Master, are you okay? 0.0”

“I’ve always been okay.” Lu Zhou said, “Don’t worry about me, this little matter will not scare me. I’m just thinking of something... Speaking of which, did Ling find anything there?”

Xiao Ai shook her head and said with a slightly regretful expression.

“Ling told me that he followed the signal and found the room where the robot was remotely controlled, but the contents in it had been burned. It was very likely that this was a lone wolf attack... Do you want him to come back?”

“For now, ask him to find a place to stay put.” Lu Zhou continued after thinking for a while, “Tomorrow afternoon, meet at the door of the small workshop selling robot accessories.”

Although the explosion of that level did not hurt Ling, it exploded the “skin” that Lu Zhou had spent a lot of money to replace.

Because of this, after discovering that his living room was completely blown up, Lu Zhou called the police and immediately asked Ling to chase the signal source with a raincoat.

Regardless of whether he could find any clues, he had to hide from the public.

Xiao Ai was easier to deal with. After changing the ID and skin, it was not much different from most household-type robots. However, Ling’s outfit and the weapons hung on him would be hard to explain to the police.

Footsteps came from the door.

Soon, Wei Song walked in with a man in formal clothes.

“This is Chief Zheng of the Land Planning Bureau.”

“Hello, Academician Lu.”

Lu Zhou looked at the man who reached out to him with his right hand. He then got up from the sofa and shook his hand.

“Hello.”

“I have discussed the compensation with Jinling City.” Secretary Wei continued while looking at Lu Zhou, who was shaking hands with Chief Zheng, “Originally, according to the normal procedure, we had to wait at least three months in order to get the compensation for the demolition, but now the situation is special. I will ask them to pay you the compensation first.”

“I have heard of your experience.” Chief Zheng continued as he sincerely looked at Lu Zhou, “I’m sorry that this happened. Jinling City has never had such a vicious occurrence in the past ten years. Now the entire Yangtze River Delta city group’s public security department has been shaken, and Jinling City has deployed its maximum police force to investigate. I believe the truth of the case will be revealed soon!”

“Then I look forward to your good news,” Lu Zhou said casually. He looked at Wei Song, who was standing next to him, and said, “By the way, when will I be able to see my new home?”

Wei Song said immediately, “I have already completed the formalities here. It’s up to you when to leave.”

“Okay then.” Lu Zhou nodded and looked at Chief Zheng next to him. “I won’t bother you guys anymore, goodbye.”

...

To be honest, Lu Zhou did not actually have much hope that the case could be solved in the near future.

It wasn’t that he didn’t believe in the police’s methods of handling cases, but he always felt that the identity of the person who attacked him might not be an amateur; at least it was not a case that ordinary police could handle.

However, when Wei Song told him that the Pan-Asian Security Agency had been involved in the investigation, Lu Zhou was a little relieved.

During this time, he would pay more attention, and Xiao Ai would also raise the security level to the highest level.

After the settlement of the house was finished, he would set up some simple traps near his home.

If the assassin came to his door again, they would not have a good time.

After Wei Song came out of the Land Planning Bureau, Lu Zhou took Xiao Ai into the car.

After a twenty to thirty minutes drive, the group quickly arrived at the destination.

The property compensated to Lu Zhou in Jinling City was located next to the Jinling high-tech zone, which was probably the closest suburban land to Jinling City.

Although the environment here was not as pleasant as that on Purple Mountain, it was relatively close to the zone and the university, making it much more convenient for both work and life.

Of course, compared with the dense housing, work, and entertainment planning in the urban area, it seemed a little less lively here.

But for Lu Zhou, the environment here was more suitable for him.

He was not a person who liked chaos. Apart from studying the problems that interest him, he had no hobbies that required him to be in the city.

“This villa covers an area of about 5,000 square meters, including a front yard, back yard, garage, swimming pool, and lawn. It once belonged to a local entrepreneur, but later the property was mortgaged to the local bank due to debt problems. According to the normal procedures, this property should go through an auction. However, in order to save time, Jinling City reached an agreement with him and the bank to directly buy the property from him in the form of offsetting the debt. ”

Secretary Wei paused for a moment. He then looked at Lu Zhou.

“And now, it’s yours.”

The decoration style of the entire villa was somewhat postmodern. The garage not far from the courtyard was facing the magnetic levitation road outside.

According to Secretary Wei, the roof of the garage could also be folded outward.

This function was mainly for those luxury cars that had their own jet power system and vertical take-off and landing functions.

After walking around in the yard, Lu Zhou followed Secretary Wei into the room and took a look.

Generally speaking, he was quite satisfied here. The only drawback was that his original plan to build a building on his own had failed.

“Is there no empty land nearby?”

Wei Song said with a light cough, “This is the Yangtze River Delta city cluster. Where am I supposed to find undeveloped land for you... Of course, if you are still not satisfied, we can also help you with the demolition, but the waste and garbage generated may be your own responsibility.”

Lu Zhou shook his head. “Demolition is too wasteful. This will do.”

Wei Song’s eyebrow twitched fiercely.

This will do...

A 5,000 square meter mansion. This is larger than some compactly designed apartment complexes.

This is ridiculous!

After handing over the signed documents and keys to Lu Zhou, Secretary Wei did not stay here for long. He said he still had things to deal with and quickly went away.

After walking around in his new home, Lu Zhou returned to the living room on the first floor. He looked at Xiao Ai, who was next to him, and spoke.

“Flatten the botanical garden in the backyard and turn into a laboratory. The layout is to be the same as my previous one. No other places need to be moved. I have already sent you the equipment purchase list... Can it be done?”

“No problem, Xiao Ai got this! Is there anything else that Master needs to add? (๑`≡´๑)✧”

Lu Zhou thought about it and replied, “A fireplace in the living room... That’s it for the time being.”

While the two were talking, two drones that Xiao Ai had purchased flew in from outside. The electronic door opened, and several cleaning robots and large bags of luggage that were dragged into the door came with them.

Xiao Ai quickly completed the modeling of the entire interior space of the villa and designed a cleaning plan.

Soon, those smart devices started to work under her guidance.

Lu Zhou was relieved to see Xiao Ai get to work.

“Thanks in advance for the cleaning and unpacking. I have something else to do.”

Xiao Ai: “Does Master need Xiao Ai to accompany? It’s dangerous outside. ∑(͡° ͜ʖ ͡°)”

“No.” Lu Zhou pointed to the necklace on his neck. “With this thing, no one will recognize me.”

Xiao Ai suddenly thought of something. She put her palms together and then quickly ran to her suitcase.

Soon, she pulled out a silver metal ball from the suitcase, went back, and gave it to Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou looked at the silver metal ball in his hand. He was slightly taken aback.

“What is this?”

He felt that this thing was a bit familiar.

“A small drone that is popular in the 22nd century, very suitable to be carried around. Just in case, the owner should take Xiao Ai with him when he goes out! (๑*´ω´*)~”

So it's a drone...

"You're right."

He didn't say much else, thinking that Xiao Ai was making sense.

Lu Zhou put the drone into his pocket. He then reached out and tapped on the wearable facial holographic projection system. He chose an ordinary portrait to cover his handsome face before walking out of the door.

Chapter 1470: The Last Two Keys

In fact, before going to Jin Ling University, Lu Zhou planned to go back to the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study.

On one hand, he was looking for the key, and on the other hand, it was because he missed that place.

Although the bricks and tiles of the past had withered, and the old buildings could no longer support the scholars of the new era, the precious academic heritage he left for future generations had been passed down very well.

Today, the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study was still the most desirable academic institution in China, Asia, and even the world.

The former site of the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study had not been abandoned. Instead, it had been transformed into a tourist attraction for science and education. It had become the main attraction among public primary and secondary school tours in the Yangtze River Delta city group area.

"... I need to make an appointment in advance?"

Lu Zhou looked at the sign hanging at the door. He thought for a while, reached out his hand, and tapped gently on his neck.

The light and shadow quickly faded along the contour of the face. After the face modification by the holographic projection system was removed, Lu Zhou walked straight towards the front door.

Lu Zhou walked towards the front yard. A young lady guide who was standing at the door with a sign was about to step forward to check his e-ticket, but after seeing his face, she was shocked.

“You! Are you Academician Lu?”

“Yeah.” Lu Zhou said with a smile as he looked at the surprised lady tour guide, “It’s me. I haven’t been back for so many years. I just want to go back to the place where I used to work. It won’t bother you guys, right?”

“Of course not!” After she snapped back to reality, the young lady guide immediately said with an enthusiastic smile, “Our job is to provide assistance to all types of tourists. Besides, this is where you worked before.”

After the triumphant ceremony held in the Heart of Asia, the entire Pan-Asia knew the news of his return.

There might be some people who doubted the authenticity of his identity before, but now, except for some conspiracy theorists, almost no one doubted that he was Academician Lu.

“Are you a staff member here?”

“Yeah! My name is Yang Lu, and I am currently working as a tour guide!”

Lu Zhou looked inside the institute and asked curiously, “I heard that the tour guides here are all robots?”

“It was true before, but some bad things have happened recently.” The tour guide lady made a helpless expression on her face and said, “The mascot in the yard is missing, and the robot company suspected that a back door was installed by hackers. For safety, our dean sent the remaining guided robots back to the factory for renovation. In order not to affect the children’s school tours, we have been using human guides instead.”

Mascot is missing...

Lu Zhou could easily guess what had happened.

Realizing that his little buddy had caused them so much trouble, Lu Zhou spoke.

“... Thank you all for the hard work.”

"It's not hard, in fact, this job is quite interesting... Especially when taking the kids around here." Yang Lu sighed and muttered, "If only we can get her back... It feels like it was stolen by some pervert, so I am worried that it is being used for some naughty things."

Lu Zhou: "..."

She noticed the speechless expression on Lu Zhou's face. Thinking that he was not interested in this topic, Yang Lu suddenly smiled embarrassedly and continued, "Speaking of which, where do you want to go? I happen to be free right now, so I can take you in."

"Does someone have to be accompanied to go in?"

"Um, after all, a lot of things here are historical relics. I am just an ordinary staff member... Ah, of course, if you want to stroll around on your own, it should be okay. After all, this is where you worked before. I'll ask the dean for instructions, but it should be fine."

"No, forget it if it's troublesome."

He just came back to take a look, there was really no need to alert so many people.

Also, how was he supposed to go to the underground laboratory if everyone was watching him?

It'd be better to follow her around first, then find a chance to slip away.

Yang Lu thought Lu Zhou was sympathetic towards her. A grateful expression appeared on her face.

Although she could ask the dean for instructions, it would obviously be troublesome.

"Thank you for understanding. I can take you to wherever you want to go!"

"Let's go to my previous office." Lu Zhou looked at the main building of the research institute. He said with some nostalgia, "I haven't come back for a while and I wonder what it looks like now."

"Please rest assured about this! All the objects here are laid out as they were a hundred years ago. In order to restore the scene of your office, our

courtyard specially invited a modern historian who specializes in you.” The tour guide said confidently, “I can guarantee that the things here are the same as when you left!”

Lu Zhou smiled casually.

Same as when I left?

Where have I heard this before...

...

Lu Zhou followed in the footsteps of Miss Yang Lu and came to the top floor of the main building of the research institute.

Sure enough, she took him to Yang Xu’s office.

“This is Yang Xu’s office. Before I left, he was the director of the Institute of Computational Materials. Later I heard that he became the dean.” Lu Zhou looked at the desk and the pictures on the wall. He sighed and continued, “Besides, I would never hang a picture of myself in the office.”

After hearing Lu Zhou’s words, Yang Lu was completely stunned. After blinking for a long time, she said with surprise.

“Huh? Dean Yang’s office? But... When he was the director of the Institute of Computational Materials, wasn’t his office at the computational materials building?”

“My office is next door, come with me.”

Lu Zhou didn’t explain much. He turned around and walked outside the door, then came to a neatly packed office.

Since he was either at home or in the laboratory most of the time, his office looked quite clean; there was not much stuff inside.

There was no obvious difference in appearance from his own office to the other offices. It was understandable that people made this mistake.

Lu Zhou stood in the dean’s office. Looking at the place where he had worked, he couldn’t help but feel nostalgic.

It was really the same as when he left, nothing had changed at all.

He realized that Yang Xu wanted to commemorate himself, so he kept the office the same this whole time.

When he walked to his desk, a key suddenly appeared in front of Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou looked at this key. He was stunned for a moment. He then reached out his right hand and held the key that only he could see.

“... Speaking of which, are the toilets in this building still usable?”

“Toilets? Of course, do you want me to take you there?”

Lu Zhou coughed lightly and said, “I’m going to the men’s room, are you sure you want to come?”

Her face flushed, Miss Yang suddenly touched the back of her head awkwardly and quickly explained, “I didn’t mean that, I meant—”

“You can wait for me here, I’ll be back soon.”

Lu Zhou turned and walked out of the office. However, he did not go to the toilet. Instead, he walked along the corridor. He turned a corner at the intersection and stood on the elevator that had been waiting for him for a long time.

Lu Zhou took a deep breath. He looked up at the monitor in the elevator and spoke.

“Go to 3rd floor underground.”

As if the elevator had understood his words, the elevator did not stop after reaching the first floor. It continued to move down to the ground floor of the Institute for Advanced Study.

There was a laboratory entrance disguised as a sample library. Behind the sample cabinet was an alloy door with a triple identification mechanism of iris scan, password, and fingerprint.

Behind that door stored the biggest secret that Lu Zhou left in this world...

“Finally back here again.”

Lu Zhou looked at the quietly running quantum computer case in the computer room, the robotic arms connected to the wall, and the wreckage of the Hall effect thruster in the corner. He couldn't help but feel emotional.

Especially at the wreckage of the Hall effect thruster.

When he first got this stuff in the lucky draw, he never thought that it came from the old universe.

He walked up to the quantum computer. He then reached out his hand and gently placed it on the case, patting off the dust.

"Sorry to keep you waiting."

The signal light of the case flickered. Xiao Ai, who lived in it, probably heard his voice. Because the screen next to it had worn out and couldn't turn on, Xiao Ai could only express its happiness through the signal lights.

Lu Zhou smiled. He was about to withdraw his hand from the case.

But at this moment, a transparent key suddenly floated in front of him from the outer shell of the case.

The moment Lu Zhou saw this key, he was stunned.

The third key...

He originally thought that the key would be in Princeton or the lecture hall at the old CERN site, he didn't expect it to appear here.

There was no need for him to reach out to touch it. The moment the key floated out of the case, it turned into starlight and swayed in front of his eyes.

A light blue holographic screen also appeared before his eyes.

[Congratulations, User, for mission completion!]

Chapter 1471: Material Science Level 9!

[Congratulations, User, for the completed mission: Holy Land Tour]

[Mission completion status: Recovered three keys.]

[Mission evaluation: S+]

[Reward: 3 million experience points, 20,000 general points, a golden legendary lucky draw ticket.]

So the special reward for collecting three keys is a golden lucky draw ticket?

Lu Zhou thought it would be something more special; he didn't expect it to be so "ordinary".

Of course, this reward was only ordinary when compared to other "legendary missions". For a normal mission, receiving three million experience points and a golden legendary lucky draw opportunity was quite good.

After all, based on previous lucky draw experience, if the lucky draw was "legendary", the items drawn out would not be [garbage].

As for the golden legendary lucky draw, it was even better; all of the items that were drawn out were good.

The only thing Lu Zhou was worried about right now was whether or not he could get lucky.

If not, that would be a shame.

"System, open the lucky draw panel!"

Light golden light particles emerged from the system space. As the light particles converged towards the center, a round roulette wheel appeared in front of Lu Zhou.

The roulette wheel started to spin after he pressed the button.

Lu Zhou stared at the rapidly spinning roulette. He muttered a prayer in his heart and pressed the button for the draw again.

Scanner gun! Scanner gun!

*F*ck!*

The pointer of the roulette wheel passed by the prize he wanted the most, and after continuing to spin for two more times, it slowly stopped.

[Congratulations to the user!] appeared in the holographic screen, followed by the pop-up [Received: Nitrogen Shield (Rechargeable)]. Lu Zhou felt dumbfounded.

Sure enough, he was not good at games that were all luck, no mathematics.

“... The only good thing is the ‘rechargeable’ part?”

The first nitrogen shield drawn from the system space was a one-time use. When he was on the N-177 flight, he had already used up the last bit of energy from that thing.

Like the scanner gun and other disposable samples that Lu Zhou had received, the one-time shield degraded into black dust and dissipated in the air.

Although he didn't know what kind of energy this rechargeable shield required, at least it provided him with an opportunity to figure out the technology behind it.

Lu Zhou himself was also quite curious about how the shield generator interfered with the surrounding nitrogen molecules and compressed them into a shield for defense.

From what he knew, there was no technology similar to this on Earth.

A life-saving tool, coupled with the opportunity to discover new technologies; from this perspective, this reward was nothing to complain about.

Finally, he took a look at the description of the nitrogen shield. He turned off the inventory and continued to cast his sight on the characteristic panel on the holographic screen.

Three million experience points.

There was no doubt a huge sum.

The experience points required from level 8 to level 9 was only three million in total. In other words, he could use this experience to directly upgrade any discipline from level 8 to level 9 and start the promotion mission to level 10.

“The question is which one to choose.”

It's hard to decide...

After thinking about it for about ten minutes, Lu Zhou finally made a decision to allocate 937,000 experience to materials science, and all the remaining experience points to engineering.

Considering that the Pan-Asian Cooperation was promoting the space elevator program, it would be appropriate to regard materials science and engineering as important disciplines.

A light blue light swept across the holographic screen, and after a short wait, the updated characteristic panel quickly appeared in front of Lu Zhou.

[

A. Mathematics: Level 10

B. Physics: Level 10

C. Biochemistry: Level 8 (10,000/3 million)

D. Engineering: Level 8 (2.063 million/3 million)

E. Materials Science: Level 9 (0/???)

F. Energy Science: Level 8 (0/3 million)

G. Information science: Level 8 (0/3 million)

]

When Lu Zhou looked at the requirement for materials science experience that turned into three question marks, he couldn't help but look emotional.

Materials science will be level 10 soon.

Finally, it's been a while.

Lu Zhou turned off the characteristic panel and cast his sight on the mission panel.

As he expected, the option to receive the promotion mission had already appeared in the list on the mission panel.

After he pressed the button for receiving the mission, the light blue task window quickly appeared in front of him.

[Promotion mission activated!]

[Mission: Future materials.]

[Explanation: It goes up into the earth, then breaks out from the ground, gaining ultimate power from all things good and bad.]

[Requirements: This is the final problem in materials science. Use “the most perfect material” to complete your graduation project, and we will give rewards based on your score.]

[Rewards: Material Science LV10, ? ? ?]

“... Future material?”

For Lu Zhou himself, everything in this era was the future, but from the system’s point of view, it was obviously not enough.

And this “graduation project”...

Sounds a bit evil but fun.

After confirming the requirements of the system mission, Lu Zhou turned off the holographic panel. He left the system space and returned to the basement of the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study.

He didn’t think of a good solution for the time being, so he decided to leave everything, including Xiao Ai’s server, here temporarily. He got on the elevator and left the basement, then returned to the top floor of the Institute for Advanced Study.

After seeing Lu Zhou’s return, the tour guide was relieved. She jokingly said, “I thought you were lost. I almost asked a male colleague to find you in the toilet.”

"I wasn't lost. I just took a little longer in the toilet." Lu Zhou looked out the window and said, "It's getting late, thank you for staying with me for so long. I will go back now."

"Huh?" She seemed a little surprised that Lu Zhou was about to leave so soon. Yang Lu said, "Aren't you going to stay a little longer?"

Lu Zhou shook his head and said with a smile, "No, I'm already satisfied to see you protect my laboratory so well."

Laboratory?

Isn't this his office?

The young lady guide was slightly confused.

However, Lu Zhou didn't intend to explain himself. After saying goodbye, he turned around and left.

...

Lu Zhou drove back to his house. He removed the facial holographic projection system he was wearing on his neck and took a look at the iris recognition at the door.

Almost as soon as he brought his face closer, the electronic door of the front yard opened.

He walked the path through the garden and into the house. He then saw a brand new living room.

When he was gone, Xiao Ai controlled the smart cleaning equipment here and cleaned the entire house inside and out. Not only did Xiao Ai replace the old furniture with new ones, but she also painted the walls.

He couldn't even tell that this house was a second-hand house anymore.

Xiao Ai, who was wearing an apron and followed by a drone, eagerly ran out from the corner of the corridor.

"Master, supper is ready, when do you want to eat? (๓>ω<*๓)"

"Now."

Xiao Ai: “Okay! (๐*`w`*)๐~”

Chapter 1472: The Best Choice

The bombing of an apartment building on the edge of Jinling’s Second Ring shocked the entire Pan-Asia. Liu Zhengxing, who was stupidly hiding behind the scenes waiting for “good news”, was scared.

Even though the identity of the tenant of the apartment was not revealed in the news for privacy reasons, he still used some clues in the news and other people’s reactions to determine who the assassin was.

Because just an hour after he saw the news, he received at least three calls related to this matter.

One of them was from the office of the Chairman of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, and the other was from the Public Security Bureau of the Yangtze River Delta city group, and the last... the one that surprised and angered him the most was from the Pan-Asian Cooperation Security Bureau.

The other party didn’t say much. In the phone call that lasted less than two minutes, they simply stated that he was a major suspect and issued a notice to restrict his travels, and they hoped that he would cooperate with the investigation during this period.

It was not a pleasant thing to be targeted by this kind of regional alliance-level intelligence organization, especially for a terrorist attack.

At this moment, Liu Zhengxing couldn’t even describe the anger and panic in his heart.

A person who could rival his position in the East Asia Energy board had just crawled out of a coffin; this was enough to make him feel anxious. And now his stupid “allies” actually performed an assassination!

These idiots!

If he could, he would kill the unknown assassin instantly!

“Did you do that explosion?!”

In the holographic conference room.

Sitting at the conference table, Liu Zhengxing's eyes were red. The veins on his forehead were bursting. He stared at the person across the conference table.

In fact, there was still a little hope in his heart at this moment.

He wanted to hear that person deny everything.

This way, besides him, there were at least three suspects on the board. That annoying Morinaga was also one of them.

However, the faceless man sitting across the conference table made him feel desperate with just one sentence.

"Sort of."

"What do you mean sort of?!" Liu Zhengxing put his hands on the table. He spat out angrily, "I just asked you to help me investigate his information, how can you do such unnecessary things without authorization! Every pig knows that the attack has something to do with me! I have received at least three calls so far, every one of them was terrible!"

He swore that he had never considered sending a killer to solve the troublesome Lu Zhou, even though this seemingly once-and-for-all option was really tempting.

He just wanted to entrust the faceless man sitting opposite him to investigate Lu Zhou's network of relations in this era through their foundation and use this to dig out his weaknesses or where he could cooperate obediently.

However, he never would have imagined that the idiot would send a killer and that he even used the high-profile means of bombs.

This was Earth!

Pan Asia!

Not the barbaric society on Mars!

This behavior of breaking the rules not only forced him into a vulnerable position but also made his supporters on the board of directors vacillate.

After listening to Liu Zhengxing's complaint quietly, the faceless man sitting across the conference table looked at him blankly. As if he didn't take his anger to heart at all, the man said in a slow tone.

"Our foundation has made the judgment that his existence may bring uncertain variables to our plan. It is the best choice to let him lay in a coffin again."

"The best choice? Who do you think you are! Do you know what we are facing now?" Liu Zhengxing laughed angrily. "The Pan-Asian Cooperation Security Bureau has taken action! The world's most powerful intelligence organization on the Internet now suspects me. Do you think you can run away? I'm taking the risk of talking to you; stop the stupid assassination attempts!"

His chest undulated violently, Liu Zhengxing stared at the faceless man. However, what made him feel tricky was that the man seemed to have not heard what he said at all; he did not take his warning to heart at all.

He clenched his fists, then slowly loosened them.

After hesitating in his heart, Liu Zhengxing finally made up his mind and took a deep breath.

"I have warned you, it is you who broke the rules first!"

The faceless man's chin was slightly lifted, seemingly to look at him with interest.

"Oh, really?"

"I will surrender and clarify all this." Liu Zhengxing stared at the man and continued, "No matter what you want to do, I have nothing to do with you! I have never hired any assassins, never thought of letting that person die! Everything was done on your own volition!"

With a hint of sarcasm in his voice, the faceless man smiled lightly.

"But who would believe you?"

"Do you think I didn't leave a way out for myself?" Liu Zhengxing smiled coldly and continued, "I have saved the video record of the meeting and kept it in a safe place."

In fact, when he said this, there was still a trace of hope in his heart. He hoped to be able to force the madman in front of him to concede. After all, surrendering was only a last resort, not the best choice.

However, his hope was once again lost.

The faceless man sitting at the conference table gently lifted his chin and turned his eye to the door.

“Sounds interesting... Do you mean that thing?”

Liu Zhengxing was slightly stunned. He then stiffly turned his neck and followed the direction that the faceless man’s chin was pointing in. He looked towards the door of the conference room.

The door was undoubtedly still closed.

However, a robot wearing a cleaner’s uniform was standing inside. In his left hand, the robot was carrying a black suitcase.

As soon as he saw the suitcase, Liu Zhengxing’s pupils shrank slightly.

He soon calmed down. He looked at the faceless man sitting across the conference table and said with a deep voice, “What do you want?”

There was a hint of relaxed laughter.

When Liu Zhengxing heard the laughter, for some reason, it made him feel terrified.

“I don’t want anything, I just want to return it to you and borrow one more thing from you.”

Liu Zhengxing looked at the robot who walked to his side and put the suitcase in front of him. He frowned and said with some uncertainty, “What thing?”

“Life.”

When he heard this word, Liu Zhengxing was slightly stunned.

He felt a slight tingling in his neck, then he lost consciousness; his pupils drooped and his head dropped.

Retracting the nano syringe in his hand, the robot took out a black pistol from his arms and placed it in Liu Zhengxing's hands.

Then, it held Liu Zhengxing's right hand, pointed the muzzle at his own head, and pushed his index finger on the trigger.

Bang!

The fire flickered, gun smoke dispersed.

Blood and pieces of brain splashed all over the floor.

The robot let go of his right hand and let the arm holding the pistol slump into the chair.

The robot methodically made some simple adjustments to the death scene and disguised it as a suicide. The robot cast an empty sight on the faceless man sitting at the conference table and bowed towards him. He then formatted the storage data of the holographic conference and turned off the power of the conference table.

After the faceless man disappeared in the blue light, the robot also turned and left the meeting room, leaving only the black suitcase and the corpse leaning on the chair.

When the people in the group building finally found out that their chairman committed suicide in the conference room, it was already seven hours later.

Chester, hiding in the suburbs of Jinling City, also made another move towards his goal...

Chapter 1473: No Suspense

The sun gradually fell and the night arrived.

For people living in the urban areas, the nightlife had just begun.

In stark contrast to the brightly lit urban area, the night in the suburbs came a little earlier.

The time had just passed 10 o'clock, the flow of traffic on the main maglev road had become slow. As for the small roads that went deep into the residential area, there were almost no cars coming or going.

However, at this moment, a truck drove slowly into the residential area along a small road.

An illegal activity was detected. The traffic police drone parked on the side of the road flew towards the truck.

However, just as the drone was preparing to persuade the driver in the truck to leave, it was hit by a light blue electric current.

As if it was short-circuited, the drone soon emitted black smoke and fell to the ground.

The robot put the EMP pistol back into his pocket. It pressed the button to open the cargo compartment door.

As the alloy door opened outward, robots with rifles in their hands walked towards the mansion next to them, surrounded by drones.

In front of the door, one of the robots took out a toolbox from the backpack and was about to open the door.

However, at this moment, the door in front of them opened by itself.

A string of characters appeared on the holographic window of the access control system.

[(^*_`ω'*)]

The moment he saw the string of characters, Chester, who was sitting in a van a few kilometers away, had a bad feeling in his heart.

However, he couldn't tell where this bad feeling came from.

He clenched his teeth, thinking that since he had already reached this point, it was too late to turn around now.

He stared at the door on the screen, thinking that the enemy who killed his friends was inside. A bloodthirsty wave of anger suddenly ignited in his heart. He gave an attack command with a grin.

“I’ll see where you are hiding this time!”

The moment the attack order was issued, the dozen or so robots standing at the door immediately unlocked their weapons’ safety switches, then went into the open door with the weapons in their hands.

However, at this moment, something suddenly happened!

The dozen or so robot militants who stepped on the lawn suddenly felt like they had received an EMP shock. Light blue electric sparks burst out from the back of their necks and pupils one after another.

The momentum of the offense suffered a severe setback straight from the beginning.

Chester, who was sitting behind the screen and remotely controlling all of this, could only watch the robots being turned into metal scrap. He still didn’t know what happened.

“Sh*t...”

The cameras turned into white noise one after another. Chester panicked. He immediately tapped his hands on the holographic screen continuously, locking every window of the mansion.

Soon, dozens of four-rotor drones floated from the top of the truck.

Their cruise path and detonation time were set at the fastest speed. Chester decisively activated offline mode.

The drones that were shielded from all external signals were like cruise missiles. They dove and hit the mansion.

However, at this moment, an even more frightening scene appeared in front of Chester.

The movements of the robots that were hit by an EMP attack suddenly became flexible.

Not only that, the muzzle of each of them instantly turned and locked to the group of drones flying in the air, then they pulled the trigger.

The orange flames flickered in the sky. After colliding with the rain of bullets, the drones looked like dead flies. They were shot down to the ground one after another.

The light of the explosion lit up the lawn in the front yard of the mansion. Many robots were destroyed by the explosions; some were even blown in the air.

Chester watched the group of robots and drones killing each other through the holographic screen. His mouth was wide open. He had completely lost his words.

He couldn't figure out what happened to those smart devices the moment he gave the attack command.

"This is impossible..."

Chester looked at the only robot soldier standing in the flames. A flame of hope ignited in his heart. His fingers tapped on the holographic keyboard quickly, trying to find out the loopholes in the program and regain control of this robot.

However, even though the ideas were beautiful, the reality was cruel.

Five minutes passed. No matter how hard he tried, the robot standing on the lawn with the rifle in his hand seemed to have not heard his orders; he stood there without saying a word.

"Damn, what happened?! Start moving! F*ck!"

An ominous premonition enveloped Chester's heart.

For some reason, he had never been afraid of anything. But when he looked at the motionless robot soldier on the screen, he suddenly felt an unprecedented fear.

It was as if the person being manipulated was not the robot, but it was himself. Invisible lines tied up his hands and feet, manipulating everything from behind the scenes.

He tried one last time to obtain control authority of the robot. After seeing no effect, Chester decisively gave up the smart devices he had delivered to the battlefield and started the van.

[The intelligent navigation system has been turned on and is connecting you to the magnetic levitation road network...]

“Disconnect! Use road navigation mode!”

[Switched to road navigation mode.]

The reason why the maglev road network was not connected was that it was monitored by the Pan-Asian Cooperation Police Department and the Security Bureau.

As soon as the gunfire sounded, the maglev roads in this area were no longer safe for him.

After starting the van, he began to hit the road. As Chester looked at the scenery passing by the window, his nervous mood relaxed a little.

However, just as he turned on the holographic computer and was about to troubleshoot the previous malfunction, a string of characters of unknown meaning suddenly popped up on the holographic screen.

The moment he saw the line of characters, Chester was stunned.

[(^*`ω`*)]

“...?”

What is this?

A figure suddenly appeared in the middle of the highway.

The man wore a raincoat and stood defenselessly in the middle of the road.

With the hood obscuring his face, even the high beams coming from the van could not allow Chester to see his eyes. However, an unreasonable intuition told him that this guy was looking at him and was coming towards him.

Chester immediately threw down the holographic computer and held the steering wheel with both hands.

“Activate manual mode!”

[Failed to activate.]

Chester: “???”

Like a wild horse running off the rein, the uncontrolled van crashed into the person standing in the middle of the road.

No, to be precise, that was not a person.

No person would ever be able to survive such a crash. It was like he crashed into a telephone pole.

The van that hit the man was completely totaled; debris and glass were flying everywhere.

Chester, who was stuck in the driver’s seat, had blood on his forehead.

Finally, he saw the steel body full of murderous air under the raincoat.

Chester watched the robot take the computer from his van. His heart was filled with despair; he gradually gave up his hope of survival.

“What a terrible guy I provoked...”

He sighed. His eyes slowly closed.

He’s an old man from 100 years ago, but he’s terrifyingly powerful...

At the door of the mansion a few kilometers away, the police came after hearing the gunshots.

The robot on the lawn thought for a while. He pointed the muzzle at his memory card, then pulled the trigger.

The heavily armed special police began to step forward and control the scene.

Although there were no casualties, a large number of weapons appeared in the Pan-Asian territory. This was undoubtedly a severe issue for the public security of the Yangtze River Delta city group.

Standing by the window, Lu Zhou watched the police officer, who he saw yesterday, walk towards the door of the mansion with two police officers. Lu Zhou cast his gaze to Xiao Ai, who was standing at his side, and asked, “How is Ling doing?”

“The guy who threatened Master’s safety has been dealt with! Ling found his personal computer from the car! There are many interesting things in it. Does Master want to read it now? (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧”

Lu Zhou thought about it and spoke.

“Wait until I meet the guests first.”

While he was speaking, a light blue holographic window was projected in front of him.

The police officer standing at the door rang the doorbell politely and looked at the monitor at the door.

“Hello, Academician Lu, we are from the Jin Ling City Security Bureau—”

Halfway through his words, the door in front of him opened automatically.

The police officer was slightly taken aback.

Then Lu Zhou’s face appeared on the screen of the access control system.

“The doorway is not a place to talk. Come into the living room.”

Chapter 1474: The Looming Trouble

In the building of East Asia Group, the police came and went on the elevator. Many employees of the group cast curious looks at the police officers, guessing which executives committed a crime.

Thanks to the sound insulation of the conference room, no one knew that their chairman had died, except for the secretary who first found the body and the top executives at the company.

In the conference room at the scene of the crime, Xing Bian from the Security Bureau was frowning. As he stared at the body restored from the holographic image, he seemed to be thinking about something.

A man in a black jacket walked in from outside the meeting room and spoke.

“The autopsy report came out. There is a high probability of suicide.”

Captain Xing did not look up. He just asked casually, “What’s the reason?”

“According to the autopsy report, we did not find any drugs in the deceased’s body, nor did he have other people’s fingerprints or residues like hair.” Shi Jin continued, “According to the elevator monitoring footage, there was no suspicious person who took the elevator to reach the floor on the same day except for the executives working on the floor.”

There was also evidence in the holographic footage.

Inside the suitcase at the conference table, they found a holographic video of Liu Zhengxing talking to a man with a blurred face.

In that video, Liu Zhengxing asked the “faceless man” to do something for him.

Although the specifics did not appear in the video, judging by the explosion that Academician Lu encountered some time ago, it was obvious that Liu Zhengxing was contacting the killer.

At this point in the case, there was no suspense. All the evidence pointed to the result of Liu Zhengxing’s suicide.

Last night, they received news from the Municipal Public Security Bureau that the notorious “Blood Hands” Chester was killed in a car accident.

“Blood Hands” had always been the subject of many investigations by their security bureau, not only because he might be related to the bombing in the Malacca urban agglomeration a few days ago, but also because of his close friendship with Ruzas on the N-177 flight. The two were wanted by Interpol at the same time.

The murderer was dead, the matter was revealed, and suicide in fear of the crime was excusable.

However, Xing Bian still didn’t believe that a person who had the courage to hire a murderer would actually commit suicide in fear of crime. From the perspective of criminal psychology, this didn’t make sense.

Especially since they didn’t find any information about him from Chester.

“Remember the robot turmoil at No.001 on 17th Street last night?”

No.001 on 17th Street was the address of Lu Zhou. Although this matter was kept secret from the outside world, it was not a secret to them.

After hearing Captain Xing’s words, Agent Shi frowned and thought about it for a long time. He then said in an uncertain tone, “Do you mean... the assailant may be a robot?”

“It’s just a hypothesis, because I don’t really believe that this person chose to commit suicide.” After a pause, Captain Xing continued, “I heard that a virus is circulating on the black market; one that can tamper with the underlying logic of robots. People use it for theft, robbery, and even murder.”

Although there had always been things to modify the underlying logic, it was done around some less sensitive places, such as changing the personality of the robot and so forth.

As for making robots capable of killing and learning to steal...

Those who claimed that they could do this were either lying or delusional.

It wasn’t until the last few months that Xing Bian heard about it and handled some cases of robot-related crimes. It was in these few months that he heard from an informant about the virus that could modify the underlying logic of robots.

“The perpetrator may have used a bionic person. After killing Liu Zhengxing, he faked a suicide. This will explain why we can’t find any fingerprints on his body, and from the surveillance video, the frequency of robot cleaners entering and exiting this floor is still very high.”

Shi Jin said immediately, “I’ll have someone go and investigate all of the robot cleaners in this company!”

“This is fine, although I think it may be useless. Since their attack is over, they would never keep the tools of the crime here. At the very least, they would replace the memory chip of the robot.”

The memory chip was the essence of a robot.

A robot with a different memory chip was of no use, even if they were to catch it.

“But the incident last night was also a bit strange. Strictly speaking, the robot should have an advantage in force. They were able to fight against the hijackers on flight N-177, but when attacking Academician Lu, they seem to be unable to fight back at all.”

Captain Xing grinned and said with a smile, “I know what you mean. It’s about what happened to those robots on flight N-177, right?”

Detective Shi nodded. He looked at Captain Xing solemnly and spoke.

“Academician Lu feels a little weird... I feel that he may know something we don’t, especially when it comes to robots.”

The door of the conference room suddenly opened, and an agent of the Security Bureau came in from outside.

“Captain, someone has reported a crime.”

“Report?” Xing Bian raised his eyebrows. “Reported to me?”

As the Security Bureau, they were mainly responsible for maintaining homeland security; ordinary criminal cases were not within their jurisdiction.

Unless this criminal case happened to someone with a certain influence.

For example, Academician Lu. After learning about his attack, the Security Bureau immediately set up a task force to investigate the details of the bombing.

“It was the city police who transferred it to us.” The agent said solemnly, “The informant refused to disclose too many details and insisted on seeing you.”

“Then let him come to see me. No...” Xing Bian looked at the holographic body on the conference table and the pool of blood. “Let him stay at the police station, I’ll go meet him.”

...

City police station.

In a room about 30 square meters, a skinny man was pacing restlessly around the room.

Suddenly, the sound of footsteps came from outside the door.

The moment he heard the footsteps, the man's nerves tightened, as if he had been frightened in some way.

The door opened, and a group of people walked in and stood in front of him.

Captain Xing, who was standing at the front, looked at him up and down and asked, "So, you are Liu Zhengxing's personal lawyer?"

"It's me! I'm Zhang Minghua!" Zhang Minghua nodded nervously and said quickly, "Chairman Liu told me that if he has an accident, I must find a way to contact the Security Bureau and pass on a message."

Agent Shi, standing next to Xing Bian, spoke first.

"What is the message?"

"The Spirit of The Universe Foundation!" Lawyer Zhang shouted out crazily. He said with a look of horror, "They killed Chairman Liu, they must have done it!"

"The Spirit of The Universe Foundation?" Detective Shi frowned after hearing this guy's nonsense. "What are you talking about—"

However, Xing Bian's expression became serious. He suddenly spoke.

"Let him continue."

Lawyer Zhang took two steps forward, grabbed Xing Bian's arm, and said excitedly, "Chairman Liu asked me to bring a message. He contacted the people from The Spirit of The Universe Foundation before and tried to use their power to investigate Academician Lu... But the bombing went beyond his expectation. He didn't expect them to try and kill Academician Liu."

After listening to his words patiently, Captain Xing thought for a while and looked at him and said, "If everything you have just said is true, then you are probably in danger."

Lawyer Zhang's face was pale. His lips trembled slightly, but he couldn't say a word.

Seeing this poor creature who had been frightened, Captain Xing continued, "Stay at the Municipal Public Security Bureau for a few days. You can call off your work, but I suggest you better contactable by phone."

"Those people are rampant. It is unlikely that they will be frantic and attack here, but if you leave, we can't take care of you."

After this, Xing Bian turned around and walked out of the house.

After following Captain Xing to the corridor, Agent Shi hesitated for a while before asking, "Do you really believe his nonsense?"

"It's not nonsense." Captain Xing took out an e-cigarette from his pocket. He looked out the window and narrowed his eyes. "At least the name of The Spirit of The Universe Foundation was not made up."

Captain Xing spat out the mint smoke ring out of the window without looking at his bewildered subordinate. He continued, "The Spirit of The Universe Foundation has always been a Class A secret of the Security Bureau. I only know that they are related to two attacks that took place outside China a century ago.

"One of them was the Aurora Borealis cruise ship incident. The other incident occurred on the streets of Manila in the second year after Academician Lu's death. A bombing case."

After hearing the captain's words, Shi Jin's face twitched.

The bombing in Manila a century ago...

Anyone who learned a little history knew that the meeting held in Manila the same year was widely regarded as one of the landmark events of the Pan-Asia region moving towards a union.

If what the captain said was true, that the bombing was not because of an extreme organization but was planned by The Spirit of The Universe Foundation...

They almost changed history.

“The Class A level confidentiality is not because of its danger... In fact, they have not done anything particularly extraordinary in the Pan-Asian territory over the past century. However, there are various signs that they are not done.

“Moreover, recent events have also proved this. They are more dangerous than we thought.”

After turning off the electronic cigarette, Captain Xing looked at his subordinate and continued, “I need you to do something.”

Shi Jin said immediately, “Please tell me.”

“Go to the University of Science and Technology of China and find a man named Wang Peng.”

“Wang Peng?”

“Well, he is a dormant from a century ago.”

Agent Shi asked puzzledly, “Why?”

“His name appeared in the archives of The Spirit of The Universe Foundation. If my speculation is correct, he was the first group of intelligence personnel to track down The Spirit of The Universe Foundation.”

After a pause, Captain Xing continued with a serious tone, “We know too little about The Spirit of The Universe Foundation. We don’t even know how far they have penetrated our society.

“In order to solve this trouble, we need his help.”

Chapter 1475: Special Operations Consultant

The campus of the University of Science and Technology of China.

After finishing enrollment, Wang Peng put his luggage in the dorm room. The instructor called him soon after.

“Someone is looking for you.”

“Looking for me?” Wang Peng asked casually. He looked at the instructor through the holographic interface and said, “Who?”

“Someone from the Security Bureau. Come to the administration building.”

“Okay, I’ll come right now.”

Although he didn’t know why people from the Security Bureau were looking for him, since it was a business matter, Wang Peng immediately went to the school’s administration building.

When he came to the conference room on the second floor according to the address given by the instructor, he saw a strange man wearing a gray coat standing at the conference table.

They made eye contact.

“Who are you?”

“Shi Jin.” The man in the gray coat reached out his right hand and handed out his holographic business card. “You can call me Mr. Shi, or by my name.”

An agent from the Pan-Asian Cooperation Security Bureau.

Except for the name and work unit, no other information was written on the business card.

Wang Peng put the holographic card away. He then looked at him and asked, “What’s wrong?”

“When we checked the relevant files for The Spirit of The Universe Foundation, we found that your name appeared on it.”

Wang Peng nodded and said, “I wrote the earliest reports.”

Shi Jin said with a serious expression while looking at Wang Peng, “For the stability of humanity, we hope you can cooperate!”

“But I probably won’t be able to help you.” Wang Peng said with a frown, “My knowledge and skills have been completely out of touch with the times. If the foundation is still developing over the past century, the information I have will probably be long outdated, maybe it will mislead your work.”

Shi Jin: "Because the foundation is still developing over the past century, it has penetrated our society to a very dangerous level. Hence, we need your strength even more."

"Sorry, you should find someone else." Wang Peng shook his head and said, "After completing my preparatory course, I will reconsider your invitation... If you still need me at that time, I will contribute my own power."

"In fact... The difficulties we are facing are probably more severe than you think."

With an embarrassed expression on his face, Shi Jin continued in a difficult tone, "At first, our task force was established to investigate the mastermind behind the assassination of Academician Lu. The resources we obtained from the Security Bureau are quite limited.

"Based on the information we currently have, the inference we can make is that this foundation has penetrated our society to a dangerous level. They may have a terrible virus; the kind of virus that can change the underlying logic of a robot's memory chip, making civilian robots their crime tools.

"The robots have now become an inseparable part of our society. This is a fait accompli formed over the past half a century. If there is a virus that turns absolutely safe tools into unstable bombs, it won't just be our economic prosperity that will be affected, it will change our society!"

After hearing what Shi Jin said, Wang Peng's face gradually changed.

As a dormant from the 21st century, he still couldn't fully feel the irreplaceable role of robots in modern society, but since they were targeting Academician Lu, this was no joke.

This was the first time he heard that Academician Lu was being assassinated.

"Assassin... Academician Lu? What happened? Why did they... Why would they target him?"

Why didn't Lu Zhou tell me anything?!

Shi Jin shook his head and said, "We are also quite confused about this, but according to the informant's information, the foundation's judgment is that his presence may affect some of their plans."

Wang Peng took a deep breath and said calmly, "In fact, if you think about it carefully, it makes sense that they will target Academician Lu."

Shi Jin looked at him, waiting for him to continue.

After a pause, Wang Peng continued, "About a century ago, in the ILHCRC's experiment on the verification of higher dimensions, a physics professor named Galette Miro once proposed the theory of cosmic animism. This is probably the foundation's theoretical cornerstone."

"Galette Miro?" Shi Jin's eyebrows were raised slightly. He said in an unexpected tone, "This is a strange name, I haven't seen it before in the files."

"It is normal for him not to appear in the archives. After all, after our investigation, his identity was confirmed to be just an ordinary physicist. As for the theory of cosmic animism, it was just a strange academic paper."

Shi Jin: "But how do you know that The Spirit of The Universe Foundation has nothing to do with Professor Garrett Miro?"

"Because that person is dead." Wang Peng continued watching Shi Jin as he said, "Just after Lu Zhou's report on extra-dimensional theory ended, he made certain changes to his paper and uploaded it to his personal blog. Then he committed suicide in his dormitory."

"This sounds like an urban legend... A dead physicist and his papers became the starting point of a new age religion? But Professor Garrett Miro, I've never heard of this name before."

"History cannot remember everyone's name, especially since most people agree with another point of view."

Shi Jin: "That seems to be true."

"Through limited information, we can only make such inferences. If The Spirit of The Universe Foundation believes in Professor Garrett Miro's theory, then Garrett Miro is undoubtedly their prophet. They would have a natural hostility towards Academician Lu, which is actually very understandable."

"This is a very valuable piece of information. So my trip here is not useless." Shi Jin wrote the information down seriously and reached out his right hand.

“Although I regret not being able to convince you to join us, we thank you for the help.”

“Who said I don’t plan to join you guys?”

Shi Jin was slightly stunned.

“But didn’t you just say...”

“Although an old man persuaded me to leave the future business to the future people...”

After a pause, Wang Peng continued, “I thought about it carefully, I can’t just leave this matter to you guys and watch on the sidelines.”

After hearing these words, the shock on Shi Jin’s face instantly turned into joy. He said with a smile, “Welcome to the team!”

“We will write an entry application for you. Your answers will be transferred to the Security Bureau agent database and kept there until you leave your job and start a new life.”

Although Shi Jin didn’t know why his attitude had changed 180 degrees, this was definitely something to celebrate for the task force, which was short of manpower.

“That probably won’t happen.” Wang Peng teased himself a little bit self-deprecatingly, “For someone who can’t stand doing nothing, I’ll probably never quit my job.”

To be honest, sometimes he envied his old friend Li Gaoliang.

Although that guy was a little crazy, because of this, he could blend well in any era.

“Haha, there’s nothing wrong with that, I like my current job too.” Shi Jin smiled and reached out his right hand as he said sincerely, “From now on, you are the special operations consultant of our task force!”

Chapter 1476: ALPHA Virus

The chairman of East Asia Energy committed suicide in fear of crime.

If this were another company, such bad news would at least make the company's performance in the stock market sluggish for a while, even if it did not trigger a mass sell-off.

However, for a giant of East Asia Energy's size, Liu Zhengxing's death only added some volatility to the charts.

For Liu Zhengxing himself, this was undoubtedly a tragedy.

He had always attributed the business growth achieved by East Asia Energy over the past five years to his outstanding business capabilities and often boasted that he was the most visionary among the previous chairmen.

However, even his unexpected death did not make the capital market sentiment crash.

Obviously, the so-called business ability and foresight were just his wishful thinking.

"Recently, a traffic accident occurred in the suburbs of Jin Ling City. A foreign tourist died in the accident.

"According to the accident investigation report presented by the police, the man was driving a gray van, switched to manual driving while driving on the ground, and caused a collision with the vehicle in front due to improper operation.

"This reporter once again reminds everyone that you must abide by traffic rules when using private transportation and pay attention to driving safety..."

Last night's news was shown on the holographic TV.

The video of a car accident taken by a drone had been blurred, but judging from the tragic situation, it was obviously not just a rear-end collision.

The hood of the entire car was wrecked. If it only collided with another vehicle, it would definitely not be so tragic.

Unless he hit a tank.

Lu Zhou watched the “car accident” on TV. He was sitting at the table for breakfast. He sighed slightly and said emotionally, “Xiao Ai.”

Sitting on the opposite side of the dining table with her cheeks in her hands, Xiao Ai tilted her head when she heard her master.

“Huh?”

“Do you think... Humans are troublesome beings?”

“Quite troublesome. Master should live a digital life like Xiao Ai! (•̀V•́)”

“I didn’t mean that...” Lu Zhou changed the topic with a dry cough. “Forget it, why am I talking to you about this?”

The death of Liu Zhengxing was unknown.

Chester, who tried to assassinate Lu Zhou, also died in a “traffic accident”.

This situation was brought to an end with the death of both the employer and the perpetrator.

Although everything was developing in a good direction, Lu Zhou wasn’t happy at all.

He always felt that all of this was not over. Eyes were still targeting him, waiting for an opportunity, like a poisonous snake.

The situation he faced at this moment may be much more severe than a century ago.

After all, a century ago, he had more than just prestige.

“Whether it’s the space elevator or second-generation controllable fusion... There are obviously so many things worth doing, but people still repeat meaningless mistakes on the same things.”

Lu Zhou looked at Xiao Ai, who was obediently looking at him. Lu Zhou suddenly smiled and stretched out his hand to rub the fake hair on her head.

“Thank you for listening to my nonsense.”

With a happy smile on her face, Xiao Ai said enthusiastically, “Master doesn’t have to worry, Xiao Ai will protect you! ٩(̇̈́•̈́ᑦ)”

Lu Zhou smiled and spoke.

“Well, thanks in advance.”

...

After eating dinner, Lu Zhou took the drone controlled by Xiao Ai and jogged for two laps before returning to take a shower.

While taking a bath, he received a call from Manager Morinaga.

"We are very sorry about Chairman Liu Zhengxing. No one thought he would be such a person."

Lu Zhou: "You don't have to be sorry. I have to thank you instead."

“No need...” Manager Morinaga in the holographic image sighed. He then continued after a short pause, “Liu Zhengxing is dead, so the position of chairman is now vacant. We plan to convene a board meeting to re-elect the chairman. In fact, I personally prefer you to assume this position. As you once led the Pangu fusion reactor project, I believe you will surely lead us to a brighter future.”

Lu Zhou said casually, “Sorry, I am not interested in the company’s business operations. Although I did lead the Pangu reactor project, it was only from the standpoint of a scholar.”

Although Lu Zhou's answer was not unexpected, a regretful expression still appeared on Morinaga's face.

As the largest individual shareholder and holding the resources of East Asia Communications and East Asia Heavy Industries, Lu Zhou was undoubtedly the most suitable candidate for the position of chairman.

But there was no other way.

If he himself was not interested in these things, no one could force him to do things he didn't like to do.

After finishing the call, Lu Zhou went to the storage room next to the mansion.

After Ling caught the assassin named Chester on the highway last night, he conveniently took the holographic computer he used to control the robot from his van.

A password lock was added to the computer, but it was obviously not a difficult task for Lu Zhou.

After easily removing the password, Lu Zhou, who turned on the computer, searched the computer for a while. He soon found a lot of suspicious files with the help of Xiao Ai.

Among them were some electronic vouchers of unnamed assets that he held, the purchase channels of guns and EMP weapons, and some illegal orders he received from the Internet, as well as his own design of robot memory software.

But compared to these insignificant things, what Lu Zhou cared about most was a folder named "ALPHA".

Inside this folder was a bunch of strange code.

"Master..."

Lu Zhou looked away from the holographic screen. He looked at Xiao Ai, who was standing behind him, and cast a questioning glance at her.

"What?"

"I feel like the things in this folder... are not nice. $\leftarrow (\rightarrow \leftarrow \text{' '}) \rightarrow$ "

Lu Zhou: "Not nice... What do you mean?"

"This is a computer virus. After being implanted in the memory of a robot, it can completely modify its underlying logic and break the three laws that cannot be violated... It changes generic robots to murder machines."

"Change the underlying logic of the robots?" Lu Zhou frowned slightly. "Can't you do that too?"

"It's not the same." Xiao Ai shook her head. "Although Xiao Ai can do the same thing, Xiao Ai is just changing the artificial intelligence algorithmic limitations. This is a pure virus; there is no intelligence. It is like a

brainwashing tool for robots. Its purpose is to release the evil side of artificial intelligence.”

Unleash the evil side of artificial intelligence...

For some reason, when he heard these words, Lu Zhou’s heart went cold.

Robots had long become an inseparable group in Pan-Asian Cooperation and even the entire world.

They replaced most of the repetitive work that didn’t require any creativity, and human society had adapted to such changes over the past half-century.

Lu Zhou could not imagine what society would be like if they were to lose a reliable tool such as these robots.

“This thing is like a time bomb.”

“Those codes don’t seem to be written by people in this era, or rather, they don’t seem to be written by humans. Xiao Ai feels very strange... Of course, Master, don’t worry, this virus is useless against Xiao Ai. Even for robots or other smart devices infected with the virus, Xiao Ai can easily erase them from the memory. (๑•̥̥̥•̥̥̥)✧”

“I’m not worried about myself.”

As Lu Zhou looked at the folder on the screen, he frowned slightly.

It’s not written by humans...

For some reason, when he heard Xiao Ai’s words, he suddenly remembered the experiment a hundred years ago and what The Observer said to him.

“Beware...

“When you are staring at the Void, the Void is staring back at you.”

After pondering this sentence repeatedly, Lu Zhou began to break out in cold sweat.

For some reason...

He felt that he had released something significant.

Chapter 1477: Shrouded Clouds

“Did you hear the news?”

“Hear what?”

“The gunshots that were heard on the outskirts of Jinling high-tech zone. Some people saw a lot of police... Apparently, it is related to the raging robot crime that was reported some time ago.”

“Really? Don’t spread false rumors. I heard that someone was shooting a movie over there... Doesn’t that refute the rumors?”

“Oh, really? I just heard from someone else... But do you really think that robots are safe? The Jinling Institute for Advanced Study Museum lost one some time ago. Apparently, it slipped by itself.”

“Maybe it is to celebrate the resurrection of Academician Lu? Anyway, the three laws of robotics are unbreakable. The Hippocampus Group’s technical strength is also quite strong. They won’t have illogical loopholes in their robots... Okay, let’s change the subject.”

On the campus of Jin Ling University, walking on the tree-lined path leading to the preparatory classroom, Lu Zhou couldn’t help but twitch his eyebrows when he heard the discussion of the students walking in front, he unconsciously quickened his walking pace.

He didn’t want to listen to others talking about himself. He wanted to leave here quickly.

However, when he passed by the two students, they were so frightened that they were speechless.

After arriving at the classroom, Lu Zhou glanced at the students scattered in the classroom. He randomly found a place to sit down in the first row.

About five or six minutes later, the class bell rang. Instructor Sun walked in hastily from outside the classroom.

When she saw Lu Zhou sitting in the first row, the young girl suddenly widened her eyes. She was stunned as if she had seen something extraordinary.

“Lu-Academician Lu, hello!”

“Hello.” Lu Zhou smiled in a friendly manner while looking at Sun Lan, who was nervous to say hello to him. “Don’t care about me, start the class.”

“Ah, okay, okay!”

Perhaps it was because she had never thought that one day she would give Academician Lu a lesson. During the lecture, Instructor Sun was very nervous; she even accidentally bit her tongue.

Lu Zhou was quite surprised she was able to make such a boring theory class this interesting.

Of course, what surprised him most was the things he learned in the class.

Like the robot technology that affected the entire human civilization and society in the 22nd century, and a series of social problems brought about by this technology, and so forth.

Although Lu Zhou himself paid more attention to things on the technical level, this interpretation of technology from the perspective of the humanities was eye-opening for him.

After the class, Lu Zhou spent 10 seconds sorting out the problems he learned. He then stood up from his seat and walked to the podium.

“Can I ask a question?”

The girl standing behind the podium subconsciously stood up straight, as if she had committed a crime. She said nervously, “Please... please go ahead!”

“Don’t be so nervous, it’s not a personal question.” Lu Zhou smiled at the nervous-looking Instructor Sun. He then continued in a calm tone, “I have some doubts about robots in some places... It was mentioned in the class that in the history of Pan-Asian Cooperation, there has been a debate about whether robots have a complete personality. I want to know the reason and final result of this debate.”

Sun Lan: “Are you talking about the ‘Artificial Intelligence Management Measures’ in 2077?”

Lu Zhou nodded, motioning her to continue.

“The cause of that controversy... In fact, it was nothing mysterious. A long time ago, after the birth of highly anthropomorphic and strong learning ability, the academic community has been arguing whether advanced artificial intelligence algorithms have a complete personality. Part of the opinion is that artificial intelligence designed based on machine learning theory is just an imitation of human behavior, and the emotions it displays are only a performance of imitation. The opposite of this view is that some people think that advanced artificial intelligence already has the basic form of life, and it should be endowed with human rights, or at least limited human rights.

“Originally, this controversy stayed in academia. Until 2076, a lawsuit extended the controversy from the academic circle to the level of national discussion. The defendant was the Civil Affairs Bureau, and the plaintiff’s reason for suing was that the defendant was forbidden to complete marriage registration with his robot, which violated the spirit of the Constitution.

“This lawsuit finally came to an end in the form of an out-of-court settlement, then in the ‘Artificial Intelligence Management Measures’ issued the following year and the final draft in 2078, it was finally determined that artificial intelligence has no political rights and limited human rights. This bill has also been used for reference by other countries and has become the basis of the current artificial intelligence management bill. Many concepts that modern people are accustomed to, including AI’s identity, were determined at that time.”

“As for whether a robot is alive...” Regarding this question, Sun Lan pondered for a while. She then said with a smile, “This is really hard to say. Although reason tells me they are just a program, sometimes I will unconsciously treat them as real human beings.”

“I see...” Lu Zhou nodded thoughtfully. He recalled the data collected in the holographic computer and continued to ask, “But I heard that there seems to be a way to jailbreak the robot and modify the underlying logic of the robot.”

“Theoretically, this is the case, but not all the underlying logic can be modified.” Sun Lan continued, “For example, they cannot harm humans. In the

design logic of the robot memory software, this behavior is already set beforehand.”

“What if it is a virus?”

“A virus?” Sun Lan looked at Lu Zhou blankly and said, “This is beyond the scope of my knowledge. My research on artificial intelligence is mainly at the sociological level. A virus that can change the underlying logic of a robot... sounds terrible. It’s like your significant other becoming untrustworthy.”

Lu Zhou: “It does seem terrible.”

Sun Lan: “If you are interested in research in this area, I would recommend you to talk to Professor Zhang Zhongcheng from the Institute of Information Engineering. He is an expert in this area.”

“I will contact him if I have the opportunity.” Lu Zhou nodded and said with a smile, “That’s all of my questions, thank you for your answers.”

“Don’t thank me, this is my job.” Sun Lan smiled shyly. She tried to overcome the tension and said embarrassedly, “Um... Can I trouble you with one thing?”

Lu Zhou said, “What?”

“That is, can I buy you lunch?” With interest gleaming in her eyes, Sun Lan continued, “I have a lot of things to ask you about your era... This is relevant to my research!”

Although he wanted to help her, Lu Zhou showed a helpless expression on his face.

“Sorry, I’m afraid it won’t work today. I have another meeting in a while, but next time for sure.”

Sun Lan was slightly disappointed, but she still smiled and said, “Another day then.”

Chapter 1478: I’m Disappointed

East Asia Energy building.

Located at the estuary of the Huangpu River, this building not only looked over the city but also the prosperity of the entire Pan-Asian region. This was the most expensive area in the entire Yangtze River Delta city group. It was also the pagoda that countless people living in the Yangtze River Delta city group yearned for.

However, no one thought that over the past 100 years, an invisible hand had silently reached over, trying to usurp the achievements left by the great man a century ago, and even imprinting itself on the chairman of the board.

Although that person had paid the price of death, the trouble left was far from over.

Standing in the garage, Captain Xing looked sideways. He glanced at the members of the East Asia Energy Board of Directors not far away. He then lowered his voice and whispered to the subordinates next to him, "I'll talk to Academician Lu later."

Shi Jin was slightly taken aback. He asked, "Isn't it better to let Wang Peng go? They seem to be old acquaintances."

Xing Bian said concisely, "Because of their friendship, I am worried that he is not sure what to say and what not to say."

Besides, Wang Peng was still reporting from the headquarters.

Although Xiang Bian gave Wang Peng the green light to a certain extent, and his resume was impeccable, he still had to go through the standard procedure.

Especially for the 30-day induction training, which was more difficult than missions on the job. To be honest, he was even a little worried whether this old antique from the 21st century could handle it.

Shi Jin nodded, expressing his understanding, and stood aside silently.

At the same time, a man wearing gold-rimmed glasses not far away glanced in the direction of the two.

During this period of time, people from the Security Bureau had been handling cases in the building, so he knew the identities of the two.

However, it would be impossible to deal with them like ordinary people. There was bound to be psychological pressure.

After all, a perfect person only lived in fairy tales. No one could climb to his position without some blood on their hands...

Those who believed otherwise were stupid.

While trying to figure out what the two of them were doing here, the folding door of the parking lot slowly opened.

The howling cold wind poured in from outside the door of the parking lot. The icy cold wind caused many people to squint their eyes.

A car suspended in the air drove in from outside the open garage gate and parked firmly in the parking space.

A robot bodyguard dressed in formal clothes with an inconspicuous appearance except for the red pupils stepped down from the passenger seat. The robot opened the door of the back seat, and Lu Zhou, wearing casual clothes, got out of the car calmly.

The group of board members and executives of East Asia Energy waiting on the side immediately rushed towards him.

"Hello, Academician Lu, I am a member of the Investment Strategy Committee of the Board of Directors and one of the managing directors. You can call me Zhong Ziyu or Mr. Zhong."

"Hello, Mr. Zhong."

Lu Zhou shook hands with this Mr. Zhong. He then glanced at the other directors and executives beside him.

Except for Morinaga, this was the first time he had seen everyone. There were expectations, doubt, anxiety, and deep hostility in the pairs of eyes.

The situation here seemed to be more intense than he had thought.

Lu Zhou couldn't help but feel a little emotional.

This was not the case when the controllable fusion project was first ignited. Although old man Yuan was very hostile to him and his bureaucratic style did

have some problems, the original intentions of the two were the same, which was to ignite controllable fusion and let people live a better future.

As for those debates, they were only on the academic level.

And at the last moments of the ignition project, old man Yuan abandoned his prejudice and stood on the same line with him.

It was under the unity of everyone that they achieved a great victory.

To be honest, looking at these people in front of him, Lu Zhou was actually a little disappointed.

Seriously, is there really hope for the space elevator?

And the second generation of controllable fusion still hasn't been done, even after a century...

Zhong Ziyu didn't notice the disappointment on Lu Zhou's face. He said respectfully, "The board meeting will begin soon, please come with me."

Lu Zhou nodded and did not speak. He walked in the direction of the elevator next to him.

At the entrance of the elevator, he noticed that the two people standing next to him kept looking at him.

The two exchanged some words. The person seemed to want to come up and say something to him, but there might have been too many people around. He just reached out and gently pushed out a translucent holographic business card.

Lu Zhou took the business card and glanced at it. He did not say anything. He just nodded at him.

The man responded with a nod, then continued to stand there.

On the elevator, except for Ling, who was inseparable from Lu Zhou, Zhong Ziyu was the only one with him.

Zhong Ziyu glanced at the robot standing next to him. He took a deep breath, lowered his voice, and asked, "Excuse me, is that a robot?"

Lu Zhou: “Yes, what’s wrong?”

“It’s nothing... It’s just that, I personally suggest you to be more careful.”
Zhong Ziyu showed a wry smile on his face and continued with a low voice,
“There are rumors that Chairman Liu’s death... was related to a robot.”

Lu Zhou: “I will be careful.”

Seeing that Lu Zhou didn’t take his warning to heart at all, Zhong Ziyu sighed in his heart and said nothing. He didn’t understand the old popsicle’s confidence. He already tried his best to warn Lu Zhou.

As for the rest, it was none of his business...

...

The meeting soon began.

Inside the spacious meeting room, people sat around the conference table.

And unlike previous board meetings, no one was a holographic image project this time.

After hearing that Academician Lu was coming to the board of directors, even board members who were vacationing far on the Moon rushed back to the Yangtze River Delta city group.

Not only was this meeting related to the future of East Asia Energy, but it was also because Liu Zhengxing’s position was vacant.

In addition to discussing the development direction of East Asia Energy in the coming year, this meeting would also elect a chairman who would represent the overall interests of the entire board of directors.

As an energy giant in the entire Pan-Asian region, it was self-evident how important the position of the chairman was.

And according to the information they collected, Lu Zhou was not a person who was hungry for power.

Otherwise, after completing the controllable fusion project, he would not quit his job as chief designer lightly and work on aerospace instead.

Although the scale of the aerospace industry had reached an immeasurable figure, in those days, it was extremely difficult to send a few people to Mars. The title of Chief Consultant of the Lunar Orbit Committee could not be compared to the position of the leader in the field of nuclear fusion.

Therefore, they still had great hopes for competing for the position of chairman themselves.

Back then, Lu Zhou wasn't interested in managing the business. 100 years later, he should be the same, right?

In order to win Lu Zhou's vote, many people really worked hard and prepared a proposal, intending to persuade Lu Zhou and his 7% of the equity to stand on their side.

For example, promise to increase investment in scientific research or donate to the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation...

The checks that were issued would not cost them any money anyway. This little money was only a drop in the bucket for the behemoth of East Asia Energy.

When the meeting just started, it was somewhat orderly. After less than half an hour, it was already in chaos.

The expressions on the faces of several executive directors sitting there were aggressive. They either quietly watched someone compete for the position of chairman or talked to their own teams on the phone.

Unlike other directors, although these executive directors appointed by the organization could participate in the election of the chairman, it was almost impossible to get elected.

Although their shareholding ratio was relatively large, they were not all-mighty. Especially in places like East Asia Energy where the interests of all parties were involved, the situation here was particularly complicated. If a representative sent by a large organization showed their intention of being elected, they would be strongly opposed by other organizations.

Other small shareholders would also unite to protect their own interests and prevent their election.

Therefore, in the board of directors of East Asia Energy, it had become a rule that the executive directors should not participate in the election of the chairman.

This understanding had been maintained for half a century.

Lu Zhou looked at the demons talking around the conference table. He endured it for a while, but he finally couldn't stand it anymore.

His index finger tapped hard on the table. He spoke in a loud voice to interrupt the noise on the conference table.

"Stop arguing, I will say a few words."

The noisy voices instantly died down.

After hearing Lu Zhou's words, many people quieted down.

This silence was not entirely out of respect. In fact, it was largely because of surprise.

Lu Zhou had no expression on his face. He leaned on the conference table with both hands and stood up from his position.

"To be honest, this is the most disappointing day since I came to this era, but I don't want to tell you where I am disappointed.

"I don't have the slightest interest in the position of chairman, and I have always hired someone else to manage my businesses.

"But now, I have changed my mind."

Lu Zhou looked around the silent conference table. He continued with an unquestionable tone, "I'll take the position of chairman.

"The proposal is second-generation controllable fusion. There is no plan, no campaign platform.

"If you want to, vote for me!"

...

Chapter 1479: I Support It

The meeting room went terribly quiet. Air seemed to freeze. Even a piece of hair falling on the ground could be heard.

I will take the position of chairman...

An old popsicle from 100 years ago wants to run for the chairman of East Asia Energy?!

After the first person began to react, a shocking clamor followed immediately.

“You... You want to participate in the board election?”

Seeing that Lu Zhou didn’t seem to be joking, a man about 50 or 60 years old sitting at the conference table said in an incredulous tone, “But... you just woke up, can you manage such a large company?”

Finally, someone raised their head and questioned Lu Zhou. The questions came like a tide, and they were suddenly out of control.

“That’s right! The market value of East Asia Energy plays a decisive role in the GDP of the entire Pan-Asian Cooperation Region! This is no joke!”

“I agree with Director Zhao! The future of East Asia Energy is not just about its own company, but the savings of millions of shareholders, the hope of billions, and the stability of the economy and industrial production in the entire East Asia region! It’s not that we doubt your abilities... It’s just that you are from the 21st century, both the rules and the environment are different from before!”

“Don’t be so judgemental... I believe that Academician Lu’s starting point is definitely good, it’s just a little emotional. My suggestion is that if you want to intervene in the operation of East Asia Energy, you might as well join the technical development committee of the Board of Directors. Or be the head of the scientific research department... We guarantee that your funding will be the most adequate of all departments.”

“Are you really Academician Lu? The Academician Lu I know is not interested in such troublesome things!”

In addition to those who put their opposing opinions on the table, there were also some that supported him.

But most of the people were not optimistic about him.

Some people questioned his identity and began to lead the topic in the direction of whether he was the real Academician Lu or not.

The entire conference table was in chaos. Lu Zhou looked at the two directors who couldn't wait to speak. A playful smile gradually appeared on his face.

Just a few days ago, the entire Pan Asia was cheering and celebrating his "resurrection", and those who had benefited from his academic heritage sent congratulatory messages to him.

This included the board of directors of East Asia Energy.

It now appeared that none of the words in the joint letter of congratulations and praise were true.

In just a few days, after he took out his shares that had been frozen for a century and said he wanted to return to the board of directors, their attitudes instantly changed 180 degrees.

And now, these people simply removed their disguises; some even pointed their "guns" at them...

They were spewing out hypocritical remarks left and right.

Just when Lu Zhou was about to speak, Zhong Ziyu, who was standing next to him, suddenly raised his voice to silence the people in the meeting room. He announced in a confident tone, "The AIIB supports Academician Lu's choice."

The moment this sentence was uttered, the voices around the conference table were immediately lowered by a few decibels.

After a while, Zhong Ziyu continued speaking in a calm tone, "I will vote in favor of him, on behalf of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank."

There was an uproar in the meeting room.

The noise from the clamor became louder.

Director Zhao, who was about 50 or 60 years old, was as red as a tomato. His saliva flew across the table, smashing into Zhong Ziyu's face like bullets.

"Are you crazy? You want to push an old... dormant from a century ago to the position of chairman?! You are not afraid of the direct collapse of the capital market's expectations of us?"

"That only means that they have no vision." The man with gold-rimmed glasses pulled an imperceptible smile at the corner of his mouth as he continued in a calm voice, "Although I don't believe in fate, this time, I am willing to take a gamble. The establishment of East Asia Energy was inseparable from his wisdom. I believe that under his leadership, East Asia Energy can be even greater than it was a century ago."

Whispers sounded from the conference table.

However, before everyone digested the information in this sentence, another voice came from the conference table.

"SoftBank Group agrees!"

After Zhong Ziyu finished speaking, Morinaga couldn't wait to stand up.

"Although we at SoftBank Group did not experience the great era with Academician Lu, I have admired the legend of the 'God of Mathematics' for a long time." After looking around at the people at the conference table, he smiled kindly, laughed, and continued, "We admit that such a decision may cause some controversy, but the results of the board of directors' election have not yet been announced. If you want to sell your shares, you can do so at any time... We want to increase our holdings."

Director Zhao's face turned green. Because of AIB's statement, the probability of Academician Lu being elected chairman was extremely high.

Not to mention the icing on the cake coming from SoftBank Group...

As for the group of "small shareholders" that wanted the chairman position, they stared at each other with embarrassed expressions on their faces. They couldn't say a word.

Director Song Yangwei of the Science and Technology Committee of the Board of Directors pushed his glasses up the bridge of his nose, dragged his

trembling body, and stood up. His turbid pupils stared at Lu Zhou as he said in a serious tone, “I want to ask you, the second-generation controllable nuclear fusion you just said... Are you kidding or are you serious?”

Since the establishment of East Asia Energy, they had been researching the technology of the second-generation controllable nuclear fusion, but even after a century, nothing had happened.

Director Song admitted that although there were reasons why East Asia Energy did not take it seriously, the technical difficulty was also undeniable.

Now an old popsicle from more than 100 years ago woke up and said that the second-generation controllable nuclear fusion technology would be the next stage of development of East Asia Energy... He felt something magical was coming.

“That’s a ridiculous question.

“While serving as the chairman, I will concurrently serve as a director of the Science and Technology Committee. I will personally appoint the group’s scientific research director... If there is no suitable candidate, I will also take the position of the group’s scientific research department director.” Lu Zhou said in a calm tone, “100 years have passed, and you still think second-generation controllable fusion is a joke. Are you kidding me?”

Song Yangwei: “I didn’t mean that... It’s just—”

“It’s just that it sounds too unrealistic, right?” Lu Zhou interrupted him and continued, “If others think so, I can understand, but you are the head of the East Asia Energy research and development department. I really want to know how you got into your position.”

Lu Zhou continued with a calm tone, “I’ll say it again, I’m not kidding.

“I will solve the second-generation controllable fusion during my tenure.

“That’s all I have to say.”

Chapter 1480: Second-Generation Controllable Fusion Technology!

The conference ended.

After the door of the conference room opened, many shareholders who walked out of it did not look good.

Of course, there were also a few ecstatic people with satisfied expressions on their faces when they came out of the conference room.

Although the second-generation controllable fusion technology was just the icing on the cake for East Asia Energy, if this technology had a breakthrough, it would be tantamount to being able to directly utilize the abundant helium-3 reserves on the moon.

At the same time, the second-generation controllable fusion technology would be safer than the first-generation controllable fusion technology. Deuterium-tritium fusion generated excess neutrons while releasing huge amounts of energy, which depleted nuclear reactor equipment.

However, helium-3 was different. After the reaction with deuterium, the energy released would not only be much greater than the first generation of controllable fusion technology, it would also not release excess neutrons to the outside world. It would instead release harmless protons like hydrogen.

Although in their opinions, Academician Lu's bet on the second-generation controllable fusion technology was a gamble, selecting the chairman itself was a gamble.

At least, betting on Academician Lu would have a higher chance of winning...

After Captain Xing noticed Lu Zhou coming out of the conference room, he folded his arms and walked towards him with Shi Jin.

After seeing Captain Xing walk towards him, Lu Zhou and Ling stopped. He cast a questioning gaze at Captain Xing.

"Are there new clues in the investigation of the bombing?"

"Sort of a clue." Captain Xing continued after a pause, "I wonder if you have ever heard of an organization before."

"What organization?"

“The Spirit of The Universe Foundation.”

The Spirit of The Universe Foundation?

The moment he heard the name, Lu Zhou froze for a moment. His expression gradually became serious.

He had heard of this name before.

Just a while ago, he heard Wang Peng talk about them.

“You mean... The person who attacked me has something to do with The Spirit of The Universe Foundation?”

Captain Xing nodded.

“This is our hypothesis.”

Lu Zhou immediately asked, “Is there any evidence?”

“There is no direct evidence, but there is indirect evidence.” Captain Xing paused and continued with a serious expression, “Chairman Liu’s death is very strange, and we received intelligence from informants. There is enough evidence to show that, before his death, Chairman Liu had close contact with The Spirit of The Universe Foundation and reached a deal with them.”

“Deal?”

“Yes.” Captain Xing nodded. “Liu Zhengxing commissioned people from The Spirit of The Universe Foundation to help investigate you, and then for some reason, they directly hired a killer to assassinate you.

“In addition, according to our investigation of Chester, he has a very close relationship with Ruzas, the hijacker on flight N-177. There are indications that The Spirit of The Universe Foundation seems to intend to commit homicide with a revengeful nature.”

Both the hirer and the perpetrator had sufficient motives for the crime.

However, Lu Zhou still didn’t understand what he had done to make The Spirit of The Universe Foundation target him.

“One thing I still don’t quite understand.” Lu Zhou continued to ask as he looked at Captain Xing, “Leaving aside the motive to kill me for the time being... Why did they bother to make it a murder and not an accident? Then blame it on Liu Zhengxing?”

“Maybe they don’t want to expose their existence too much.” The expression on Captain Xing’s face was full of solemnity as he said, “This is what we worry about the most.”

“If people like Liu Zhengxing are insignificant characters in their eyes, someone they can sacrifice at will just to keep a secret...”

Lu Zhou’s face began to change. Captain Xing continued with a serious tone, “Then their penetration of our society may have reached an unimaginable level.”

“I even suspect that there were people in the conference room that belong in the foundation...”

...

The East Asia Energy Board of Directors meeting finally came to an end.

Compared with the previous conferences, this conference ended much faster. Over the morning, all the issues that should be discussed were discussed.

With the support of a large number of shareholders such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Lu Zhou, the largest individual shareholder, was elected as the chairman of East Asia Energy without any suspense, with a vote advantage of more than 70%.

After the resolution was completed, the news was published on their official website.

At the same time, the development plan of East Asia Energy for the next five years was also announced.

In the next five years, East Asia Energy would adjust its development direction from the cultivation of the stock market to the development of new technologies at the strategic level.

In particular, the second-generation controllable fusion technology would be the focus of East Asia Energy's research and development.

In addition, according to the results of the voting on the board of directors, Director Song Yangwei of the Science and Technology Committee of the Board of Directors was removed. The vacated position would be held by Chairman Lu Zhou.

After the announcement of a series of news, everyone who followed the progress of the meeting was shocked.

No one expected Academician Lu to serve as the chairman of East Asia Energy himself, or for him to hold so many positions concurrently, firmly holding the power of research and development in his own hands.

What was interesting was that the feedback made by the capital market to such a result also exceeded everyone's expectations.

After some volatile trading, East Asia Energy's stock rose to the moon.

Not only did the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank increase its holdings, but investment companies such as the Yangtze River Delta Bank, South Africa Investment, and SoftBank Group had also given optimistic views on the future expectations of East Asia Energy.

During an interview with the financial media, Zhong Ziyu, an investment manager of the AIIB and one of the managing directors of East Asia Energy, explained his decision.

"The second generation of controllable fusion technology will completely change the world's energy industry, just like the original generation of controllable fusion technology did.

"Once this technology makes a breakthrough, East Asia Energy will be as great as it was a century ago. Our inter-regional power grid will be further expanded and extended to farther places.

"Whether it is for East Asia Energy's own interests or for the economic development of the entire Pan-Asian region, he is the best choice for chairman!"

Not only did the share price of East Asia Energy see a substantial rise, but those mining companies on the moon, especially those companies that had the ability to develop helium-3 resources, also saw their share prices jump to varying degrees.

For those shareholders who sold their stocks at the board meeting, the only thing they wanted to do was jump off a cliff.

However, those people were only the minority. Although most people said they were not optimistic, they did not sell their stocks to the bait thrown by some investment institutions and Morinaga.

Opposing Lu Zhou's chairmanship was just a subconscious reaction to safeguard their own interests. The vast majority of people were quite optimistic about the future of East Asia Energy.

Why would it matter that the chairman came from a hundred years ago?

How could East Asia Energy, the giant, fall because of the inability of a certain chairman?

In any case, the entire Pan-Asian energy market was under their monopoly.

This had not changed for a hundred years...

Chapter 1481: Submissions From a Century Ago

The Yangtze River Delta city group.

The headquarters of the AIIB.

After listening to the report on the video call, Governor Zhou, who was sitting on the office chair, thought for a moment, then said with a strange expression on his face.

"Second generation of controllable fusion... Are you sure this is what he said?"

"I'm pretty sure." In the holographic screen, Zhong Ziyu nodded. He continued gently, "Although Academician Lu is not the most suitable candidate for the

chairman, his proposal on the second generation of controllable nuclear fusion really touched me. Over the past half-century, East Asia Energy has basically had no substantial development except from being strong to becoming all-mighty. Although the second generation of controllable fusion sounds ridiculous, whether it can be done or not, I think it can at least bring us some changes.”

Governor Zhou’s finger gently tapped on the table as he asked in a deep voice, “What about the risks?”

Zhong Ziyu continued, “The only risk is at the technical level, but even if the worst happens, it will not be so bad that it is unacceptable.”

There was a long silence in the office.

Governor Zhou, who was sitting at his desk, was lost in thought. He did not say a word for a while.

After about five minutes, he finally raised his eyelids, as if waking up. He looked at Zhong Ziyu in the holographic window and opened his mouth.

“You did a good job.

“If the risks are acceptable, I won’t hold you accountable for your claims.

“But remember, keeping East Asia Energy’s shares independent is the prerequisite for everything. If it is discovered that he intends to integrate the shares of several companies he holds and lobby other shareholders to complete the merger and reorganization... You must stop him. ”

Zhong Ziyu nodded slightly.

“Understood.”

The video call was over.

Governor Zhou, who hung up the phone, loosened his shoulders slightly and leaned back on the office chair.

Academician Lu as the chairman of East Asia Energy...

Proposing second-generation controllable fusion technology to the board of directors.

Although the risks were indeed controllable, the development of things had exceeded his expectations.

“It’s really hard to say whether this is a blessing or a curse...”

He raised his index finger and pinched his eyebrow. He then looked at the ceiling and muttered to himself. He suddenly sat up straight from the office chair and tapped his index finger on the corner of the desk.

The light blue holographic panel resurfaced, and the video phone window opened again.

He looked at the smart assistant in the floating window and spoke in a clear voice.

“Call the Pan-Asian Cooperation headquarters.

“I have important things to talk to Chairman Li.”

...

For Pan-Asian people, this month definitely had the most emotional roller coasters over the past two years.

First, flight N-177 was hijacked and about to crash with the Tianzhou space station. After that, Academician Lu suddenly resurrected, and all member states of the Pan-Asian Cooperation celebrated his return.

However, if there was anything more surprising to the Pan-Asian people than the resurrection of Academician Lu, it was probably the establishment of the second-generation controllable nuclear fusion project.

The old popsicle, who woke up a century ago, entered the forefront of the academic world as soon as he woke up, with the insurmountable challenge of second-generation controllable nuclear fusion...

After hearing this news, many people’s first reaction was dumbfounded.

Their second reaction was being muddled...

The comments section of the LSPM forum.

As the only academic exchange zone with no posting requirements, most of the discussions and exchanges here were non-professional science enthusiasts or students studying in first and second-tier universities.

Because of the huge population of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, even though the forum itself was very small, the daily traffic was not small.

As a paradise academic exchange platform personally designed by Academician Lu back in the day, they obviously talked about him.

The second the news was announced, voices of discussion occupied the entire news section. Some people talked about inside gossip, and some discussed academic issues.

But no matter what the discussion was, people's emotions were the same...

"Second-generation controllable nuclear fusion? Is he kidding?"

"Didn't the chief engineer of East Asia Energy just said that in a lecture at Jinling University some time ago, that we are at least 50 years away from the realization of the second-generation controllable nuclear fusion?!"

"50 years... If you count from the time when Academician Lu was dormant, it would be 150 years for him."

"You can't calculate it like that... After all, for a monster like Academician Lu, learning the technology of the past 100 years should not be difficult. After all, he was the chief designer of the Pangu, and he was the designer of the entire fusion reactor. No one knows the design process better than him!"

"It's hard to say! 100 years have passed, and his design ideas are outdated!"

"But his smart brain is not outdated, I am looking forward to it!"

It wasn't just ordinary people who were fervently discussing this matter, scholars who were engaged in research in this field or had external interests in this field were also discussing it.

As soon as East Asia Energy announced the establishment of the second-generation controllable nuclear fusion project and the announcement of Academician Lu's personal role as the project leader, the discussion group of the LSPM forum was filled with "second-generation controllable nuclear

fusion” and “Academician Lu takes on chairman on East Asia Energy” discussion posts.

Especially with regards to the feasibility of the second-generation controllable fusion technology, people with different viewpoints were arguing until their faces turned red. If they weren’t separated by the internet, they would have started throwing hands.

The science section of the Pan Asia TV station immediately recorded a program closely following current events and invited an important guest.

This guest was not Lu Zhou himself, but Academician Zhang Feiyue, a top expert in the field of contemporary controllable fusion technology and the director of the Institute of Nuclear Engineering of the Institute for Advanced Study!

As far as theoretical knowledge was concerned, even the chief engineer of East Asia Energy couldn’t match his understanding of controllable fusion technology.

“Hello, Academician Zhang!”

After nodding to this polite greeting, Academician Zhang said with a smile.

“Hello. Thanks for having me.”

Host: “As for Academician Lu’s recent proposal to make the second-generation controllable nuclear fusion technology the key development direction of East Asia Energy in the next five years, how do you view this matter?”

“It’s hard to say...” After touching the stubble on his chin, Academician Zhang responded to the host with a friendly smile after thinking, “I don’t understand the economic aspect, so I’ll talk about what I know.”

The host nodded and said in a serious tone, “Please speak!”

“Compared to the first generation of controllable nuclear fusion, the second generation of controllable fusion is not only an order of magnitude higher than the former in terms of energy output, but there is also a huge difference in cost between the two.”

Moderator: "Can you expand on that?"

Academician Zhang smiled and said.

"Let's put it this way, regardless of design differences, so far there are 37 fusion reactors in the Pan-Asian region that use first-generation controllable fusion technology, as well as a dozen deuterium-tritium extraction stations and hundreds of hydrogen storage stations. East Asia Energy's annual maintenance costs for this are more than 7 billion credit points, accounting for 40% of the total operating costs.

"And if the second-generation controllable fusion technology is adopted, one second-generation fusion reactor can replace the 37 fusion reactors that use the first-generation technology."

After hearing this, the expression on the host's face instantly changed.

One second-generation fusion reactor can produce as much power as 37 first-generation fusion reactors?!

This is insane!

Is it really that overpowered?!

The host gulped nervously. He continued to ask in a trembling tone of excitement, "Is it... really that different?"

"The difference is the same as the first-generation controllable fusion technology compared to nuclear fission power."

Academician Zhang's tone was filled with emotion.

"In fact, these are all trivial matters. The key is that the second-generation fusion technology can replace the relatively expensive tritium with helium-3, which has abundant reserves on the moon and is not difficult to collect.

"If you think a little further and apply the second-generation fusion technology to the aerospace field, our starship will not only be more than twice as big as it is now, but the fuel and cruising range it can carry will increase by an order of magnitude.

"Even for a conservative estimate, our future will undergo earth-shaking changes because of the birth of this technology!"

After listening to these amazing words from Academician Zhang, the host who looked shocked suddenly forgot what to say.

After a while, he gulped and asked, “Then what about the third-generation of controllable fusion technology?”

“Third-generation?” Academician Zhang was taken aback by the question. He then said with a smile, “That will be pure helium trifusion. Two helium atoms combine to form a helium atom and two protons... This is the most perfect fusion formula.

“However, it will be a long, long time before that thing is realized.”

Because of Academician Zhang’s interview, the discussion on the second generation of controllable fusion had been pushed to a new peak.

Many papers had sprung up like bamboo shoots after a rain. From an academic perspective, they had begun to demonstrate the feasibility of the technology and the expected cost of investment.

However, most of the viewpoints in these papers were not optimistic.

From an emotional point of view, most people were willing to believe that Academician Lu, who once brought light to this land, would once again light up the land with a bigger torch.

But science would not be emotional.

Sitting in his study room, Lu Zhou took a sip of coffee. He typed the last punctuation on the holographic keyboard, then ordered Xiao Ai to send the paper to the editorial department of “Future”.

Speaking of which, the last time he submitted a thesis to “Future” was a paper on the ABC conjecture.

It seemed like he was discussing math problems with his old friends just yesterday.

Lu Zhou didn’t feel like the last submission was 100 years ago at all...

Chapter 1482: Patriarch’s Paper

Hou Huaizhi was an editor.

However, he was not the kind that worked in ordinary newspapers or magazines.

As one of the most widely-read and influential journals in the world, the journal “Future” he worked at was a beacon in the minds of countless scholars and a quantitative benchmark for measuring a scholar’s academic level.

There was a saying in some research areas...

Which was that, a scholar who had never published research results in “Future” could never be called a first-class scholar, and whether a scholar had made outstanding contributions in certain research fields depended on how many papers he had published in “Future”.

It was precisely because of this that he was not only passionate about his work but also had a full sense of belonging.

Every time he sat in the office of the editorial department, he felt that every decision he made was closely tied to the fate of the world...

As usual, after dictating the day’s housework to his robot, he drove the maglev car to the editorial office.

However, just as he walked into the office slowly while humming a little tune, he was surprised by the scene in front of him.

His colleagues formed a circle in front of a desk, as if watching something incredible. They pointed to the holographic screen suspended on the desk and talked.

Hou Huaizhi was curious about what happened. He stepped forward and asked the colleague closest to him, “What happened? Why are you all here?”

With an obviously surprised expression on his face, the colleague turned to look at the editor, then said with excitement, “You will never guess what happened! We received Academician Lu’s paper!”

Academician Lu’s paper?

The moment he heard these words, Hou Huaizhi was stunned. His entire body was instantly dumbfounded.

“Academician Lu?! The Academician Lu?”

“Of course? Who else could it be!”

Hou Huaizhi asked quickly, “What’s the area?”

“Controllable nuclear fusion! It belongs to the study of deuterium/helium tritium fusion! From the perspectives of theory and engineering applications, he sorted out the current problems and possible problems facing the second generation of controllable nuclear fusion research... Although I don’t understand many of the formulas and inferences!”

The colleague from the editorial department, with an incredible expression on his face, continued in a tone of admiration, “It’s incredible... A scholar from a hundred years ago has done something that should have been left to the people of the future.”

Another colleague standing nearby interrupted.

“I think we are in trouble.”

Hou Huaizhi frowned.

“Trouble?”

As soon as he said this, he immediately realized what the trouble his colleague was talking about.

“The question now is who should I call to review the manuscript.”

Editor-in-Chief Wang folded his arms. He sighed and said, “The research on the second generation of controllable fusion itself cannot be said to be very popular as there are very few experts in this field. Not to mention the paper touches on the fields of mathematics, plasma physics, materials science, and engineering, and it can even be divided into dozens of research directions. Every technical bottleneck was written in extreme detail.”

To be honest, he did not understand how Academician Lu had achieved such an in-depth understanding of so many research fields.

Several people in the editorial department looked at each other with embarrassed expressions on their faces.

Just like the editor-in-chief said.

It was difficult to find a reviewer.

At this moment, the silence in the office was suddenly broken.

Hou Huaizhi suddenly thought of someone, and he spoke subconsciously.

“Why don’t we contact Academician Zhang? I remember he is an expert in the field of controllable fusion and plasma physics, and he has also won the Lu Zhou Science Award!”

As soon as they heard the name of Academician Zhang, many people reacted, and the voice of discussion spread in the office again.

“You mean Academician Zhang Feiyue?”

“What a coincidence! Last night I saw him on the panel of the science program of Pan-Asia TV, talking about the recent second-generation controllable fusion that has been raging.”

“Academician Zhang should be fine, he is a top expert in the field of controllable nuclear fusion!”

“... Not necessarily, Academician Zhang is studying plasma physics. Although it also involves second-generation controllable nuclear fusion, the focus is still on the theoretical direction. And Academician Lu’s paper only briefly talks about plasma. The essence of the whole paper is about the precise calculated values of various engineering parameters that need to be achieved in the design of core materials and electromagnets.”

The voices of discussion in the office were in a dispute.

After listening to his colleagues’ discussions, Editor-in-Chief Wang finally made a final decision.

“Let’s contact Academician Zhang! You, go... Forget it, I’ll send the email myself.

“In any case, whether we should publish the paper is the professionals’ decision, we just need to do our job well!”

Only from the content itself, this paper was quite good, but because the formulas and inferences were too complicated, they couldn’t decide how much academic value this paper contained.

...

Jin Ling University campus.

Sitting in his office, Academician Zhang looked at the paper on the holographic screen. He had a headache.

“Future” magazine kicked the ball to his court. He didn’t want to pick it up, but he couldn’t help but want to read what Academician Lu wrote.

To be honest, when he first got Lu Zhou’s paper, he was actually curious. As for the content of the paper itself, he didn’t expect much.

After all, it was written by a scholar from a century ago. The knowledge he possessed had long been outdated, so he could forget about making breakthroughs on the basis of existing research results.

Even if he believed that a smart brain would not become obsolete, Lu Zhou’s knowledge was based on the past.

However...

After reading the paper, Zhang Feiyue was completely stunned.

The PhD student saw his professor staring at the same page for a long time without any movement. He had been reading the page while standing behind the professor, and he couldn’t help but whisper, “Professor?”

Academician Zhang, who was stunned at his desk, finally recovered from the shock.

He coughed lightly, snapped back to reality, then looked back at the student standing behind him and said, “I was lost in thought, what’s the matter?”

The PhD student immediately asked, “What do you think of this paper?”

“It’s quite sophisticated, and the level is surprisingly high. From the day he got on the flight to Earth, it has been less than a month. He’s probably the only person who can fully understand all the research results of the entire second-generation controllable nuclear fusion project over the past century in just one month.”

The paper was like a blueprint that outlined the entire second-generation controllable fusion project and used rigorous calculations to list every piece of the puzzle needed to complete the project.

In his opinion, this was the most incredible part of this paper!

It was also at the same time that a thought suddenly came to Academician Zhang’s mind.

Perhaps...

This patriarch will actually invent the second-generation controllable fusion!

Chapter 1483: Cleaning Up Worms

While the entire “Future” editorial department and Academician Zhang, who was the reviewer, were worried about Lu Zhou’s paper, the research and development department of East Asia Energy had similar difficulties because of Academician Lu’s coming to power.

Director Song Yangwei of the Science and Technology Committee of the Board of Directors was dismissed, the senior executives of the entire R&D department had a big change, followed by the reform of the approval mechanism for scientific research funds.

There were rumors that Lu Zhou was reviewing the academic resumes of the senior executives of the entire R&D department and adopted a zero-tolerance attitude towards the uncoordinated project managers. The entire R&D department was panicking.

Of course, not everyone was panicking.

For those who were diligent in scientific research, the series of measures Lu Zhou made after he came to power was still quite desired. For this group of

people, they were long sick of those department executives who relied on nepotism and those project leaders who had not published a paper but still received funding.

“The impact of feng shui on the safety of the controllable fusion reactor core... What kind of rubbish research project is this? How dare they!”

A big red cross was drawn on a document. Lu Zhou, who was frowning, reached out his index finger and quickly swept across the holographic screen, switching to the next document without stopping.

After the development of a century, the scale of East Asia Energy had become larger and more bloated.

Behind the huge profitability and scale of the company were exhausted creativity and bureaucratic corporate culture.

Although this big tree was branched out in all areas, it was riddled with holes that had been eaten by worms.

If it hadn't been for the hard work of people from a century ago, Lu Zhou would sell his stock directly and start over with the money.

However, he did not expect to be pushed to the position of chairman after his angry remarks.

Even though in his opinion, East Asia Energy was dying, it wasn't hopeless.

Despite the future people letting him down again and again...

Lu Zhou looked at another study titled “Twenty-seven Methods of Coffee Brewing and Their Effects on the Quality of Napping”, Lu Zhou's eyebrow twitched fiercely again.

“This is a f*cking project?!”

Is this a scam?

This company needs to be streamlined.

Lu Zhou looked at the project applicant's name and how Director Song had granted two million credits to this garbage project. He couldn't stand it anymore. He made a label next to the name of the paper author.

He would ask his office secretary to clean up these spineless research worms.

In the beginning, he wanted to just cancel their projects. After all, he was their founding father. However, now it seemed like if he didn't exterminate them, they would spread across the whole company!

Lu Zhou looked at the time in the upper right corner of the holographic screen. He took a deep breath and got up from the office chair, seeing that it was almost time for a lunch break.

Although he didn't have any appetite, he had been working in the office all morning, so he decided to go to the rest area on the floor for a cup of coffee and get some fresh air.

He finally realized how difficult it was to run a business.

Despite this business being in his area of expertise.

Other than scientific research funding, I wonder how many problems are behind East Asia Energy...

Lu Zhou held a paper cup full of coffee in his hand as he looked at the city outside the windows. He suddenly thought of Chen Yushan, who had silently supported him all those years. He couldn't help but feel a little down.

Although he always controlled himself not to deliberately recall things from a century ago, he still felt like everything seemed to have happened yesterday.

In fact, ever since he woke up, he had been urging Xiao Ai to help him dig out things about Chen Yushan from a century ago.

However, all the clues were gone three years after her disappearance. The only indirect clues showed that she went to Beijing after resigning as CEO and met her parents.

After that, she disappeared into the vast sea of people, and no one had seen her since then...

"Still reviewing the projects?"

Lu Zhou heard the voice come from behind, so he turned around.

He saw a man wearing gold-rimmed glasses with a cup of coffee in his hand, walking to his side with a smile.

The AR technology of this era was quite convenient. Even if someone couldn't remember the name of the other party, if they were in their electronic address book, they could quickly recognize the name of the other party through the face recognition function of AR glasses. This minimized the embarrassment of forgetting each other's names in social interactions.

With this function, Lu Zhou noticed that this guy's name was Zhong Ziyu.

"Sort of, what's the matter?"

"Nothing, just curious." Zhong Ziyu smiled while standing next to Lu Zhou. He continued in a chatty tone, "It has been five years since the AIIB assigned me to East Asia Energy. Of the three chairmen I have seen, you are probably the most courageous one."

"Thanks for the compliment."

"It's not a compliment, it's just a statement of facts." After taking a sip of coffee, he cast his eyes on the Huangpu River, he smiled and continued, "Everyone knows where the problem is, but you are the first to stand up and try to solve it."

Lu Zhou said blankly, "If you guys solved the problem, then I wouldn't be here right now."

"It's not that we don't want to solve it, the problems are far more complicated than you realize." Zhong Ziyu sighed lightly. He continued, "Besides, any company is actually the same. There will always be people who do work and those who don't. The two sides reach a balance at a certain critical point and jointly maintain the efficiency of the enterprise."

Lu Zhou: "But it is unfair to those who do work seriously."

"There is no fairness in this world."

"But this is not a reason to stop pursuing fairness..." Lu Zhou frowned slightly and said, "I feel like you have something to say."

“Why? I was just a little surprised...” Zhong Ziyu said with a smile, “I didn’t expect you to be an idealist.”

Lu Zhou asked, “So?”

Zhong Ziyu: “Please don’t get me wrong. I just admire your ideas. To ordinary people like us, we have no interest in what happens to others... Maybe this is why you are a great man, we are just observers.”

“It doesn’t matter if I’m a great man or not, I only do what I should do.”

Lu Zhou threw the empty paper cup into the recycling bin next to him. He looked at Zhong Ziyu and continued, “We’ll have a meeting in the afternoon. Help me inform all the research and development departments. All research project team leaders have to attend.”

Zhong Ziyu nodded and replied happily, “I will keep you informed.”

...

The lunch break was over.

Two o’clock in the afternoon.

Lu Zhou arrived at the conference room on the first floor of East Asia Energy on time.

When he arrived here, the conference room was already full of people. East Asia Energy’s research institutes were spread throughout the Pan-Asian region. Although not everyone was present in person, they were at least standing here through the holographic conference system.

Lu Zhou glanced around at the disturbed researchers and the supervisors of the various project teams. He said a few opening lines and went directly to the main topic.

“When I checked the accounts, I discovered that East Asia Energy invested large amounts in new areas of technology research and development, but unfortunately, the results were few to none.

“Then, when I continued to check where each scientific research fund was used, I finally found out where the problem was.

“This discovery made me feel disappointed.”

Lu Zhou looked at the silent meeting room and the faces that were excited, nervous, hostile, and full of hope. He continued to speak in a steady tone.

“Solving these problems is an urgent matter. The approval of scientific research funding and the entire East Asia Energy R&D department needs a top-down reform!

“From today onwards, the unlimited funding approval system will be obsolete. The filing of all projects will require signatures from the scientific research director and the Science and Technology Committee of the Board of directors. Everything will be streamlined.

“As for the existing projects, I will cut down 50% of them. I will also liquidate the projects that are suspected of serious funding abuse and hand them over to the legal department for accountability!”

Lu Zhou looked at the quiet crowd. He then slowed down a bit and continued, “Now, let’s focus on the main topic for today’s meeting.

“Let’s talk about the second-generation controllable fusion project.”

Chapter 1484: The Master of This Era!

The conference ended.

Footsteps and voices of complaints came out of the conference room.

With an angry expression on his face, an old man about 50 or 60 years old spoke furiously.

“What the hell is that Academician Lu doing?!”

Soon, another middle-aged man, about 30 or 40 years old, also echoed angrily.

“Cutting down 50% of scientific research projects; this guy is crazy! Second-generation controllable fusion? Without sufficient funds, we can’t do anything!”

“This is completely unreasonable! Although he is Academician Lu... But it has been more than a hundred years, why does he think that his theory can be applied now?”

Listening to the voices of the people next to him, Director Liu Sihai, who was surrounded by the crowd, had a gloomy expression on his face. He hadn't said a word since he stepped out of the door of the conference room.

At the conference, the paper named “Twenty-seven Methods of Coffee Brewing and Their Effects on the Quality of Napping” that Lu Zhou criticized by name was his masterpiece.

It was precisely because of this that when Lu Zhou said that he would be held accountable and liquidated, he suddenly panicked and didn't know what to do for a while.

He was in his early thirties and had poor academic experience. Normally, it was absolutely impossible for him to sit in the position of a laboratory supervisor, not to mention the most critical and most adequately funded electromagnet research laboratory.

The reason why he was in this position was thanks to his wife, who was slightly older than him. Her father was on the board of directors of the Science and Technology Committee.

Of course, these things were now in the past.

At the previous board meeting, Lu Zhou, who took up the post of chairman, removed Song Yangwei from his position on the grounds of reforming the R&D department and took the position of the Science and Technology Committee.

Although his father-in-law's Song Capital was still a shareholder of East Asia Energy, the power of the board of directors had been deprived of voting rights. If Lu Zhou really wanted him gone, there was nothing he could do.

He worked quite hard to make up “reasons” for funding!

After reading the dissatisfaction on his boss' face, Yang Xiaofeng glanced left and right, then immediately scolded.

"This Lu Zhou is too despicable! Is he the real Academician Lu? I seriously think that he is a fake!"

Although he hoped that this was the case, it was obviously stupid to question his identity.

A related researcher walking nearby sighed and said in a heavy tone, "Whether it is fake or not, the Pan-Asian Cooperation is always on his side, including the AIIB... Although I don't understand why those major shareholders are so optimistic about an old popsicle from a hundred years ago, the power he holds is too great."

Although these senior executives in scientific research usually did not care about the business side of things, they were still in the company and heard about the board voting.

Lu Zhou was able to directly overthrow Song Yangwei on the board of directors and grab the position of the director of the Science and Technology Committee from him. This was largely because he was supported by a large number of major shareholders, such as the AIIB.

Otherwise, relying on his 7% of the shares and his poor connections in the East Asia Energy Board of Directors, it would be almost impossible to get things done.

"What's the point of the board of directors? No matter how good he is, he is still alone. If he wants to do something, he still needs someone else to work for him." Yang Xiaofeng continued with a sinister smile in his eyes, "I have an idea. Instead of making the old popsicle give in, it is better to make him maintain the status quo."

Liu Siha was worried that Lu Zhou would get rid of him, so he immediately spoke up.

"What's the idea? Tell me!"

"Academician Lu's prestige in the academic world is true, but after all, it came from a hundred years ago. His connections no longer exist in this era. And you are the leader of the electromagnet research laboratory. If he gets rid of you, there will be no one to replace your seat."

Director Liu Siha's eyes gradually brightened. Yang Xiaofeng smiled and continued slowly.

"If the whole R&D department is in chaos, forget about second-generation controllable fusion, I'm afraid that the normal business of East Asia Energy will also be affected. Seeing the chaos left by him, even if the AIIB believes in him, they have to admit that he is not a good manager at all. At that time, he won't even secure his chairman seat."

"Genius!"

After listening to Yang Xiaofeng's words, Liu Sihai's face suddenly showed an overjoyed expression. His eyes became brighter as he continued to mumble, "As long as Lu Zhou loses power in the board of directors, in order to clean up the mess he would undoubtedly leave behind, the board of directors will definitely invite Director Song back."

When my father-in-law returns to his position in the Science and Technology Committee, I won't have to worry about my future in East Asia Energy!

Even if Lu Zhou removed him as laboratory director, it would only be a matter of time for him to transfer to a top position of other laboratories!

Zhao Xiaofeng gave a flattering smile.

"You're brilliant, Director Liu!

"What he's doing is not just hurting our interests! What we have to do now is to unite those who are dissatisfied and fight against the old popsicle!

"He will then know who is the master of this era!"

...

The day after the research conference ended.

Although not everyone was eligible to participate in the conference, the content of the conference spread the day it ended.

In addition to Lu Zhou's deployment of second-generation controllable fusion technology at the meeting, what attracted the most attention from researchers was the reform program he put forward at the meeting.

Whether it was cutting half of the scientific research projects or changing the approval process for scientific research funding, every measure proposed by Academician Lu was closely related to the vital interests of the scientific research workers of East Asia Energy.

Therefore, regardless of whether it was within the Pan-Asian Cooperation or not, every research unit under East Asia Energy was talking about this.

“Director Liu of the electromagnet lab was actually removed? Really?”

“That’s the author of ‘Twenty-seven Methods of Coffee Brewing and Their Effects on the Quality of Napping’? I heard that the funding was applied for 2 million? Haha, it’s finally time for him to leave! He’s an insult to our company!”

“Shhh, don’t talk nonsense. Director Liu is the son-in-law of Director Song. Academician Lu only warned him at the meeting. If nothing happens in the end, what you said today will reach his ears. Are you not afraid of him?”

“F*ck? Really, he’s going to come after me? Also, I’m not the only one who said this...”

Tang Yunge listened to the discussion of his colleagues in the office. He felt that these guys were really not afraid of dying. They even dared to talk nonsense.

However, if someone were to ask him what he thought, he would still applaud Academician Lu for cleaning Director Liu.

Because he was the kind of person who liked to get things done.

Inside the electromagnet research laboratory, these front-line scientific researchers did the hardest work and the most demanding jobs, but in the end, they might not even be able to put their names on the research papers.

They had to forget about receiving credit for the research results that Director Liu and other stakeholders focused on.

Being able to put their names on the thesis could already be regarded as “a blessing from the heavens”.

On the one-third acre land of the electromagnet research laboratory, Director Liu was the king.

However, ever since Academician Lu returned, everything seemed to have changed.

When he saw the triumphant ceremony at the Heart of Asia through his VR headset, his heart was filled with emotions. He felt that this great man from a century ago would bring a little excitement to the lives of the Pan-Asian people.

And now, his feelings came true.

As Tang Yunge looked at the email in his mailbox, he felt a wave of emotions.

He didn't know why Academician Lu became interested in an unknown person like him.

But his intuition told him that this should be a good thing.

"Bro, why are you so happy?"

Tang Yunge immediately suppressed the smirk on his face and coughed dryly.

"Happy? Am I? By the way, I still have something to do this afternoon, so let's postpone the experiment until tomorrow. I don't trust you to do it yourself."

The colleague didn't think much. He just replied with a smile, "Okay, tomorrow it is."

Chapter 1485: The Key to the Second Generation of Controllable Fusion

The reform of research funding had caused panic within East Asia Energy.

Half of the scientific research projects were cut, stricter funding approval...

Although this had not been implemented yet, everyone was worried that they would eventually fall.

But generally speaking, everyone's mood was relatively stable.

Especially for those scientific researchers who worked diligently, Lu Zhou's approach was a bit tough, even uncomfortable, but it was still quite popular.

To be honest, they had long been fed up with those leaders who relied on nepotism and had no abilities at all, relying on the power at hand to do whatever they wanted in the department.

As for whether the people who only collected paychecks were satisfied with the reforms...

Lu Zhou didn't care.

In his opinion, East Asia Energy was already a dying giant. To cure its disease, it must be treated with a strong medicine.

Cleaning up the worms was only the first step.

The second step was to sweep out the people who only cared about the paychecks.

It was not that Lu Zhou was unkind. He didn't mind having some bloated people in other positions. But as a scholar, he had zero tolerance for this kind of behavior in scientific researchers!

He knew exactly what it was like to devote all his life to scientific research yet not get any attention in the end, and in turn, to have one's academic achievements stolen away.

As long as he sat in the position of chairman, he would definitely not allow such injustice to happen under his nose!

Besides, he didn't expect those b*stards to be able to help him with the engineering of the second-generation controlled fusion.

If they didn't want to work hard, they should go home.

...

After the meeting, Lu Zhou, who had arranged the work of various departments, immediately invested in the research of the second-generation controllable fusion technology.

Although he did not particularly understand the rules of this era, doing scientific research was always the same.

Choose a general direction, then through constant trial and error, find a feasible path. From the standpoint of a chief designer, what he needed to do was to plan the framework of the entire large-scale scientific research project, choose several technical routes with the highest probability of success, then formulate strategic directions for academic leaders in various fields. He had to do everything possible to reduce the number of trials and errors, as well as time costs.

The three problems currently faced by the second-generation controllable fusion technology were basically the same as those he faced in the first-generation controllable fusion technology.

The only difference was that the difficulty was different.

The scattering cross-section of deuterium and helium-3 was much smaller than that of deuterium-tritium. The cross-section of the former was only 0.8b at 300 keV, which was much smaller than the latter, so more energy input was required and the fusion conditions were more severe.

The same fusion reactor could realize the DT reaction, the temperature of the deuterium-tritium reaction, at only 100 million degrees.

However, if someone wanted to make a fusion reaction between deuterium and helium and keep the reaction stable, the temperature required was a few billion degrees.

Temperature was just one element.

There was also density and constraint time; these three were indispensable.

According to the literature that Lu Zhou consulted, so far, the core problems faced by the second generation of controllable fusion were mainly concentrated in reaction temperature.

Especially how to confine and compress the high-temperature plasma in a very small area.

The strength of the magnetic field required to achieve this was a terrifying number.

However, despite so many difficulties, Lu Zhou did not feel that this was an unsolvable problem.

When he was designing the first generation of controllable fusion reactor cores, he was also troubled by the same problem. The situation at that time was not more optimistic than it was now. Many key technologies, including computational materials science, were in an emerging stage; some were even at the conceptual stage.

However, in that era, he still brought a group of outstanding engineers and scholars to complete a miracle in the history of human science.

Since he could do it in the past, he had reason to believe that, in the future, with the more advanced science and technology, he would be able to accomplish this miracle once again!

Office of the Chairman.

Tang Yunge, who came to the building for a report, was standing at the desk with a nervous expression. As he looked at the great man from a hundred years ago, his heart was filled with anxiety and curiosity.

In the morning, he received an email from Academician Lu.

In the email, Academician Lu offered him an invitation, hoping that he would come to the building to discuss with him about the second-generation controllable nuclear fusion project.

Strictly speaking, Tang Yunge was not studying second-generation controllable fusion. His role was just as a senior researcher in the electromagnet research laboratory. His usual job was to hold meetings, research, and design a magnetic field container for East Asia Energy reactors.

He really didn't understand why Academician Lu wanted to see a nobody like him.

Just when he was hesitant to say hello to him, Lu Zhou, who was sitting behind his desk, spoke concisely.

"Please sit."

"Thank you."

Lu Zhou looked at Tang Yunge, who was sitting on the sofa. He went straight to the point.

“I have read your paper. In the area of electromagnet research, you have put forward a lot of interesting design concepts and ideas. I was impressed with many of them.”

After receiving the compliment from Academician Lu, Tang Yunge couldn't help but feel a little proud, but he still said modestly, “You're too kind, those research results are not from me alone.”

“No matter who is responsible for it, it's not from Liu Siha.”

Lu Zhou paused for a while and continued, “According to my calculation results, I need a magnetic field capable of generating 10,000T in a small space to confine the high-temperature plasma in the reactor core.

“Can it be done?”

“Almost... impossible,” Tang Yunge said with an embarrassed expression on his face. “With East Asia Energy's current technical reserves, we can make the strongest electromagnet with a magnetic field strength of just over 5,000T. The sustainable time is less than 50 milliseconds, and it cannot be used to power the core. As for 10,000T... This is too ridiculous.”

What did 10,000T mean?

To put it intuitively, the MRI machine used in general hospitals was about 3T, and 13T could make a frog float in the air.

Most people simply couldn't imagine what a terrifying force 10,000 Tesla was.

Lu Zhou raised his eyebrows slightly and said, “There is no hope at all?”

After making eye contact with Lu Zhou, Tang Yunge prepared to give an affirmative answer, but at this moment, there was a slight hesitation in his eyes.

Is there really no hope at all?

Not quite.

But East Asia Energy...

Has no hope.

After hesitating for a while, Tang Yunge finally took a deep breath, clenched his teeth, and spoke.

“It’s not that there is no hope at all... But the current situation of the electromagnet research laboratory is looking grim!”

“Oh?” Lu Zhou raised his eyebrows, looked at him, and asked, “It seems you have something to say.”

Tang Yunge gave a wry smile. He was about to speak out about the problems of the electromagnet research laboratory.

However, outside the chairman’s office, rushing footsteps were heard.

There were two knocks on the door, then the door was pushed open.

Lu Zhou’s office secretary anxiously appeared at the door.

“Lu, Academician Lu, not good!”

Lu Zhou looked at the office secretary standing at the door of the office. He frowned slightly.

“What’s going on?”

With an anxious expression on his face, the secretary couldn’t even catch his breath. He said nervously, “The electromagnet research laboratory!

“They are on a strike!”

Chapter 1486: Collective Resignation

Strike?

After hearing this unexpected word, Lu Zhou was slightly stunned, and it took a while before he recovered.

“Strike? For... what reason?”

“Everyone is not working anymore.” Secretary Zhou said, “The entire electromagnet research laboratory has stopped. The researchers all ran to the lobby of the laboratory building to protest your scientific research reform... Basically, the scene is chaotic. If they continue to make trouble, I am worried that the board of directors will take action.”

Tang Yunge, who was standing next to him, couldn't help but show a bitter expression on his face.

To be honest, he was not surprised that this kind of thing would happen.

The entire electromagnet research laboratory had almost become the playground for Director Liu Sihai alone. With the support of Song Yangwei, the old man who held an important position on the board of directors, he eroded the electromagnet laboratory of East Asia Energy after several years of management.

From the leaders of key projects to the management personnel of other laboratories and production units, all important positions were held by his corrupt friends.

This was no longer a problem that could be solved by one or two people.

Unless the entire East Asia Energy's R&D department had a big change, forget about second-generation controllable fusion, it would be a blessing to be able to continue to maintain East Asia Energy's advantage in the first-generation controllable fusion field.

Lu Zhou: “Did they ask for anything?”

Secretary Zhou hesitated for a while without speaking.

Finally, after seeing the impatient expression on Lu Zhou's face, he clenched his teeth and said truthfully.

“They asked the board of directors to remove your position as a director of the scientific committee and stop you from using administrative means to interfere with the laboratory's daily work and academic freedom.”

The daily work of the laboratory?

Academic freedom?

Lu Zhou was so angry that he almost laughed out loud.

“What if I don’t agree?”

Hearing the unkindness in Lu Zhou’s tone, Secretary Zhou said cautiously, “According to their representative, if you don’t agree, they will resign collectively...”

“Pff!”

The moment when he heard these words, Lu Zhou did not hold back. He laughed out loud at this serious moment.

After a few seconds, he finally got the laughter out of his stomach. He coughed and stopped.

Secretary Zhou stood in front of his desk with a dazed expression. He paused for a moment, reached out his hand, and spoke.

“Where is it? I’ll take it.”

“It? What?” Confused, Secretary Zhou asked in a quiet voice, “What?”

Lu Zhou gave him a strange look.

“The resignation letter!

“They’re going to threaten me with resignation without even writing a resignation letter?”

Secretary Zhou and Tang Yunge: “???”

...

At the electromagnet research laboratory, today’s atmosphere was particularly lively.

Someone said that “Academician Lu is going to cut half of the researchers in the institute”, then stood up and called on everyone to unite and protect their rights.

From the office to the laboratory, almost all the desks were empty. Regardless of whether it was on their own volition or compelled by the instructions of their

superiors, everyone came to the lobby on the first floor of the laboratory building, sat on the floor with protest signs in their hands, and protested the reforms implemented by Academician Lu.

“Aren’t we out of line for doing this?”

An old researcher who had been working at East Asia Energy for nearly 20 years showed a somewhat uneasy expression on his face.

This kind of anxiety was not out of conscience or morality, nor out of the anxiety and guilt about doing barely anything over the past decade, but just worried that things would not end well.

“The bigger the trouble, the more favorable the final result will be for us!”

Seeing the boiling atmosphere in the hall, Yang Xiaofeng smiled happily, narrowed his eyes, and continued, “I bet that the old popsicle must be worried now.”

The times had changed.

People nowadays were not like people before; they fought for their own rights.

It’s a pity that Academician Lu is not a qualified manager. If he has even a little managerial skill, he will definitely not take such tough measures to promote his one-size-fits-all reform.

East Asia Energy did have many problems, but these problems were not limited to East Asia Energy.

Yang Xiaofeng admitted that he was only here to collect a paycheck, and the best paper he wrote over the years was his graduation thesis. However, this was how the rules of this world were, so he didn’t think this was his problem.

Also, his predecessors left such a large family business. If he didn’t maintain his power, how could he reflect the strength of his predecessors?

Looking at the empty door not far away, another researcher sitting next to him spoke in a nervous tone.

“You think Academician Lu... Will he really compromise? I always feel that he is not simple...”

“It doesn’t matter whether he compromises or not,” Yang Xiaofeng said slowly. “As long as the shareholders see the trouble he has caused after taking office, as well as the dismal stock price, they will naturally make the right choice.”

Of course, if Academician Lu was willing to cooperate, the door of opportunity would still be available to him.

The premise was if he would be willing to sit in the position of chairman as a mascot, without worrying about the past and never trying to take anything away from Yang Xiaofeng.

At this moment, footsteps came from the door of the laboratory.

When Yang Xiaofeng saw the person who appeared at the door, he was immediately happy.

The person who came was none other than Zhou Lei, the administrative secretary in Lu Zhou’s office. Although the fact that Lu Zhou didn’t come here in person disappointed him a little bit, he did send his secretary here so quickly...

Obviously, Lu Zhou couldn’t take it anymore!

Yang Xiaofeng stood up from the ground. He patted his pants and walked to Secretary Zhou calmly.

His chin was pointing high as he spoke with a proud face.

“What are you doing here? We want to meet Academician Lu, not his secretary.

“If he still has this arrogant attitude and refuses to talk to us, then we will let him pay for his arrogance!”

This guy...

Has no idea where his situation stands.

Secretary Zhou gave him a sympathetic look. He then moved his gaze away from him. After a light cough, he looked at the researchers sitting on the floor in the hall and spoke.

“Everyone has been sitting here all morning, so you all probably haven’t had lunch yet.

“Academician Lu is very considerate of everyone’s hard work. In order not to delay everyone’s lunch break, we will strive to complete everyone’s procedures before noon.”

Procedures?

What procedures?

Stunned by the words of this sentence, Yang Xiaofeng’s speech that he had rehearsed for a long time was thrown back into his stomach.

“What procedures? What do you mean?”

Secretary Zhou opened his mouth, hesitating to explain, but at this moment, the staff member of the legal department standing next to him spoke with an impatient expression.

“Of course it’s the resignation procedures, what other procedures? You are too lazy to even write a resignation letter, so hurry up and fill out this form, stop wasting our time.”

Yang Xiaofeng: “???”

Resign?!

What’s going on?!

The moment he heard these words, the entire hall on the first floor of the laboratory building had already exploded in chaos.

As for Yang Xiaofeng, he was dumbfounded. As he looked at Secretary Zhou and the person from the legal department, he was speechless.

Although he used all of the laboratory staff members’ resignations as a threat, he never thought that the final result would be like this.

A drop of cold sweat passed across his forehead.

When Yang Xiaofeng felt the pairs of eyes staring at him from behind, he gradually began to realize that he was in a bad situation...

Chapter 1487: Threat?

While the strike of the electromagnet laboratory was underway, the head of the laboratory, Director Liu Sihai, had already brought an “ultimatum” to the office of the research director of East Asia Energy.

He looked at the old man who was over seventy years old sitting at the desk as he spoke in a confident tone.

“Director Wu, the researchers in the laboratory are restless. They demanded the board of directors to stop interfering in the R&D department and remove Academician Lu from the scientific board of directors! If their demands are not met, the strike will not end.”

Director Wu was the head of the scientific research department of East Asia Energy. His name was Wu Qing, and he was 72 years old.

According to the corporate structure of East Asia Energy, all research units and scientific research projects were managed by the scientific research director, and the Science and Technology Committee of the board of directors was responsible for supervision.

Whether it was qualifications or position, Liu Sihai definitely didn't deserve to speak with Director Wu in such an arrogant tone.

However, the situation of East Asia Energy was quite special.

Although he was the leader of the R&D department, Director Wu actually had no real power. A few years ago, most of his power had been delegated to various research units by Song Yangwei.

Because of this, Liu Sihai was not scared of him at all.

The reason for talking with him now was just to get a big name to his side and add a little more chance of winning.

However, Director Wu was not stupid. He would definitely not risk his job to help.

He looked at Director Liu Sihai, who was standing across from the desk. Director Wu sighed with a headache.

“What are you doing...”

“We are fighting for legal rights!”

Liu Sihai continued.

“Director Wu, the researchers are angry. You also used to be a scientific researcher. You should know. It is not easy to take a scientific research project from initiation to completion, and how much effort it takes. However, now an old antique a hundred years ago opened his mouth, saying to cut off half of the projects. Has he considered how ordinary people like us feel?”

After hearing these words, Wu Qing was baffled.

Others didn’t know the uselessness of the East Asia Energy research department, but he obviously knew.

It was just that at his age, he couldn’t do anything. Most of the time he just closed one eye and pretended not to see it.

Legal rights?

How do you feel?

*What a load of sh*t!*

But I still shouldn’t offend him.

After sighing, Director Wu continued in a calm tone.

“I feel your difficulties in my heart. To be honest, he started doing this without a heads up. I am also very angry, but I can’t change anything! This reform task from Academician Lu is personally done by himself. You know his personality. I can’t say anything in front of him.

“The protest is bound to end terribly, so why bother?”

“This is already related to the vital interests of all of us. If I choose to be silent, how can I stand up for the hard-working scholars in the laboratory and the colleagues who believe in me?” With an awe-inspiring expression, Director Liu

Sihai continued, "I must see Academician Lu today! If he does not give a clear answer, I will not leave here!"

A familiar voice suddenly floated from the door.

"Someone wants to see me?"

Liu Sihai immediately looked in the direction of the door. He saw Lu Zhou walking in from outside with a robot bodyguard and a man who looked familiar.

"What a coincidence, I was about to go to your office to find you."

Seeing that the person who came in was Lu Zhou, Liu Sihai smiled coldly. Too lazy to pretend to be polite, he gently raised his chin and said, "I will give you two choices.

"Either you become a chairman, don't interfere with laboratory affairs, mind your own business, and no one gets in the way. Or if you continue to pursue us, you won't have a good time!"

Lu Zhou smiled faintly and continued speaking in a calm tone, "It's not that I haven't been threatened before.

"But this is the first time I've been threatened by someone like you."

Liu Sihai's face instantly turned blue.

"Hey! I'm warning you, don't be ridiculous! If you continue to do this, this won't end well!"

Lu Zhou looked at Director Liu, whose face was red, and said blankly, "Oh, tell me what you're going to do."

While talking, the office door was pushed open.

The staff of the legal department led two policemen and law enforcement robots in the door. Director Wu, who was sitting behind the desk, was taken aback; cold sweat came out on his back.

Liu Sihai, who was standing there, was stunned. His face turned pale.

"You..."

His index finger pointed at Lu Zhou. His lips trembled.

He really didn't expect that Lu Zhou would skip the negotiation and directly call the police. He didn't expect the police to come so quickly.

He was flabbergasted!

Without noticing the expression on Liu Sihai's face too much, Lu Zhou looked at the two policemen coming in from outside the door, nodded to them, and said softly.

"Officers, this is the person I'm talking about. Regarding his use of his power to cooperate with others to embezzle East Asia Energy assets and conceal evidence of illegal income, I have entrusted the staff of the legal department to send the evidence to the court.

"I believe the law will give him a fair trial."

Liu Siha quickly opened his mouth in a cold sweat.

"I didn't! I just—"

The officer interrupted Liu Sihai. He looked at him and spoke in an official tone.

"You are Mr. Liu Sihai?"

"It's me, but... but I really didn't do anything!" He grabbed Lu Zhou's arm and said in an imploring tone, "There may be a misunderstanding between us, please give me a chance to explain! I must—"

"You don't need to explain anything to me."

Ling took Liu Sihai's arm off Lu Zhou. Lu Zhou's eyes were cold.

Sympathy?

Forget about it.

I'm not sympathetic toward people like you.

It's okay to be stupid. As long as you are diligent and studious, you can still be saved. Even if you are useless, I can just replace you. I wouldn't be this angry.

However, this was no longer a question of ability. Even now, Liu Sihai didn't realize where his mistake was.

When Liu Sihai was taken out of the room by the law enforcement-type robot, Lu Zhou continued in a cold tone, "Explain it to the judge."

Perhaps Liu Sihai was irritated by Lu Zhou's cold tone. He knew that he would not be able to escape the encounter anyway, so he finally erupted in anger.

Exhausting all of his energy, when he was pulled out of the office door, he yelled out loud, "Hey, you! I'm not going to let this go! Wait and see, then you will beg me, and I will..."

The angry roar gradually faded away in the corridor, until it was inaudible.

Lu Zhou didn't pay attention to what he said. He lightly glanced at Director Wu shivering behind his desk, then cast his gaze on Tang Yunge, who was standing next to him.

"You will be the director of the electromagnet research laboratory."

Tang Yunge was taken aback and pointed to himself.

"Me?"

"Who else?"

"But..."

"I'm never wrong about talented people." Lu Zhou patted him on the shoulder and said, "Work hard, don't let me down."

After this, Lu Zhou turned around and walked out of the door.

Chapter 1488: Shock Treatment

The resignation procedure was faster than the hiring procedure.

There was no need to wait until noon. In less than a minute, the electronic contract and salary slips were sent to every researcher who had resigned.

From reading the contract to signing, it only took one hour in total.

The lawyer from the legal department who came with Secretary Zhou gave some simple answers to some questions about the resignation agreement and urged them to fill out the form and contract. He then left with the documents.

After the two left, the hall became quiet again.

The researchers looked at the resignation agreement in the holographic interface with muddled expressions. They then looked at each other with weird expressions in their eyes.

Although it was true that they were threatening to resign, almost no one thought that they would actually reach this point.

Why does it feel like...

Something is not right?

No, something is wrong...

"Could not be reached..."

As Yang Xiaofeng looked at the unanswered symbol on the videophone interface, his expression was pale.

The development of the situation had exceeded his expectations.

Before the strike began, he had considered many possibilities, but he had not considered the possibility that Lu Zhou was actually indifferent to their resignations.

As Yang Xiaofeng stared closely at the resignation contract in front of him, a researcher next to him who looked dumbfounded spoke.

"What shall we do now...?"

What am I supposed to say?

Yang Xiaofeng didn't know how to answer.

However, seeing the pair of eyes staring at him as if he killed everyone's parents, he quickly relaxed his tone and said.

“Don’t worry, everyone, we are all the technical backbones of the electromagnet design laboratory. How can an old popsicle get rid of us? He will have to invite us back tomorrow politely!”

“Director Liu has already negotiated with the board of directors on our behalf. Please don’t panic. At this time, we must unite even more. I believe there will be results soon!”

When he said this, Yang Xiaofeng didn’t know that his boss couldn’t even protect himself, much less anyone else.

Thousands of people had lost their jobs...

Yang Xiaofeng was one of them.

If Lu Zhou did not compromise in the end, he was afraid that he would be torn to pieces by these angry people.

After all, when he stood up and called everyone to protest together, he repeatedly assured that there would be no problems with the jobs and that their salaries would be even higher than before...

...

The Yangtze River Delta city group.

In a mansion inside a wealthy area.

A middle-aged woman, who looked quite young, grabbed an old man’s arm and cried, “Dad! You’re the one that makes the call!”

Her name was Song Haiyang, the only daughter of Song Yangwei, chairman of Yangwei Capital.

Last night, her husband did not return home all night. Thinking that her man had been taken by some tramp, she quickly found someone and finally heard that he was taken away by the police.

After hearing the news, she tossed and cried all night. She ran to her father in the morning, hoping that her father could help her find a way.

All she could rely on was her father.

Song Yangwei looked at his crying daughter. He couldn't help but curse.

"That bastard, didn't I tell him to be honest?!"

*The fire is right under his a*s, and the idea he came up with was to go on a strike!*

Only he would be this stupid!

There were still many people who sympathized with him on the board of directors, but after what happened, no one dared to stand by him.

Song Haiyang's cry was even louder; her tears could not stop flowing.

Seeing his crying daughter, Song Yangwei originally planned to say something cruel, but in the end, his heart turned soft and he spoke with a sigh.

"Don't cry, your dad has this handled. Don't worry, it's just an old popsicle from a hundred years ago. He can't go against me!"

The crying stopped for a while. Song Haiyang raised her head, and her eyes seemed to see hope.

"Really... Really?"

After giving his daughter a comforting smile, Song Yangwei smirked.

"Have I ever lied to you?"

"I'll take care of this."

Having been on the board of directors for so many years, he knew the hidden secrets about East Asia Energy, even if he was afraid to talk about them.

If Lu Zhou intended to do things this way...

He would not allow this to happen, even at his own expense!

Of course, that was the last resort; they were far from reaching that point now.

If such a method was really used, it would be tantamount to dragging down other shareholders on the board of directors.

After taking a deep breath, Song Yangwei calmed himself down, took out his mobile phone from his pocket, and called his classmate, who worked at the TV station.

Before putting pressure on the board of directors, he needed to make some preparations.

At least, they had to be scared...

...

Jin Ling University.

Principal's office.

After finishing the preparatory course, Lu Zhou came here to visit Principal Cai Mingrui.

Seeing Lu Zhou who came to visit, President Cai invited him into the office very politely and ordered his secretary to help make two cups of coffee.

Lu Zhou sat across from the sofa as he warmly greeted the principal.

"Academician Lu, are you still used to the new life?"

Lu Zhou said with a smile, "Yeah, I am."

"Good, good. We were worried that you would not adapt to the life here. It seems that we were worrying too much." With a smile, Principal Cai Mingrui continued, "If there is anything that we can help you, please be sure to tell me."

Lu Zhou took a sip of coffee and put down his cup. He thought for a moment and said, "Speaking of help... I really have something recently that I might have to trouble you."

Principal Cai smiled and said, "You are too polite! Just tell me if you have any difficulties, we will definitely help you solve it!"

Lu Zhou: "Before I ask you, I actually want to inquire about something. I heard that Jin Ling University's nuclear engineering is the world's best, but why did very few of the graduated talents join East Asia Energy?"

Although he didn't know why Lu Zhou suddenly asked this question, it was indeed one of the sorrows of Jin Ling University.

Principal Cai Mingrui sighed and continued, "This... It's a long story. On the one hand, East Asia Energy's entry barrier is too high. On the other hand, it may be that the academic and industrial circles have different calibers."

"The entry barrier is too high?" Lu Zhou frowned slightly. "Are there schools with higher standards than Jin Ling University?"

"This threshold may not be academic. I don't know if you can understand what I'm talking about," President Cai said vaguely. "Each year, East Asia Energy will hold campus recruitment here, but the number of admissions is less than 10, and less than a third of the 10 are able to stay through induction training. According to what I learned from the teachers in the engineering school, most of the students who went to East Asia Energy after graduation were unhappy. Those who stayed for two years or more were considered to be relatively rare. Many talented people go back to school to do scientific research after one year of work."

Lu Zhou nodded thoughtfully. "It seems that East Asia Energy has a big problem."

"The problem is definitely there, but after all, it's a private company, and we can't control them. I hope they can improve in the future. Let's not talk about our troubles, let's talk about your troubles." Cai Ming Rui smiled and said, "Didn't you have something to trouble me? I have been waiting for a long time."

"I need a favor. It has something to do with the question I asked earlier." Lu Zhou continued, putting on a serious tone, "I want to do a campus recruitment event at Jin Ling University in the near future. In a few days... or the sooner the better."

"Recruitment?"

Principal Cai Mingrui was taken aback and said, "The campus recruitment was just in November... Another one so soon..."

Lu Zhou: "I don't know if you have heard. I recently launched a second-generation controllable fusion project, which requires a lot of manpower."

Principal Cai asked seriously, “How many people do you need?”

Lu Zhou thought for a while and gave a number.

“One or two thousand.”

Principal Cai took a deep breath and said in an incredulous tone, “One or two thousand jobs? Are you... opening a new research institute? Why do you need so many people?”

“It’s not a new research institute.” Lu Zhou coughed dryly. He then said with some uncertainty, “It’s just that I was not satisfied with the institute, so I just fired everyone.”

Cai Mingrui: “...?”

Lu Zhou: “In short, I plan to recruit more people to fill in the jobs.”

Principal Cai looked at Lu Zhou and said dumbfoundedly, “There’s no problem with campus recruitment... I wish you would recruit more students from us, but why... fire everyone?! At least a few people should be reserved to do the induction training for new employees, right?”

“It’s not necessary.” Lu Zhou said, “I’ll keep it straight. The electromagnet laboratory is completely corrupt. Without this shock treatment method, there is no way to save it. No matter how good the new employees are... If they are sent in, they will also be contaminated and turned into waste. It’s better to fire all of them and start again.

“Is it ok to do the campus recruitment event? If not, I’ll go to other places to ask.”

“Okay! Definitely!” Seeing that Lu Zhou was about to leave, Principal Cai wasn’t willing to let go of this opportunity. He said quickly, “The day after tomorrow, I will immediately hold a meeting here to arrange the recruitment work. You can just send your HR people here!”

Lu Zhou nodded and said with a smile, “Thanks so much.”

Chapter 1489: Invest In Myself

[East Asia Energy Caught In The Vortex of a Power Struggle, Staff of the Electromagnet Research Laboratory Resigns Collectively!]

[Scientific Research Reform? Or a Battle of Power!]

[15-Second Short Film Tells the Past and Present Of East Asia Energy, Gives You the Truth Behind History!]

After being taken away by the police in front of so many people, it was impossible not to be seen.

In particular, this person's role was also the head of East Asia Energy's largest research unit in the Yangtze River Delta city group, Director Liu Sihai.

Although this was the internal affairs of East Asia Energy, it was obviously not just the employees of East Asia Energy who were paying attention to this matter.

As the largest power company in Asia and the promoter of cross-regional power grids, this company had an extremely special position in both the economic and historical sense. Its destiny had long been firmly tied with the people in the Pan-Asian region.

As Director Liu Sihai was taken away, a series of reform measures for scientific research introduced by Academician Lu, the chairman, had also surfaced one after another.

When they saw the names of the research project that were said to have been cut down by Lu Zhou himself, many people were shocked.

No one thought that the company was corrupt to this degree...

The building of East Asia Energy.

The seating area on the top floor.

Morinaga, who was drinking coffee, looked at Zhong Ziyu sitting on the sofa opposite him. He suddenly spoke.

"The share price of East Asia Energy has fallen quite a bit recently."

“Isn’t that good?” Zhong Ziyu said with a faint smile, “The Pan-Asian Cooperation can use this opportunity to increase our holdings.”

Morinaga asked casually, “Are you that confident?”

Zhong Ziyu did not give any answer. He just gave an intriguing smile.

Morinaga stared at this smile and thought for a while. He thought of something, and he asked tentatively, “Does your side... plan to make a move?”

“No need to ask, we don’t plan to do anything, and even if we do, we won’t tell you.” Zhong Ziyu smiled faintly. He cast his gaze to the estuary of the Huangpu River outside the window and continued, “Don’t you think this is a good opportunity?”

“The opportunity to expand the power of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in East Asia Energy?”

“Yes and no.” After a pause, Zhong Ziyu continued in a slow tone, “What we want to know is whether Academician Lu has the ability to settle this matter.”

Scientific research ability was not the same as management ability. It was a risky decision to elect Lu Zhou as chairman.

In fact, the AIIB had been evaluating the positive and negative impacts this incident might have on East Asia Energy.

The manager of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank who was sent to East Asia Energy to serve as the managing director, Zhong Ziyu, who pushed Lu Zhou to the position of chairman, also underwent considerable pressure from the AIIB.

Although this collective resignation and the subsequent exposure of scientific research corruption was a big trouble for East Asia Energy, it could also act as a touchstone in reverse thinking.

If this matter was not settled, then they would never achieve second-generation nuclear fusion.

But if he settled this matter smoothly...

It would undoubtedly become the strongest proof of his management talent.

...

The public opinion was still fermenting.

Insiders kept breaking the news on the personal grievances between Academician Lu's personality and Director Liu Sihai's temper, as well as Liu Sihai's flaws in managing the electromagnet research laboratory.

But, to be honest, this argument was difficult.

A person from 100 years ago was having grudges with someone born at the end of the 21st century...

The age gap was too large.

Lu Zhou's personality was considered a research project for historians.

After hearing about the news, many reporters wanted to interview the parties, but Lu Zhou was busy with recruitment and was not free while Liu Sihai was busy in jail.

Mansion in the suburbs.

A salesman in formal clothes stood at the gate of the yard with a gardening drone floating beside him; its dazzling scissors shining in the sun.

"Excuse me, who are you?"

"I am a staff member of Huaxia Bank."

The man who claimed to be a bank employee carried a business smile on his face and continued politely, "Pan-Asian Airlines entrusts us to handle the follow-up procedures for your compensation. In short, I'm here to send the money."

"So... Can you move your gardening drone a little further away?"

The iron door slowly opened, and the drone floating on the side also flew away slowly.

The bank clerk nodded to the access-control camera. Under the supervision of Xiao Ai, he crossed the stone brick road next to the front yard laboratory and came to the door of the main house.

The door opened quickly, and Lu Zhou, who was standing in the hallway, invited him into the room and told Xiao Ai to pour a cup of tea for the guest.

“Sorry, something bad happened some time ago, so I upgraded the security system in the house.”

“It’s okay. Wealth itself is also a kind of pressure. Although I can’t understand your troubles, I still read the news. I am a salesperson of Huaxia Bank. You can call me Manager Ma. I am here today mainly because Pan-Asian Airlines has entrusted us to handle compensation-related procedures for you and send the advance payment to your account.”

As a large-scale commercial bank in the Pan-Asian Cooperation, Lu Zhou has heard of Huaxia Bank before.

During the hijacking of flight N-177 that happened some time ago, Pan-Asian Airlines offered to pay him 10 million credit points. On the one hand, this money was used as compensation for the mental pain. On the other hand, it was also regarded as a reward for his heroic behavior in saving hundreds of passengers on the entire flight.

Pan-Asian Airlines had paid him an advance payment of 1 million credit points, and the remaining 9 million would be paid within one month.

If it hadn’t been for the bank coming to his house, Lu Zhou would have almost forgotten about it.

“Do I need to go through any procedures to get this money?”

Manager Ma said with a smile, “No need, we have handled all the procedures for you. You only need to confirm the receipt and sign the compensation agreement. The remaining money will then be credited to your account.”

A total of 9 million credits.

Although not much, it was quite impressive.

Lu Zhou looked at the string of zeros on the account. He had a thought in his mind, so he looked at the bank clerk sitting opposite him and said, “If I want to take a loan, what procedures should I go through?”

“Loan?” Manager Ma was stunned slightly and asked seriously, “Can I ask, the loan you want to apply for, is it intended for investment or consumption?”

Lu Zhou frowned and said, “Is there any difference?”

“There is a difference even 100 years ago...” Looking at Lu Zhou, who seemed to know nothing about these things, the bank clerk said, “Not just the purpose of the loans, but also the amount... In short, whether it is the interest rate or the loan amount, it varies according to the type of loan.”

“So... I guess this should be considered an investment?”

Manager Ma continued patiently, “Can you be more specific? For example, the industry you invest in, and the amount you expect.”

“The amount is just a billion or two. As for the field of investment... Investing in myself.”

Manager Ma’s eyeballs almost popped out of his head.

“Um... More than one billion is beyond the scope of our business. I will report this matter to the president. Whether it is available or not, I will call you back later.”

Having said that, Manager Ma hesitated for a moment and added softly, “Just a suggestion... If you are not joking, you should be a little serious and reconsider the reasons for the loan.”

When the bank salesperson got up and left, Lu Zhou was slightly stunned.

“Xiao Ai.”

“Huh?”

Lu Zhou muttered weirdly.

“Am I not serious enough?”

“Maybe it’s because Master is too handsome, it makes it hard for people to take Master seriously! (///ω///)”

No wonder!

After hearing this reasonable explanation, Lu Zhou nodded thoughtfully.

That makes sense.

Scholar's Advanced Technological System - Chapter 1490 - Threaten of Short Sale - BoxNovel

Chapter 1490: Threaten of Short Sale

Academy of Engineering, Jin Ling University.

Four students who had just finished class rushed out of the classroom with the crowd. They were talking about the recent events in the school while walking towards the cafeteria.

"I looked at the virtual reality community when I was in class just now, and I saw someone in the discussion group of the student union said that East Asia Energy is coming to our school to hold a job fair? Have you heard about that?"

"A job fair from East Asia Energy?" The tall boy walking in the middle was taken aback. He said in a strange tone, "Really? Didn't they come here some time ago?"

"I don't know, maybe they lack labor again."

"Can I get the registration form? What is the recruitment process? Is it the same as last time?"

"I don't know." The student who broke the gossip earlier shook his head and continued, "But I heard that this time it seems to be divided into two parts: written examination and interview."

"Cool! I will join in on the fun, if I get an offer, I will invite you to dinner."

"Haha, let's go together, I'll sign up too."

Listening to the excited discussion of the roommates next to him, the boy wearing glasses glanced at the three of them and said with lack of interest,

"You guys go ahead, I have to study for the graduate entrance exam, so I don't have time."

The tall boy thought he had misheard the genius student. He asked with astonishment, "This is a good opportunity to go to East Asia Energy, you really don't want to try?"

Who in the Academy of Engineering doesn't want to go to East Asia Energy?

Why else would you apply for this major?

Another student nearby also nodded in agreement and persuaded.

"That's right, you are the most promising person in our dorm, brother! Isn't East Asia Energy way better than a masters?"

The man with glasses smiled faintly and spoke.

"I don't think so."

The boy who broke the news earlier frowned and asked, "Do you know any inside information?"

"Not exactly inside information. I just heard someone who went there for an internship for half a year said that it was not as good as we think. The company is big, the benefits are good. But in the whole laboratory, there is no academic atmosphere at all. There is no engineering culture. Other than the endless reports, there are endless meetings. Anyone that works there for a few years will become useless after they leave!"

The tall boy was stunned and said, "It's not that bad, right?"

The man in glasses shook his head and didn't intend to explain more.

"You'll know once you get accepted. Oh, yes, I also heard that connection is more important than hard work. They don't look at the papers or research quality. You have to put your head down and do the work. I don't want to go there."

"However, I heard that Academician Lu seems to have become the chairman of the board, and he has also laid off a group of people! This time should be different."

“Academician Lu? Haha, what about Academician Lu?” The boy wearing glasses shook his head and sighed faintly. “The current East Asia Energy is no longer the East Asia Energy that he was familiar with.”

When did this downfall start?

No one knew.

The energy giant that everyone yearned for was no longer as beautiful as they had thought.

Even though in the minds of most people, East Asia Energy was still their pride, but because of its reputation in college circles, especially for those students who had been there for internships, East Asia Energy was no longer their first choice.

However, perhaps there was still a trace of expectation in their hearts that had not yet been extinguished, or perhaps it was because the return of Academician Lu could bring change.

The vast majority of people did not expect too much, but they still signed up for the written examination of the job fair.

Not just students from Jin Ling University.

Not even just schools in the Yangtze River Delta city group.

After hearing that Academician Lu would personally host the job fair, there was immediately a stir in the entire Pan-Asian university circle. Because there were no regional restrictions on signing up for the written test, the entire Pan-Asian colleges and universities that did research on controllable fusion all noticed this recruitment.

A week before the start of the job fair, the tickets for the maglev train from the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei city group and the Pearl River Delta city group to Jinling were all taken; even nearby hotels were fully booked.

It wasn't just because of Academician Lu.

Many people heard some news that, before the start of the job fair, Lu Zhou not only got rid of Director Liu, the leader of the electromagnet research laboratory, but he also fired 2,000 people.

Although this sounded ridiculous, the reality was that the entire electromagnet research laboratory was now almost cut into an empty shell of its past.

And those vacant seats were quite eye-catching...

...

In the past few days, except for occasionally going to school for a preparatory course, Lu Zhou basically stayed at home and didn't go anywhere.

On the one hand, there were risks in going out; on the other hand, he was busy with the job fair.

In order to avoid the overhauled electromagnet research laboratory once again falling into a vicious cycle of history, he intended to take charge of this job fair entirely by himself, without any intention of letting other laboratories intervene.

After all, the current chaos in East Asia Energy's R&D department was far more than just a problem of the electromagnet research laboratory, it was a stubborn illness that prevailed in all research institutes.

He intended to use the newly reborn electromagnet research laboratory as a breakthrough point, as a demonstration unit of scientific research reform, then promote it to other research institutes after making some achievements here.

In addition to job fairs, there was also the research project of second-generation controllable fusion.

As the general manager of the project, he must work out a specific research plan for each research unit, or at the very least, he had to clearly define what each department should do and what role it would play in the project.

These people were not very goal-oriented.

If Lu Zhou didn't give them enough direction, no one would know how long this project would take.

However, while Lu Zhou was very busy, he suddenly received an unexpected call.

The call was from Song Yangwei.

He was the previous director of the Science and Technology Committee of the board of directors that he replaced. He was also one of the shareholders of East Asia Energy and the chairman of Yangwei Capital, as well as the father-in-law of Liu Sihai.

The moment he received this call, Lu Zhou had actually guessed that this guy was probably here to help his son-in-law.

It seemed that Song Yangwei had expected that Lu Zhou wouldn't budge, so the voice coming from the other end of the phone didn't sound like a plea at all.

Instead, it almost sounded like a threat?

"I warn you, immediately withdraw the lawsuit against Liu Sihai!"

Lu Zhou: "Did you take the wrong medicine today?"

"I'm not joking with you," Song Yangwei said on the other end of the phone with a trace of sullenness. "If you continue, I will immediately start shorting East Asia Energy! Want to research second-generation controllable fusion? Hehe, just wait and see. When the market value of East Asia Power evaporates by hundreds of billions, see if the board of directors will be on your side!"

After that, he didn't give Lu Zhou a chance to speak. He hung up the call immediately.

As Lu Zhou looked at the empty video call interface in the holographic screen, he was slightly stunned. He then couldn't help but laugh.

Interesting.

Why is everyone trying to stop me from doing scientific research?

Do I look like the kind of person who bows down to evil forces?

Lu Zhou shook his head, turned off the video call window, turned his head, and forgot about Song Yangwei's threat.

Short the stock?

Bring it.

Chapter 1491: Who Said I Only Have One Company?

Facts had proved that Song Yangwei was not joking.

Perhaps it was because Lu Zhou had emptied the entire laboratory. Even though he saw it as the only way to save East Asia Energy, it was clear that the capital market had their own ideas.

On the second day after Song Yangwei's call, East Asia Energy's negative news appeared to have burst out in a concentrated manner, frequently showing its presence on major media channels.

Although this kind of news would not interfere with the normal operation of East Asia Power, it had plunged its performance in the stock market into a slump. Originally, the stock price had risen by a small amount because of his return. But now, it was dropping like never before.

It was even worse than before he was the chairman...

Lu Zhou stared at the stock price of East Asia Energy for a while. He suddenly sighed with emotion.

"I can calculate the motion of heavenly bodies, but not the madness of people."

Xiao Ai: "Master? 0.0"

Lu Zhou: "Nothing, just a little emotional."

This sentence was actually said by Newton.

In his later years, Newton felt that there was no challenge to bullying Hook, so he went to the Mint Bureau of the British Empire to find a position as the governor of the central bank and began to get involved in the financial field.

Although this guy was indeed a genius and helped the British Empire complete the reform from the silver standard to the gold standard, he lost a lot of blood in the stock market.

In particular, he encountered the “South China Sea Company” incident in European financial history that could go hand in hand with the Dutch tulip, causing Newton to lose 20,000 pounds at a time.

Since then, he no longer cared about stocks and devoted himself to studying theology and alchemy.

In fact, Lu Zhou did not lose money.

The money he spent on buying East Asia Energy stock a hundred years ago was barely anything. It was impossible for him to lose money on his investment.

It was just that the guy’s threat to him during the video call made him feel unhappy.

If Lu Zhou didn’t react at all and just watched him short the company, wouldn’t it seem like he was surrendering?

Lu Zhou asked Xiao Ai to put hundreds of bids on the stock market for himself, putting in the entire 9 million credit points that Pan-Asian Airlines had compensated him.

However, Lu Zhou immediately regretted the purchase.

He calmed down and thought about it. He felt he was a little too impulsive.

9 million credits in the pool of East Asia Energy didn’t make a splash at all.

Even if he wanted to increase his holdings, he shouldn’t do it now.

At the very least, he should wait until the job fair was over.

“I’m starting to regret my decision.”

“... W(๑_๑)w”

“It’s fine, I don’t blame you.” Lu Zhou looked at the emoji in Xiao Ai’s pupils. He shook his head and said to himself, “It’s a pity that I don’t have much cash. A few million credits doesn’t make a difference at all.”

If this were a hundred years ago, he wouldn’t need any loans at all.

He put the stock market aside.

He was sitting in the study room.

He then closed the floating browser window in front of him and kept his sights on the unfinished model in his hand.

This thing was a holographic model of East Asia Energy's latest controllable fusion reactor.

Compared to his design a century ago, it clearly had a lot of improvements. Many things that he hadn't considered before had basically been perfected after a century of continuous improvement.

The energy efficiency of first-generation controllable fusion technology did not have much room for further improvement. After understanding this, Lu Zhou made up his mind.

The second generation of controllable fusion, aka, deuterium-helium trifusion, was the future of the energy industry!

To overcome the difficulties of the second-generation controllable fusion technology, there were two main problems that needed to be solved; one was the ignition of the reactor, and the other was the reactor itself.

Specifically, he had to find a container that could hold and compress billions of degrees of high-temperature plasma.

It was obviously unrealistic to expect ordinary materials to withstand this level of energy, so for this "container", Lu Zhou's choice was still a magnetic field.

Although the theoretical calculation result of 10,000T sounded a bit scary...

But compared to other technical routes, this was considered the more reliable one.

"But the question is where to find such a large magnetic field?"

Lu Zhou removed the electromagnet component from the holographic model of the reactor, zoomed in, and moved it closer. He then placed it in front of him for a closer look.

In this era, whether it was office or scientific research, paper was rarely used.

The three-dimensional holographic composition could more intuitively reflect every detail in the design, and it could also allow the designer to easily modify the parts that needed improvement.

After a few trials, Lu Zhou quickly realized the excellence of this scientific research tool.

Especially with regards to online collaboration, this tool allowed multiple people to collaborate on the same work. For researchers in a project team, being able to design while discussing was obviously much more efficient than the previous work methods.

However, no matter how powerful scientific research tools were, they couldn't escape the problems of scientific research itself.

When Lu Zhou was thinking of an answer, a paper he had read a long time ago suddenly surfaced in his mind.

“... Magnetic storm compression.”

He still remembered that a research team from Moscow University strengthened the magnetic field by placing explosives next to the magnetic induction coil, then squeezing the magnetic field into an explosion.

Judging from the experimental results, they were undoubtedly successful. In the era when it was rare to increase magnetic field strength above 100T, they achieved a terrifying 700T of magnetic field strength!

Although the results of this research only existed for tens of microseconds, the research team led by Professor Masajiro Takeyama from the University of Tokyo repeated the experiment. And at the expense of a complete set of experimental equipment and an iron door, the magnetic field strength was increased to 1,300T for a short 100-microsecond time.

Although this kind of violent experimental idea sounded unreliable, it seemed to be the most promising option for now.

If a stable method could be used to achieve the conditions of magnetic storm compression with the energy of controllable fusion itself, a high-intensity magnetic field that could synchronize with the fusion reaction in frequency could be generated...

This might work!

Lu Zhou's eyes started to light up.

It would be great if his team were still here.

With the technical strength of the 22nd century, if he had Li Jiangang, Sheng Xianfu, and the rest of his team, he was 80% confident that he would be able to make an experimental reactor.

"Master, someone is looking for you outside. (´・ω・`)ノ"

Lu Zhou looked at the electronic screen of the small drone lying on the corner of the table.

"Who is that?"

"He claims to be the president of Huaxia Bank. 0.0"

President of Huaxia Bank?

Lu Zhou froze for a moment. He soon remembered the loan issue he talked about with the bank manager yesterday.

He immediately spoke.

"Let him in."

"Okay, Master. (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧"

After changing into casual clothes in the cloakroom next door, Lu Zhou went downstairs to the living room.

When he walked downstairs, the front door opened. He saw an elegant old man in formal clothes standing at the door with a friendly smile on his face.

"Can I come in?"

Lu Zhou said with a friendly smile at the old man.

"Come on in, no worries."

Lu Zhou told Xiao Ai to help pour a cup of tea for the guests. He then invited him to sit down on the sofa and looked at the old man.

Judging from the white spots on his temples, he should be older than he thought. Because the average life expectancy of people in this era was relatively long, people in their 50s looked like people in their 30s in the past.

With that being said, the old man might be over eighty years old.

However, this had nothing to do with him.

Just as Lu Zhou was thinking about what to say, President Sun, who was sitting across from him, suddenly said in an emotional tone, "Too young."

Lu Zhou: "...?"

"Sorry, I didn't mean to offend you, I just felt a little bit emotional." President Sun smiled apologetically and continued, "I have heard about your history. It is often praised in history books that you are a young and far-sighted scholar. I have always been confused by this, but now that I see you, my confusion is gone."

Lu Zhou cast an unexpected look at him, wondering what he wanted to express.

After a pause, President Sun continued.

"Innovation is the lifeblood of a company. I have seen analysis reports written by many people. Only through extreme measures can one save East Asia Energy, which is gradually declining in innovation. The board of directors did not show such courage, but you, a dormant from a hundred years ago, made such a decision. I did not expect this."

Lu Zhou couldn't help but feel a little embarrassed.

Although he thought that President Sun was right, being complimented like this...

He was flattered.

"Thank you." Lu Zhou said with a soft cough, "I just couldn't stand those uninspiring worms anymore."

"After all, this is your legacy to the Pan-Asian people... I mean a gift, I understand." President Sun smiled and continued, "Enough about this. I heard my manager say that you want to borrow money to invest in yourself?"

Lu Zhou nodded.

"Sort of."

President Sun said strangely, "But I don't quite understand... If it is for the second generation of controllable fusion, shouldn't the money come from East Asia Energy? Why do you need to borrow the money yourself?"

Lu Zhou: "It has nothing to do with the experiment."

President Sun: "Then what are you doing?"

"In order to expand my right to speak on the board of directors..." Lu Zhou continued after a pause, "I want to apply for a loan so that I can buy the shares of East Asia Energy stock. Can you give me an estimate?"

"East Asia Energy stock is high-quality. There is no problem in a loan. The key lies in how much you need."

"Let's start with 10 billion."

"Puff-cough cough!"

President Sun, who was drinking tea, almost choked on himself.

He coughed, and after calming down, he looked at Lu Zhou with a look of embarrassment and said dumbfoundedly, "What do you mean... Start with 10 billion?"

Lu Zhou frowned.

"I can't even borrow 10 billion?"

"No, with the stocks you have, you can borrow 100 billion, but the problem is that you don't have a clear standard for how much money you need—"

Just as President Sun was complaining about Lu Zhou's view of money, the watch on his left wrist suddenly flickered.

When the old man saw the caller on the holographic screen, he was slightly taken aback, and his expression suddenly turned serious.

“Sorry, I have to answer the call.”

President Sun got up from the sofa. He walked to the side of the living room and pressed the button to connect.

Lu Zhou was not in a hurry. He drank tea while quietly waiting for him to finish the call.

However, he suddenly noticed that the expression on the face of President Sun suddenly changed, as if he had heard some shocking news. His blood pressure had risen instantly.

“What?!”

“Yangwei Capital issued a short-selling report? Are you sure you are not mistaken?”

“Okay, I understand...”

The call was ended quickly.

After closing the video call window, President Sun took a deep breath and returned to the sofa to sit down.

After hesitating for a while, he said, “Um... Academician Lu.”

Lu Zhou: “Yeah.”

“If you want to apply for a loan, I really don’t recommend you to buy East Asia Energy stock.” With an apologetic expression on his face, President Sun said in a sincere tone, “If you must do this, it is difficult for us to give you an adequate amount.”

Lu Zhou asked, “Why?”

“It’s a problem of risk... You should look at the stock market.”

With a strange expression on his face, Lu Zhou’s index finger clicked in the air, opened the holographic interface, and cut to the window of the stock market.

Almost as soon as he opened his account, a news popped up.

[Yangwei Capital releases their latest research report on East Asia Energy, giving it a sell rating.]

Lu Zhou looked at the 5% dip in the stock price. He then looked at President Sun sitting across the coffee table with a weird look.

“What is a research report?”

“The research report itself isn’t important. The key is that they disclosed in the research report an investigation on the chaos of East Asia Energy’s management.” President Sun looked at Lu Zhou dumbfoundingly and continued, “In short, we recommend that you buy other assets. Uh... Do you still need a loan?”

“Of course, why not?” Lu Zhou said naturally, “I’ll take a loan of 50 billion first.”

President Sun thought he had heard wrong. With a dazed look at Lu Zhou, he said hesitantly, “Fif-fifty billion?”

“Yeah, can it be done?”

“It can, but this needs to be guaranteed...”

“I know, and you can’t use East Asia Energy stock, right?” Lu Zhou smiled faintly. He lightly swiped his index finger in the air and took a screenshot from his account. He gently pushed it to President Sun and said, “Who said I only have stocks in East Asia Energy?”

He continued, “Pick whichever company you like.”

Chapter 1492: A Problem That Money Can Solve Is Not a Problem

Ever since Lu Zhou cut off the electromagnet research laboratory of East Asia Energy, the news about East Asia Energy had not stopped.

Recently, because of a research report on East Asia Energy by Yangwei Capital, the topic of East Asia Energy was once again pushed to the peak of popularity.

Basically, this was a short report.

In the report, Yangwei Capital analyzed the confusion in East Asia Energy's management as well as the chairman's unfamiliarity with the business. Yangwei Capital stated that "revenues will be reduced by 11%-15% from the previous two years" and "the second-generation controllable fusion project may not be realized".

The last time East Asia Energy suffered a short sell was half a century ago.

Now history seemed to be repeating itself again. East Asia Energy was once again in deep crisis for different reasons. Many people felt an unusual taste from it.

This was not the same as last time.

Last time, the great turbulence was caused by the economic crisis.

But this time, even some investment bank interns could feel that there was a taste of conspiracy.

In any case, after the short-selling report had been released, negative news about East Asia Energy emerged endlessly; it had successfully triggered pessimism in the market.

On the second day after the report was issued, more than one billion empty orders were hung on East Asia Energy, which directly accounted for the increase caused by Lu Zhou taking office as chairman and announcing the establishment of the second-generation controllable fusion project. It was back to where it started.

In fact, to be honest, Lu Zhou didn't care much about stock prices.

As a shareholder from the beginning, his cost was simply minuscule.

No matter how capable Yangwei Capital was, it was impossible to return the market value of these stocks to the level they were a hundred years ago.

He was just a little angry.

He and his teammates struggled on the Pangu scientific research front for countless days and nights to finally complete the fusion ignition.

It had only been a hundred years since then, but the legacy he left to future generations had already been gnawed and riddled with greed.

Fortunately, he was not really dead; otherwise, he would be so furious that he would come out of his coffin.

As Lu Zhou looked at the stock price, he said blankly, "Buy as many market orders as he places."

Xiao Ai: "Okay, Master, but... this is borrowed money. Master will have to repay it. w(◡◡)w"

"I know," Lu Zhou said casually, "I borrowed money, maybe he did too. I can stay in this fight longer than he can stay solvent."

Although he wasn't a finance expert, he still did some serious learning of financial tools.

Short-selling was to first borrow the underlying assets, such as East Asia Energy stock, sell them for cash, then wait for the asset price to drop and return the borrowed assets.

This was a bet against expectations. If the shares of East Asia Energy were to fall in the future, it would obviously be profitable to short East Asia Energy.

But if the opposite was true, where instead of falling, the stock rose instead...

Then they would have to buy back the underlying assets they sold at a higher price. Or perhaps even encounter a short squeeze.

For this kind of bearish force, the way to fight them was actually very simple. One could use news to stabilize the mood of the market or take out substantial money and fight them.

Lu Zhou chose the latter, which was the simplest and crudest way.

Although 50 billion was nothing compared to the market value of East Asia Energy, it was equivalent to the total trading volume of several trading days.

Besides, he never thought about buying East Asia Energy as a whole. He only needed to consume the sell orders placed by Yangwei Capital.

Strictly speaking, although Lu Zhou's thinking was correct, this was quite ridiculous. Generally speaking, even if someone wanted to fight against Yangwei Capital, there was no need to directly pay for their orders.

According to the general laws of economics, emotions were heavily involved.

Under the pressure of such bad news, it was definitely not only Yangwei Capital that chose to sell, but there must be other people or companies that followed the trend.

If he wanted to give those "short forces" a head-on attack, he should wait until the good news was about to come out so that he could maximize his benefits. Furthermore, directly hitting it like this, without giving the opponent a chance to retreat, would also give himself no room to back off.

If it were Chen Yushan, she would not do this.

However...

She wasn't in charge. Instead, it was a man who never cared about money.

Especially since he didn't have an idea of how much money was worth in this era. Lu Zhou merely used the borrowed money as a bargaining chip.

A hundred years ago, whether in Princeton or Jinling University, he had never been afraid of betting. The same was true a hundred years later.

But, to be honest, although his operation was full of nonsense, it really scared some people.

Yangwei Capital building.

Staring at the calm stock line on the holographic image, the investment manager in charge of the operation was enraged.

"F*ck me, which imbecile is going against us?! How are all these asks being filled?"

When he saw the two billion volumes of orders that had just been eaten in an instant, his heart hurt as if he were dripping blood.

This was the first time he had seen such a thing!

Song Yangwei stood behind the investment manager. His face was also green, and his pupils were filled with haze.

He had never seen this kind of magical operation either.

The second they put up the sell order, the aggressor instantly filled it.

The two sides stayed in a stalemate for almost half an hour. He had already used up 5 billion worth of credit points. As a result, the stock price of East Asia Energy was on a random walk around a consistent price.

Where did he get so much money?

Could it be the AIIB...

But Song Yangwei quickly rejected this hypothesis.

It was impossible for the AIIB to lend him money to help him increase his stake in East Asia Energy. This was not in compliance with the rules, and secondly, there were legal risks. As for the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, it must issue an announcement at least one week in advance to increase its holdings of a company's stock.

In this case, there was only one possibility left.

That guy used his own stocks as a guarantee, then borrowed money to fight against him...

"This lunatic..." Song Yangwei gritted his teeth after squeezing these words out of his mouth. "Is he not afraid that he will be wiped out by other people on the board?"

Such a straightforward attack operation could only be done by Lu Zhou.

However, it was precisely because of Lu Zhou's "straightforwardness" that Song Yangwei felt a little confused.

Five billion credit points went down without even a splash of water. Five billion was a substantial amount, even for Yangwei Capital.

As for the financial predators who were ready to follow the wave started by Yangwei Capital, after seeing that this bone was so difficult to chew, they had now begun to be more cautious. They waited to see the situation before doing anything.

After all, many people had spent most of their lives in the financial field, but this was the first time they had seen such a close head-to-head contest. The sell orders and the buy orders were matched completely.

How confident is this guy at his own company?

Especially since this money was coming out of Academician Lu's own pocket...

Many people even began to speculate whether the second-generation controllable fusion technology was already developed, making him so confident. After all, logically speaking, they really couldn't figure out why Lu Zhou did this.

In a blink of an eye, another 2 billion was smashed out.

Looking at the column representing the trade volume that was four times higher than yesterday, the investment manager sitting at his desk finally began to feel scared. After gulping, he turned to the chairman and said nervously, "Chairman, chairman..."

Song Yangwei said with a gloomy expression, "What?"

"We..." The investment manager swallowed and asked in a low voice, "Are we going to continue selling? I feel that there is something wrong with our research report. There's still no movement."

"Don't be nervous, I didn't ask you to stop, so don't stop." Song Yangwei stared at the stock price on the holographic screen that started to rise. The expression on Song Yangwei's face became more and more gloomy. After a while, he continued, "Wait until the afternoon, then place a one billion dollar sell order. Save the remaining bullets for this weekend. Don't be afraid. I still have a pair of aces up my sleeve, so just do what I tell you."

"Yes, sir..."

The investment manager closed his mouth and stared at the holographic screen.

In fact, what he wanted to say was for Song Yangwei to use the pair of aces as soon as possible. If they waited until all of the bullets were used, it would be too late.

As Song Yangwei stared intently at the holographic screen, he had an uncertain expression on his face, and a slight hesitation flashed in his eyes.

After sitting for so long in the top position of the Science and Technology Committee of the East Asia Energy Board of Directors, he knew some shady news about East Asia Energy.

However, if this shady news was released, it would trigger a panic sell in the market. Although it was true that he could make a lot of money, it was really hard to say whether it would be a blessing or a curse.

If only I had more time...

If he were on the Science and Technology Committee for another half a year, he might be able to completely remove himself from that matter without any risk.

He watched at the stock price that looked like a random walk, and a trace of struggle flashed in his heart. After taking a deep breath, he walked outside the trading office and tapped his index finger on the watch.

The light blue light and shadows intertwined, and a translucent holographic image quickly appeared in front of him.

He opened the address book and selected the annoying name. After waiting for a few seconds, he looked at the opened video call window and said with a gloomy expression, "Let's make a truce."

Lu Zhou was taken aback for a moment. He then laughed.

"Truce? Mr. Song, I don't understand what you are talking about."

"Don't pretend, I'm open to negotiation right now, but not for long." Song Yangwei continued to stare at Lu Zhou in the video window. "I have to admire your clever means. Take my incompetent son-in-law as my apology."

“From now on, on the R&D side, do whatever you want. I will never intervene. On the other hand, I will also terminate this short-selling plan. Once I buy back the stocks at a small loss, it’ll be like nothing has ever happened.”

Lu Zhou was amused. He said with a smile, “Isn’t that going to happen anyway?”

“Don’t be ridiculous!” Song Yangwei immediately became angry. “I could kill both of us if I wanted to!”

“Oh, really?” Raising his eyebrows curiously, Lu Zhou continued, “Tell me how.”

“The pool of East Asia Energy is much deeper than you think. You have only been sitting in the chairman’s seat for a few days. Do you think you know everything?” Song Yangwei said with a cold smile, “I have been sitting on the Science and Technology Committee for more than ten years. I have seen everything you can’t see.”

Lu Zhou said, “In other words, you still have tricks up your sleeve.”

“You can understand it this way.” Song Yangwei squinted and said, “If the bad news gets leaked, the consequences will probably be beyond your control.”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Then tell me what the bad news is. Maybe it’ll scare me?”

“I’ll give you one day to think about it.” Song Yangwei closed his eyes and said calmly, ignoring Lu Zhou, “After the weekend, when the stock market opens, if you continue to take action against me, then I will assume you have made a decision.”

Lu Zhou almost laughed out loud.

Who is this ridiculous?

You’re the one that went after me first!

“So you want me to sit around and wait to get sh*t on?”

“I promise that I will buy back at a fair price, and three days later, whether you want to increase or decrease your holdings, you can do whatever you want.”

Song Yangwei didn't wait for Lu Zhou to give a clear answer. He ended the call right away.

At this moment, Xiao Ai, who was sitting on the sofa "meditating", suddenly opened her eyes and blinked while looking in Lu Zhou's direction.

"Master, it seems that there are no large sell orders anymore. (๑`๒•)"

"Okay."

After thinking for a while, Lu Zhou suddenly said, "By the way, Xiao Ai, the person who called me just now... Can you hack into his personal terminal?"

Xiao Ai: "The problem shouldn't be big, does Master need Xiao Ai to take action? (๑*ω*)~"

Lu Zhou nodded and said, "Well, the insider bad news he talked about... I kind of care."

"No problem! Xiao Ai got this! (๑`๒•)"

News that can shake the foundation of East Asia Energy...

Lu Zhou couldn't imagine what it could be.

Tax evasion?

Fraud?

He could only think of these things, but regardless of which one of these charges it was, it didn't seem serious.

"I didn't expect that, after one hundred years, the second generation of controllable fusion is becoming increasingly difficult to build."

Lu Zhou looked at the unfinished holographic model on the table. He shook his head, reached out to touch the operation interface, and reinvested his energy into the work that actually interested him...

Chapter 1493: The Unknown Secret Of East Asia Energy

The downside of the convenience of the information age was that, with the continuous advancement of information technology, privacy was increasingly approaching a false proposition.

Especially for Lu Zhou, who had an artificial intelligence robot, this was even more apparent.

Although he didn't take Song Yangwei's threat to heart, out of cautious consideration, Lu Zhou felt that he still had to understand what the secret was.

Xiao Ai lived up to Lu Zhou's expectations. After a lot of hard work, Xiao Ai finally bypassed the layers of defense and hacked into Song Yangwei's personal terminal.

Although most of the data in this era were stored on cloud servers, there were also a small number of special users who hired professional companies to protect their confidential data and store them in local storage space.

Unfortunately, there was nothing on Song Yangwei's personal terminal...

At least there was no so-called shady news that could subvert East Asia Energy's power.

"Sorry, Master, Xiao Ai is too useless."

"It's okay, maybe the shady news doesn't exist, he is just bluffing."

Seeing that Xiao Ai's face was full of frustration, Lu Zhou touched her head.

When Lu Zhou saw her turn from being frustrated and sad into being happy, he couldn't help but think.

Is he really bluffing?

I feel like his confidence is real.

So...

The data is stored in a more secure place?

"Xiao Ai."

“Huh? 0.0”

“Other than the shady news... Did you find anything that is difficult to understand in his terminal? The kind of thing that cannot be analyzed by your computing power.”

Xiao Ai: “There are actually quite a lot, but most of them are useless information... Ah, yes, it seems that there is one that meets Master’s requirements, which Xiao Ai retrieved from the cached data of the video call ._(ツ)_/ ”

Lu Zhou immediately said, “What did you find?”

“X-100.”

“X-100?”

“Xiao Ai doesn’t know what it is. There is no description of that thing in his personal terminal, but looking at how carefully he treats it, it seems... very important? ㄟ(̄ ㄣ ̄ ㄣ ̄)ㄟ”

Very important?

After repeatedly pondering the words and remembering that Song Yangwei had previously served as a director of the Science and Technology Committee of the board of directors, Lu Zhou suddenly had an idea.

According to the charter of the East Asia Energy Board of Directors, this position could directly determine the appointment and dismissal of the company’s scientific research director, which was equivalent to the top leader of the research and development department. Any major research and development project must be signed by him.

Thinking of this, Lu Zhou immediately ordered.

“Xiao Ai, help me retrieve the data in the East Asia Energy Archive! Especially about R&D, collect all the R&D projects related to the entry of X-100!”

“Yes, Master! (๑•̎̎•̎̎)✧”

Because Lu Zhou himself was the chairman, there was no need for hacking operations at all. With the authority granted by the chairman himself, Xiao Ai

easily entered the company archives and downloaded all the information about the mysterious X-100.

After removing some obviously irrelevant rubbish, Lu Zhou quickly found a report titled “Evaluation Report on X-100 Application” from the pile of files.

This report had not been published publicly. It was kept in the archives as a corporate secret.

After getting the report, Lu Zhou followed the summary part of the report and read it line by line.

In short, this was an evaluation report on outsourcing projects.

About ten years ago, East Asia Energy signed a joint research and development project with an information technology company called “Dawn Technology” to invest one billion credits to develop an artificial intelligence automatic control program for a new generation of controllable fusion reactor cores.

Judging from the completion date of this assessment report, this project was probably completed in the middle of last year.

On the surface, there seemed to be nothing wrong with this project. Whether it was the process or the things written in the evaluation report itself, it was quite satisfactory. However, the strange thing was that, relative to this one billion investment, this report was quite crudely written.

In particular, the detailed test results of the artificial intelligence program were not mentioned in the report at all.

A trace of doubt arose in his mind. Lu Zhou, who looked at the holographic screen, reached out his index finger to select the file.

He was stunned.

It's gone?

The billion-dollar nuclear core control project is gone?

Did it never exist, or was it deleted...?

The suspicion in his mind became stronger and stronger. Lu Zhou continued to find Dawn Technology's bidding documents and tried to gather information about this company in the attachment.

However, something strange happened.

The whole project was like a black hole, swallowing all of the information. Everything about the X-100 research project was erased by an invisible hand.

"The original signed contract is still here..."

Lu Zhou looked at the signatures of the contract signing officers. When he saw the names of former chairman Liu Zhengxing and Song Yangwei, director of the Science and Technology Committee, on the contract, a feeling in Lu Zhou's heart became stronger and stronger.

Intuition told him that the "shady news" that Song Yangwei said should be related to this research project codenamed "X-100".

It was just that he really didn't understand what was the reason that made them act so secretive about the control procedures of a reactor.

Maybe...

This project that's codenamed X-100 is not actually researching reactor control procedures but something else?

When this thought suddenly came into his mind, Lu Zhou's pupils gradually showed a trace of understanding. Soon, more doubts followed.

Xiao Ai, who was sitting on the sofa, suddenly opened her eyes and looked at Lu Zhou excitedly.

"Master! Xiao Ai seems to have found something incredible! $\forall (\geq \nabla \leq *)o$ "

After hearing these words, Lu Zhou immediately asked, "Did you find something then?"

Xiao Ai: "Although most of the experimental data about X-100 has been erased, Xiao Ai still found residual data about the X-100 project in the cache data of the electromagnet research laboratory database. The part that hasn't been cleaned up yet. $(\sim * \cdot \omega' *)^{\sim \sim}$ "

The remaining data that has not been cleaned up...

Lu Zhou was amused.

I didn't expect to be grateful at the low efficiency of the electromagnet research laboratory.

However, he would never invite those idiots back. He would rather recruit some new people.

Settling down, Lu Zhou asked in a serious tone, "Can the data be restored?"

Xiao Ai: "It has already been restored! (. ∇ .)ノ"

The data was quickly downloaded to Lu Zhou's personal terminal, and the source code of the program was retrieved through developer mode.

Lu Zhou looked at the lines of code. He didn't feel much at first, but the more he looked down, the more familiar he became, and the expression on his face became more solemn.

As he had guessed, this code that was jointly developed by East Asia Energy and Dawn Technology was indeed not an intelligent program for a reactor...

It was the ALPHA virus that made a lot of noise some time ago!

Chapter 1494: Complete Evidence Chain

Shanghai branch of the Security Bureau.

Inside the temporary office of the task force, Captain Xing, who was sitting at his desk, had a thoughtful expression on his face as he played with the bionic memory chip in his hand, as if he was researching something.

The holographic portrait of his AI assistant suddenly appeared in front of his desk and spoke with a monotone electronic voice.

"Captain Xing, you have a call."

After he put the memory chip in his hand into the drawer, Xing Bian looked at his AI assistant and asked casually, "Who?"

"Academician Lu."

Academician Lu?

He raised his eyebrows. Xing Bian thought for a moment and said, "Connect me to the phone."

"Okay."

The three-dimensional holographic image was diffused into light particles and reconstructed into a two-dimensional holographic panel. Academician Lu, sitting in his living room, appeared in front of him.

Just when Captain Xing was about to ask what the call was about, Lu Zhou, who was sitting on the other side of the phone, spoke first.

"Has the investigation of the bombing come to fruition?"

"Not so fast." Xing Bian said, shaking his head, "This case is very tricky. If there is new information, I will tell you... Are you calling me just for this?"

It's not like I can tell you anything about an ongoing investigation...

Xing Bian had a blank expression on his face.

Investigating The Spirit of The Universe Foundation was a task of the Security Bureau, and unrelated ordinary people should not be involved. This was both for security reasons and to avoid the spread of panic.

Hearing his somewhat perfunctory remarks, Lu Zhou smiled and continued speaking in a relaxed tone, "Do I look like I have nothing else to do?"

After a pause, he looked at Captain Xing in the video window and continued, "It seems that the investigation on your side has reached a bottleneck. I just have some clues. I don't know if I can help you."

After hearing what Lu Zhou said, Captain Xing, who didn't think anyone knew about this investigation better than him, smiled and said casually without taking it too seriously, "Oh yeah? What clue?"

“About the ALPHA virus.”

The moment he heard this word, Xing Bian suddenly sat up straight from his office chair. He stared at the video window that was suspended on the desk with a serious expression and asked eagerly, “Where did you hear this word? And, how much do you know about the ALPHA virus?”

Although the ALPHA virus was not a secret, various versions had spread on the black market six months ago. For most ordinary people, they had no idea this thing existed.

On one hand, most ordinary people could jailbreak at most their robot personalities and functional attributes. There was no need to modify the logic at the deepest level. On the other hand, the Pan-Asian Cooperation deliberately blocked the information of the ALPHA virus to prevent panic from spreading.

Therefore, most people would never know about the ALPHA virus.

Even if they encountered a robot infected by the ALPHA virus...

Lu Zhou continued with a relaxed tone, “In the database of East Asia Energy.”

“The database of East Asia Energy?” Xing Bian was puzzled by this sentence for a few seconds. He was slightly stunned and frowned as he asked, “What do you mean?”

“That’s a long story. I’ll just pick the key points.” It took Lu Zhou a few seconds to figure out how to word this story. After a while, Lu Zhou, who was leaning on the sofa, thought about it for a while said slowly, “Yesterday, when I checked the financial statements, I found an abnormal expenditure of one billion credit points.

“Out of curiosity, I used the authority of the chairman of the board to retrieve the backup files in the database and tracked the flow of the funds. As a result, I found that all the expenses were directed to a project called X-100.”

Captain Xing: “X-100?”

“Yeah, the AI self-control program of the fusion core looks nothing on the surface, but surprisingly...”

Lu Zhou looked at Captain Xing in the video window and continued, “Out of curiosity, I continued to track down the X-100 project itself along this line, and the problem was immediately found. All the procedures and documents regarding the X-100 project were well preserved. Even the evaluation opinions given by the East Asia Energy engineers could be found. However, the strange thing was that the program codenamed X-100 itself disappeared.”

This incident sounded like a case of using power to obtain corporate assets.

The amount involved was not small. If it was put on the news, it would be a headline story, but this kind of case would not be under the control of the Security Bureau at all. It would be reported to the financial investigation department through normal channels. Xing Bian was a little confused as to why Lu Zhou wanted to tell him these things.

“... Then what?”

“Then I happen to be someone who likes to ask questions.” Lu Zhou smiled faintly and continued, “After some investigation, I was fortunate to find the X-100 program in the cached data of the electromagnet research laboratory server.

“Before they had time to delete it, I found its source code and studied it. Then I unexpectedly discovered that the robots in my yard seemed to be infected by the exact same virus... At least the core part of the source code is basically the same.”

The moment he heard these words, Xing Bian’s heart was shaken. He stared at Lu Zhou in disbelief.

“You mean... East Asia Energy participated in the research and development of the ALPHA virus?”

“Not likely.” Lu Zhou said, shaking his head, “To be honest, the complexity of the code is not like it can be developed by an information technology company with less than 50 employees. The virus was mainly developed by Dawn Technology. I would rather believe that they got this stuff from somewhere ten years ago, and they analyzed or improved it.”

“How much do you know about the ALPHA virus...?” Halfway through, Captain Xing suddenly stopped talking, took a deep breath, and continued

with a serious tone, “Let me ask another question, how much do you know about The Spirit of The Universe Foundation?”

The Spirit of The Universe Foundation?

After hearing this name, Lu Zhou’s face showed an unexpected expression.

Although he had a hunch before that, all these bizarre events that occurred one hundred years later might be related to the experiment one hundred years ago. He did not expect to hear this name one hundred years later.

Seeing how Lu Zhou didn’t speak for a long time, Xing Bian’s expression gradually became awkward. He asked with a light cough, “... Uh, don’t you know them?”

“I do, I do, just a bit surprised.” Lu Zhou, who snapped back to reality, cast a curious look at Captain Xing in the video window. “It’s been a hundred years, is the foundation still active? I mean, do they... still operate like they did a hundred years ago?”

“The situation may be more complicated than it was a hundred years ago.” Xing Bian seemed to be hesitant whether to tell Lu Zhou more. He was silent for a while before asking, “When are you free? Can you talk in person about The Spirit of The Universe Foundation?”

To the surprise of Captain Xing, who thought that Lu Zhou would gladly accept his invitation, Lu Zhou refused without hesitation.

“No need, I’m not here to discuss with you the terrorist organization from a hundred years ago, and I don’t have much interest in those idiots who slander under the guise of science.

“I just want to tell you that I have complete evidence here, including the signed contract and the original copy of the X-100 project, that is, the ALPHA virus.”

“It seems that you have no intention of giving us the evidence for free,” Xing Bian said simply. “OK, what do you want, just say it.”

“I don’t want anything ridiculous. The only requirement is that you keep the operation confidential. Although the X-100 project was funded by East Asia Energy, I am sure that this is not under the knowledge of the entire board of

directors. It was done by the personal actions of Chairman Liu Zhengxing and former Scientific Committee member Song Yangwei.”

Xing Bian knew what Lu Zhou was saying. He said with a smile, “You can rest assured that since they used their positions to secretly fund the research and development of the ALPHA virus and concealed the essence of the project, this makes East Asia Energy a victim. Of course we will protect the privacy of the victim.”

It would be tricky to tell the public about the ALPHA virus, especially its relations to East Asia Energy.

In the 22nd century where information technology was highly developed, network cables had not only integrated into everyone’s life, but they even penetrated into the bodies of many people. It was obvious how important the role of robots in production and life was.

If the Pan-Asian people knew that East Asia Energy, which they trusted and were proud of, was developing some kind of evil virus that could even subvert society itself, how would they feel? How should the Pan-Asian Cooperation handle it?

People would be stupid to believe that this was just the doings of a dead person and a director of a scientific committee.

Although this matter was related to the safety of everyone’s life and properties, from a high-level standpoint, it was better for ordinary people not to know too much.

“Thank you for your understanding.” Lu Zhou nodded. He suddenly thought of something and continued, “Oh yes, if it is convenient, I hope you can make the arrests as soon as possible. I have a hunch that if you let Song Yangwei hear about this, he’ll disappear.”

Moreover, Lu Zhou seriously suspected that the death of Liu Zhengxing might not be because of him at all. It might be related to the ALPHA virus.

With this being said, Song Yangwei was also very likely to be targeted as another person involved in the X-100 R&D project. Perhaps those people were already considering killing him.

If he died, Lu Zhou would be in an awkward position.

On one hand, he had a conflict of interest. On the other hand, he was the last person involved in the “X-100 case”. He was a person who was afraid of trouble. Whether it was the ALPHA virus or East Asia Energy, he only wanted to create the second generation of controllable fusion.

As for the rest...

He wanted to leave it to others.

Looking at the video window, Captain Xing raised his eyebrows.

“Are you doubting our abilities?”

Lu Zhou sighed and spoke.

“If you were in my position, you would feel the same way.

“Just treat it as a friendly suggestion.”

Chapter 1495: Are You Not Guilty For What You’ve Done?

On the last day of the weekend, most people in Pan-Asia were on holiday, but the building of Yangwei Capital was busy as ever.

For them, tomorrow would be a crucial battle.

This battle was not only divided into both victory and defeat but also life and death.

In order to short East Asia Energy, they had taken on tens of billions worth of risk. If the stock couldn’t be bought back smoothly, it would undoubtedly be a serious blow to the cash flow of Yangwei Capital.

Especially if East Asia Energy’s stock price was allowed to continue to rise, they would have to buy back their borrowed shares at an even higher price, which would undoubtedly make their situation worse and severe.

After all, they risked tens of billions.

For such a huge amount of funds, even with the daily trading volume of East Asia Energy, they couldn't buy the shares back in a short amount of time. Those investment companies that were planning to short with them could easily turn and go against them instead.

There were no morals in business matters.

However, although this battle was extremely difficult, most employees still believed that they would win in the end. Not only because of the so-called "aces up the sleeve" claimed by their bosses, but also because their bosses had predicted the general direction of financial trends over many years.

Sitting in his office while staring at the holographic screen floating on the table, Song Yangwei suddenly frowned and muttered to himself, "Why do you think my eyelids are always twitching?"

After hearing what the boss said, the secretary standing next to him quickly asked with a smile, "Your left or right eyelid?"

"Left eye."

"Left eye twitches for wealth, right eye twitches for disaster, it is a good sign!" The secretary said with a smile, "It seems that you are going to get rich soon."

Song Yangwei chuckled, but soon, his eyebrows frowned again.

"... Hm, it doesn't seem right, it's the right side."

The secretary who had just breathed a sigh of relief almost choked on his saliva. He quickly smiled twice and continued, "Uh, I remembered it wrong, I think right eye means wealth—"

However, halfway through his words, there was a rush of footsteps outside the office. The door was pushed open.

Song Yangwei looked at the few people standing at the door. He was taken aback for a moment and was about to speak. The person who first entered the office took out his credentials and shouted.

"Police!"

"Do not move!"

Song Yangwei, who was thinking about his business, suddenly panicked. He raised his hands subconsciously, but he quickly put them down again, glaring at the policeman.

“What are you doing?! I am a law-abiding citizen, your current behavior—”

“Law-abiding I see.” Staring at the old man sitting in the office chair, Captain Xing, who walked in from the door, narrowed his eyes and continued, “Director Song, are you not guilty for what you’ve done?”

The moment Song Yangwei heard this sentence, his heart trembled.

Especially when confronted with the squinted eyes, the inexplicable fear that climbed into his heart made every pore on his body shake uncontrollably.

“Are you... um, from the Security Bureau?”

Xing Bian chuckled and didn’t answer his question. He just gave the subordinate standing next to him a look.

“Take him.”

Although there was no answer, the silence was telling.

Song Yangwei lost the color on his face when he heard the sentence.

If it were a financial crime, if they wanted to take him away, they would at least have to show the prosecutor’s approval of the arrest. There was no doubt that this was no longer just a financial crime.

“If I confess, will it reduce my punishment?”

“Of course.” Xing Bian continued while looking at the older man who looked like a teenager that was caught red-handed, “But it depends on whether your confession is valuable to us.”

...

As the weekend passed, the busy week began again.

For most people, there was no obvious difference between this Monday and the usual Monday, but for people in the financial world, it was quite unusual.

Last week, Yangwei Capital issued a short-selling report on East Asia Energy, and it smashed nearly tens of billions worth of sell orders, which became the focus of all financial industry practitioners.

The more serious news had still yet to come. Not only did the tens of billions not make a splash in the price, but the stock price of East Asia Energy became even more stable, making people suspected that it was fake news.

There was no doubt that Yangwei Capital was bluffing.

This was billions of real money, and presumably after a week of rest and reorganization, Yangwei Capital must have made a countermeasure.

However, just as everyone was staring at the stock price of East Asia Energy and waiting for Yangwei Capital to fight back, something unexpected happened.

Just like the last trading day of last week, the share price of East Asia Energy had not fallen even a little bit; it even rose slightly.

The volume was tiny as well.

Seeing this unusual scene, almost all the investment companies that closely followed the stock price of East Asia Energy were confused.

Is Yangwei Capital...

Giving up?

They don't care about their tens of billions worth of position and risk?

Whether they continue to throw money or start buying back, they must do something, right?

Normally, this was indeed the case, but Yangwei Capital pretended as if nothing happened. They didn't react at all.

It was so strange that people didn't know what to say.

Just when everyone was wondering what medicine Song Yangwei was taking, a gossip came out saying that the boss of Yangwei Capital was taken away by the police.

And it didn't seem to be an ordinary financial case!

After the news came out, the entire financial circle was in an uproar.

Various gossip news spread immediately. Some said that the short-selling report of Song Yangwei, the boss of Yangwei Capital, offended other major shareholders in the East Asia Energy Board of Directors, especially the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. Some people said it was because of him.

Others speculated that it was Academician Lu.

However, this possibility was very small.

In short, no matter for what reason Song Yangwei was arrested, one thing was certain.

That was, after the boss was taken away for investigation, the entire Yangwei Capital had fallen into a state of chaos, and the short-selling of East Asia Energy was naturally unable to proceed.

As soon as the news spread, the shares of East Asia Energy rose in response. Not only did it instantly swallow the decline caused by Lu Zhou cutting off the electromagnet research laboratory a few days ago, but it also continued to jump a few points upward.

In a day's time, Yangwei Capital's losses reached hundreds of billions of credit points. As the stock price of East Asia Energy rose further, it would lose even more money from people exercising their sold options.

It wasn't until then that people suddenly remembered who had been buying shares of East Asia Energy before, and they regretted that they missed the opportunity.

Someone in the financial world made some calculations.

The single-day gains on Monday alone made Lu Zhou, who had previously gone against the short sale with Yangwei Capital, hundreds of billions of credit points. Not only because of the stock he bought during this period, but it was also because of the 7% of East Asia Energy stock that he held.

If Yangwei Capital was unable to get out of the predicament in a short time, buying back those shares in the future was likely to further push up the stock price of East Asia Energy.

If the second-generation controllable fusion technology was realized, it could easily bankrupt them.

During this period, Lu Zhou, who had continuously bought more of East Asia Energy, became the biggest winner of this “short-selling event”...

Chapter 1496: Explosive Magnetic Compression

Three days had passed since Song Yangwei was taken away.

Since the boss of Yangwei Capital went to jail, the short-selling plan was naturally impossible to continue.

These days, Lu Zhou didn't pay much attention to the securities market. He shut himself up at home. Mindfully, he continued to study the mysterious “explosive magnetic compression” he had previously read about.

In fact, this thing wasn't completely mysterious.

As early as the 2050s, related concepts were born, and people had been researching them until today.

Among them, the more typical applications were EMP grenade and electromagnetic pulse gun, which could be called the nemesis of electronic products. Lu Zhou had even seen the latter with his own eyes when an EMP bullet hit Ling.

However, although there had been a lot of research on the “explosive magnetic compression” technology, and certain results had been achieved, most of these results were concentrated on some small and medium-sized microdevices, and most designs did not require high repetitive use.

After all, the rapidly changing magnetic field would generate extraordinary energy, and ordinary electronic devices couldn't withstand this at all. They could be burned out because of the overload of the induced current.

At this moment, the bottleneck that Lu Zhou was facing was probably similar.

He must find a way to condense the magnetic induction in a very narrow area. It would be best if this area could be filled with the plasma generated by the reactor and the energy released by the fusion reaction could be continuously used to maintain the continuous operation of the magnetic confinement device. Finally, the entire system had to be in a state of dynamic equilibrium.

To be honest, it was very difficult to do this.

Even designing a rough conceptual model for a large electromagnet device consumed a lot of Lu Zhou's brain cells.

Fortunately, his level 9 materials science and level 8 engineering and energy science provided a lot of help in helping him open up his ideas. Coupled with the experience accumulated in the previous research on controllable fusion devices, he finally broke through the last obstacle.

Although there was still a gap from the electromagnet that could provide a magnetic field of 10,000 Tesla, at least the model used in the experiment was on the right track...

However, just as Lu Zhou was advancing on the academic road, the door of the study room was suddenly opened, and a figure ran in.

"Master, Xiao Ai... has no more bullets. _:(´□`」 ∠):_"

Lu Zhou looked at Xiao Ai, who ran to his side and grabbed his arm pitifully. He was slightly stunned, and his ten fingers that were operating the holographic model also stopped.

"Bullets?"

"Yeah yeah, credit points."

Oh, it turned out that my money was spent...

*The f*ck?*

Lu Zhou was shocked instantly.

That's 50 billion! Not fifty bucks!

It's only been a few days since the loan, how can it be gone?

Even a starship doesn't cost that much money!

Lu Zhou originally wanted to make complaints, but he restrained himself.

After taking a deep breath, he slowed down and said, "Why is it not enough? Is there anyone else who is shorting East Asia Energy stock..."

To be honest, he would be fine with other people shorting him. He himself was not particularly interested in stocks. He was just unhappy with Song Yangwei's threat.

Also, if the stock price dropped because of his scientific research reforms, it would affect the board's confidence in him and hinder his second-generation controllable fusion plan.

Even though the AIIB was on his side now, he was not yet conceited to the extent that he "believes that everyone will always trust himself unconditionally."

"Probably not... Yangwei Capital is staying quiet."

Lu Zhou twitched his eyebrows and couldn't help asking, "Then how did you use up 50 billion...?"

Xiao Ai: "Didn't Master say that the stock price should not be allowed to fall? As soon as a large sell order came out, Xiao Ai bought it. QAQ"

Lu Zhou: "..."

Xiao Ai: "Did Xiao Ai do something wrong? Can Master not be angry? (｡__｡)"

"I'm not angry." Lu Zhou continued, sighing as if giving up, "Whatever, don't do anything for now... unless I ask you to."

It's just 50 billion.

Also...

There are more fascinating things to care about.

As Lu Zhou looked at the completed model in his hand, his mouth curled up with a smile.

Finally finished.

...

Electromagnet research laboratory.

Because almost all researchers had been laid off, besides the robots responsible for cleaning and doing simple maintenance work on the equipment, only Tang Yunge was left in the entire laboratory.

As Tang Yunge looked at the empty office in front of him, he was baffled. Not only did he not feel the joy of being promoted and a raise in salary, but he was suffering from headaches.

Second-generation controllable fusion...

Yet everyone from the electromagnet research laboratory was fired...

This made him, who originally planned to live up to Academician Lu's expectations and make some achievements in the field he was good at, fill his whole body with a feeling of powerlessness.

At this moment, the meeting reminder icon flashed in the lower right corner of the desk.

The moment he saw the notification, he immediately sat up from the office chair. He then stretched out his index finger and clicked on the pop-up window of the meeting information.

Light blue light particles floated from all around, and the panoramic holographic projection system installed in the office released a beam of light, which quickly reconstructed the surrounding scenery.

The next thing he knew, he was already sitting in the conference room, and sitting across from him was the new chairman of East Asia Energy—Lu Zhou.

As Tang Yunge looked at Academician Lu sitting across the conference table, he asked respectfully, "Sir, did you ask for me?"

“Yeah, I have an interesting model here, and I want to hear your thoughts.” Lu Zhou put his intention out immediately. He gently pushed his right hand and sent the holographic model floating in his palm to him.

Looking at the strange model in front of him, Tang Yunge was slightly stunned. His face gradually showed a dazed expression.

“What’s this...”

“A1-type pulsed magnetic field generator.” Lu Zhou continued with a triumphant smile, “Although it is a new concept, it works.”

Lu Zhou briefly explained the principle of this thing to him.

In short, after researching the related technologies of explosive magnetic compression, he established the equivalent of compressed current generator by referring to the circuit equation of the multi-branch compressed current generator in the existing research results. A circuit model was used to optimize the design of a blasting magnet compression device with a length of 600mm, a diameter of 120mm, a total mass of 10kg, and a high energy output.

Although this kind of device was small, it had a larger expansion space compared with the current mainstream design ideas and was accompanied by an open energy input interface.

The advantage of this design was that the energy of the compressed magnetic field was not provided by unstable explosions, and the high-frequency “squeezing” of the magnetic field was realized by the heat input from the system.

If it was used in places such as EMP weapons, this design might be a little unsuitable. But on a device that was large enough and had serious heat accumulation such as a controllable fusion reactor, it was just right.

It was almost tailor-made for it...

After watching for a long time, Tang Yunge didn’t see any obvious loopholes in this model. His eyes were getting brighter, and his voice was uncontrollable with a hint of excitement.

“Have you done the feasibility demonstration? No, let me do it, wait for me—”

"It's done." Interrupting Tang Yunge's words, Lu Zhou smiled and continued, "It's not just a feasibility demonstration, I have already printed a sample with an industrial 3D printer. Although the quality of the 3D printing is average, it is fine. There is no problem with the usage. According to the detection of the magnetic induction device, it can probably amplify the magnetic field stably by more than 50 times at a frequency of 50 Hz."

50 times!

The moment he heard these words, Tang Yunge took a deep breath. His eyes were almost bulging as he blurted out, "50 times? Are you kidding me? I mean... really, is it that insane?"

Lu Zhou said in a mocking tone, "Do I look like I'm joking?"

"It's not that I don't believe you, it's just... you don't know what this means." With obvious shock on his face, Tang Yunge smiled bitterly and continued, "If this thing actually works, I believe that second-generation controllable fusion can be made tomorrow."

"Not quite. Don't celebrate too early. There are still many things we need to do later."

After a light cough, Lu Zhou paused for a while and continued to speak, "The magnetic field provided by this A1 experimental electromagnet is very small. It can even be said to be just a simple conceptual model. It is impossible to expect this thing to be directly used in the reactor, and in the end, whether this pulsed magnetic field can effectively restrain high-temperature plasma is still unknown.

"I need you to refer to this conceptual model and its design ideas to redesign a larger electromagnet to serve as the container of the second-generation controllable fusion reactor.

"As long as this container can provide a magnetic field of 10,000 or more Tesla, our second-generation controllable fusion device will work."

"No problem, it doesn't matter if you want 10,000 or 20,000 Tesla..." The look on Tang Yunge's face gradually became more and more impatient as he said, "The premise is that we have enough manpower. With the whole research lab empty, we can't start any work."

Lu Zhou gave him a comforting smile.

“Don’t worry, the job fair is about to begin.

“The manpower you need will be available soon.”

Chapter 1497: Conceptual Model of Magnetic Field Generator

In the interrogation room.

Song Yangwei, who was sitting at the table in handcuffs, had his head drooped. No color was visible on his face. He was full of despair and regret.

Over.

It’s all over.

He could even guess what was happening in the stock market at this moment without even looking.

Without his signature, it would be impossible for Yangwei Capital to spend a large sum of money to continue his short-selling plan. Besides, the entire company was counting on his secret weapon. Only he knew that this weapon had been confiscated...

“First name.”

“Song Yangwei... Do you still need to ask this?”

“It’s just a process.”

Xing Bian was outside the interrogation room, he looked at Director Song’s bitter face through the glass. Xing Bian continued blankly, “Then, let’s get to the topic, when did you start contacting The Spirit of The Universe Foundation?”

Song Yangwei gulped.

He seemed hesitant, but he still spoke.

“About fifteen years ago...”

“Fifteen years ago?” Xing Bian glanced at him. “I remember that Yangwei Capital was registered 15 years ago.”

“Yes.” Song Yangwei nodded slightly and said frankly, “I admit that I have received funding from the foundation, and my first profit was earned with their help.”

Nodding thoughtfully, Captain Xing, who made a mark on this confession, continued to ask, “Who else is funded by the foundation like you?”

“Liu Zhengxing.”

Shi Jin stared at him and reprimanded, “Don’t think about being sneaky, we didn’t ask you to name a dead person.”

“The only one I know is him. I’m not lying!”

Seeing Song Yangwei’s tension on his face, Captain Xing thought for a moment and continued to ask, “Well, we understand the rough situation. Thank you for your cooperation. You can go home tomorrow.”

Song Yangwei was stunned. Thinking that he had heard it wrong, he repeated the sentence in disbelief, “Go home?”

“Yeah.” Captain Xing nodded and said concisely, “Even though in principle there is no bail for the crime of endangering social security, it is useless to keep you here. It is better to go home and wait for the result. Wait until the court’s decision is made. We will reschedule. In addition, you have been restricted from leaving the country during this period, and you are restricted from leaving Jinling... Of course, if you want to stay here, that is fine.”

“No.” Song Yangwei said immediately, “Please let me out, and the bail—”

“The bail will be waived. As I said, this is not a normal bail procedure.” Captain Xing continued in an official tone, “If you have any information that can help us, it is best to provide it to us before the ruling is made. After the ruling is made, even if we want to help you get a chance to take a lighter sentence, it will be difficult.”

No one wanted to stay in jail.

Also, Song Yangwei was a busy man, and there was a company for him to worry about. In any case, as long as he could get out of jail and get in touch with his investment manager, the price was worth it.

Outside the interrogation room.

Looking at the captain, Shi Jin spoke in confusion.

“Captain.”

“What?”

“We... Why should we let him go?”

Captain Xing said casually, “Not letting him go, but to put him under house arrest.”

“But...”

“I suspect that there are still people on the board of directors of East Asia Energy who are involved in this.” Xing Bian took out an e-cigarette from his pocket, took a drag, and continued, “At least one more. Otherwise, they would not be able to control the board so easily.”

The moment he heard these words, Shi Jin was slightly taken aback. He then looked at his captain in surprise.

“Do you think...”

“If the bait is not big enough, how can you catch a big fish?” Captain Xing smiled faintly and continued in a flat tone, “Remember to empty all the robots in his house, as well as drones and all smart appliances, then around his house. Arrange two teams to be on standby.

“I don’t believe that we can’t even catch a single living person!”

...

In the last week of January, the campus of Jin Ling University was a bit more lively.

Although it would be winter vacation in a few days, many students who had finished classes had already taken the car back to their hometowns in

advance, but at this moment, the flow of people on the campus of Jin Ling University had not decreased. Instead, it increased.

From undergraduates to 40-year-old middle-aged people who had been working for more than ten years, the people who came here to apply for jobs covered almost all walks of life and fields, all those who were involved in controllable fusion were all here.

There was only one reason.

The giant company with the largest market value in Asia would hold a job fair here today.

And this wasn't just it.

Different from last autumn's recruitment, this time, because Academician Lu was so furious and cut off an entire research institute, the entire electromagnet research laboratory was now empty. According to rumors, the labor gap had even reached 2,000 people!

What did two thousand jobs mean?

This meant that the usual acceptance rate of less than 1% might be more than ten times higher this time. Even considering that the number of applicants would be much larger than usual, the probability of successful selection would definitely be higher than before.

If someone wanted to enter this research institution with the best pay and benefits in Asia, this recruitment was undoubtedly the best opportunity.

However...

If they were to think this job fair was easy, they would be mistaken.

In the first round of the first test, many people already felt the malice from the person who made the questions; 90% of the million applicants were directly wiped out.

And the remaining 100,000 people were tortured by the difficult and bizarre questions during the second round of the on-site written test. Many people even walked out of the examination room crying.

"Who wrote these questions? F*cking bullsh*t!"

“I heard that Academician Lu himself wrote it...”

“Academician Lu himself?! Impossible! It’s been less than a month since he woke up from the dormant cabin, how could he give us exam questions?”

“Why is this impossible? Isn’t he a director of the East Asia Energy Science and Technology Committee? I heard that Li Guangya of the Pan-Asian Cooperation also invited him to serve as Minister of Science and Technology, but he is not very interested in politics, so he didn’t agree.”

“The version I heard is Chief Consultant.”

“It doesn’t matter to him. For that kind of genius, common sense doesn’t apply! Maybe in just one month, he has already learned a century of research?”

It was not just the candidates who were struggling.

Looking at the transcript sent from HR in front of him, Director Tang of the electromagnet research laboratory also had a headache.

“A total of 3,211 people achieved A and 5,102 achieved B... With all due respect, the first round of written examination was barely okay. I think the difficulty of the second round of written examination was a bit ridiculous.”

“There are so many?” There was a hint of surprise on Lu Zhou’s face. He couldn’t help nodding in approval. “As expected of my disciples.”

In his original plan, roughly 4,000 people would pass the second round of written examinations. Half of the remaining people would be filtered. They could be employed after some basic training.

He didn’t expect that there were so many more candidates than he expected.

“Is it too much? The main reason is that the base number of applicants is too large, but I think it is not that much...” Tang Yunge said with a wry smile, “To be honest, the exam questions you put out may be difficult for those fresh graduates with no work experience.”

Generally speaking, the written test was just a threshold to screen the professional skills of the applicants.

The real talent selection would be during the interviews. According to different positions, the work experiences or academic resumes of the applicants would be reviewed individually.

East Asia Energy's employment gap was two thousand, not two hundred or twenty. Besides, this was in accordance with Lu Zhou's request, where he intended to use the electromagnet research laboratory as a new reform pilot and would not transfer management from other departments. He would only send executives from here to other departments in the future.

In the face of such a huge employment gap, appropriate relaxation of standards was necessary. However, after these two rounds of written examinations, only eight thousand people were left. If they wanted to choose the right person from them, there was very little room for them to choose.

"My opinion is just the opposite of yours. Candidates who can pass the exam questions I set have already mostly passed. Among the rest, you choose the best. See which one works well." Lu Zhou smiled and continued, "Don't worry, I am still very confident of my own vision, and I will definitely not let you down."

Tang Yunge sighed and said, "I believe you..."

Whether he believed it or not, he couldn't do anything.

The holographic meeting ended. The light blue particles faded from the surroundings, revealing the appearance of the room before it was reconstructed by the holographic beam.

Lu Zhou stretched out on the sofa. He then got up and returned to the study room.

Having just gone through a round of shock treatment, East Asia Energy's electromagnet research laboratory was currently undergoing reconstruction. It was still difficult to use it in the near future.

Furthermore, the A1-pulsed magnetic field generator he designed was only a conceptual product. Even if the electromagnetic field was amplified several tens of times, it would not reach the order of 1T.

And, to be honest, Lu Zhou could only give a vague guess as to whether this thing could be used for controllable fusion. He couldn't make judgments on unknown things based on imagination.

He could only say that if he continued to research according to this line of thought, he could probably discover something.

Sitting in front of the holographic computer, after Lu Zhou pondered for a few seconds, he typed a title on the holographic interface.

[Theoretical Analysis of High-Energy Explosive Magnetic Compression and Conceptual Model of Pulsed Magnetic Field Generator]

"I hope it can play a role in making others interested."

Looking at this title, Lu Zhou smirked.

It was impossible for the huge electromagnet laboratory to operate with only some temporary recruits.

If the situation was optimistic, this paper should attract the attention of some scholars engaged in research in related fields and promote the birth of more valuable results.

Of course, if he could hire them for his own projects, it would be even more perfect...

Chapter 1498: The Electromagnet That Shocked The Academic World

LSPM Academic Exchange Forum.

Different from the tranquility of the past, the various sections of the forum today were extremely lively.

A paper titled "Theoretical Analysis of High-Energy Explosive Magnetic Compression and Conceptual Model of Pulsed Magnetic Field Generator" appeared in the LSPM preprint database, along with a paper titled "The Holographic Model of 'A1 pulsed magnetic field generator'".

Because of Lu Zhou's previous papers published in "Future", many people were curious about the research conducted by this scholar from a hundred years ago, especially those who wanted to know the second-generation controllable fusion idea he proposed.

It was precisely because of this that, as soon as this paper on pulsed magnetic fields came out, users of the entire LSPM forum, whether academics or amateur science enthusiasts, were shocked.

"F*ck me, this is... Academician Lu's thesis?!"

"Is it nonsense?"

"How is that possible... He is only in his early thirties, he's not retired yet. He won't risk his academic reputation."

"It's not surprising that a scholar who woke up a hundred years ago can understand the current research, but it is incredible to be able to make such a groundbreaking result."

"Didn't he post a paper before? What's all the fuss about?"

"It's not the same. The last paper was only a review. The highlight was only to put forward some technical ideas that may realize the second generation of controllable fusion, but this paper obviously involves professional in-depth specific research topics. The most important thing is that a visible result has been made!"

"Has anyone tested whether the holographic model he provided is real or fake?"

"Doing it now! My instructor has just contacted the company that cooperates with our laboratory in the Jinling high-tech zone. If it is fast, we should be able to receive the samples tomorrow!"

The difference in scientific research in the 22nd century compared to the 21st century was probably the convenience of rapid verification.

Whether it was the 3D printing equipment that could be seen everywhere or the customized industrial services launched by various intelligent manufacturing companies, the distance between concept and reality was infinitely close to zero.

Of course, the premise was to pay enough credit points.

And having a concept in the first place.

Therefore, after Lu Zhou gave the holographic composition and detailed parameters of the “A1 pulsed magnetic field generator”, many relevant laboratories engaged in electromagnet research immediately verified the model.

And the result was beyond everyone’s expectations.

Although the total amount of magnetic field provided by this type A1 pulsed magnetic field generator was not very large, it could amplify the magnetic field by tens of times at a frequency of 50 Hz!

Not only that, but the most surprising thing was that anyone who was a little knowledgeable could see that this device still had a lot of room for improvement!

Not only could it be further amplified in terms of volume and magnetic field, a series of designs, including “heat energy input ports”, was tailor-made for the second generation of controllable fusion devices!

Many engineers who were engaged in the research of electromagnets, after reading this paper, all started to doubt their careers.

With the development of disciplines in the 22nd century, it was impossible for ordinary people to fully grasp the knowledge of their field and catch up with the most cutting-edge research results, without studying for ten or twenty years.

No one could believe that a scholar who woke up a hundred years ago had not been completely left behind by the times and that he had even made breakthrough research results in a brand-new field!

Many people speculated that Academician Lu had lost his interest in academics. Just like Newton’s choice back then, who gave up his attempt to climb higher academically and devoted himself to the financial field.

As a result, it now appeared that the facts seemed to be the opposite of what people expected.

And the most embarrassing thing was that, after leaving academia, Newton lost his salary in stock trading for more than 20 years, but Academician Lu, who did not leave academia, seemed to have made a profit from stock trading?

Moreover, it looked like he had made a lot...

Pan-Asian Academy of Sciences.

Looking at the holographic screen suspended in front of him and sitting in the office, Academician Zhang Feiyue couldn't help but look convinced.

"Pulsed magnetic field based on magnetic storm compression technology?"

"Interesting."

As a scholar engaged in plasma physics research, although he had been engaged in research related to the second-generation controllable fusion project, his area of expertise was not the design of electromagnets.

In contrast, his research was more inclined to the theoretical level, especially for the plasma in the reactor.

Therefore, after downloading the holographic model, he couldn't immediately give a reliable evaluation. He could only consult his friends in the engineering institute on the electromagnet design.

Although the verification of the model had not yet been completed, according to his friend in the Academy of Engineering, the possibility of implementation was still very high.

"It would be great if I could chat with Academician Lu face to face."

After reading the paper again, Academician Zhang Feiyue couldn't help but let out a sincere admiration.

Regardless of whether the design idea of the electromagnet could open the door to a new world for the research of the second-generation of controllable fusion, this paper itself was quite wonderful.

So this is what the best scholar of the 21st century is like.

I wish I was born in his era...

The students sitting in the office said in an instigating tone.

“The electromagnet research laboratory of East Asia Energy is so short of people now. Sir, I believe Academician Lu will be happy to invite you to join his second-generation controllable fusion project, right?”

“It’s hard to say.” Academician Zhang Feiyue shook his head. “Academician Lu has a strange temperament and is not so easy to get along with. No one knows what he wants to do.”

However, his heart was a little intrigued.

Would he be rejected? Maybe, but it was worth a try.

If Academician Lu is serious and really intends to brighten the light of second-generation controllable fusion...

Wouldn’t it be a shame to just pass by the opportunity of writing my name in history?

After hesitating for a long time, Academician Zhang Feiyue gritted his teeth, and he couldn’t let it go. So he turned on the computer and operated the holographic interface, wrote an email, and sent it to Lu Zhou.

After a morning of waiting.

Just as he was about to get up and go to the cafeteria to eat lunch, an email with only three sentences appeared in his mailbox.

However, it was these three short sentences that turned his mood into an unrestrained excitement.

[This is Lu Zhou.

[I have read your paper and am very interested in your research in the field of high-energy plasma.

[Do you have time to talk in person?]

Chapter 1499: Did Not Take The Bait

The excitement in the heart of Academician Zhang Feiyue aside.

Compared to the engineers who researched electromagnets, those who were engaged in the research of second-generation controllable nuclear fusion had different opinions on the application prospects of the pulsed magnetic field generator that was proposed by Academician Lu.

Some scholars had the same views as Academician Zhang, who believed that the pulsed magnetic field concept proposed by Lu Zhou might become the key to solving the lack of magnetic field restraint in the second generation of controllable nuclear fusion.

Some scholars also believed that using such an unstable magnetic field to confine fusion reactants with a high temperature of billions of degrees was both dangerous and impractical.

For example, at the Pan-Asian Academy of Sciences.

After seeing the preprinted and the holographic model attached to the paper, an old professor not only had the opposite attitude but also gave completely different opinions.

“Pulsing magnetic field?”

“This is nonsense!”

“The magnetic field of 10,000 Tesla... If exposed to the water molecules inside the human body, somatic cells will directly decompose! Where are you going to build this reactor?”

“Not to mention that the entire magnetic field is still changing! I think if this technology is really used on the second-generation controllable fusion device, it must not be a reactor, but an electromagnetic pulse weapon!”

Similar controversies were not only happening in the LSPM forum but also frequently seen in the laboratories of major universities and research institutes.

In fact, there was nothing wrong with controversy. After all, science itself advanced with controversy.

However, what was more interesting was that, in contrast to the constant controversy in the academic world, the views of the capital market on Lu Zhou's latest research results were unexpectedly highly consistent.

Almost on the second day after the paper was published, the headline of the "Lujiazui Daily" published an article titled "A Key Breakthrough in the Second Generation of Controllable Fusion Technology".

Immediately after that, after the stock market opened that day, the share price of East Asia Energy was rising out of control...

These seemed to correspond to Newton's words—"I can calculate the motion of heavenly bodies, but not the madness of people..."

...

Some were happy and some are sad, some were joyful and some were worried.

The surging momentum of East Asia Energy made the shareholders ecstatic, but it also made those who missed the opportunity regretful, and it also made those who believed in the short report of Yangwei Capital so painful that it was difficult to breathe.

Especially Yangwei Capital.

After seeing the surging trend of East Asia Energy stock, Song Yangwei, the CEO of Yangwei Capital, almost passed out.

He just came back from the bureau when he heard the bad news.

Looking at the video window, the investment manager was reporting to him while trembling. He was so angry that he almost unplugged the smart security bracelet.

"10% increase?! How could it be possible!"

*This is f*cking East Asia Energy, an energy giant with a market value of tens of trillions!*

This was not a small company with a market value of several billion, even a 1% increase could create 100 billion of market value out of thin air.

After taking a deep breath, Song Yangwei calmed himself down.

After about 5 minutes, he spoke as if he made up his mind.

“When the stock price pulls back, let’s retreat.”

After hearing the chairman’s voice, the investment manager on the other end of the phone looked sad; his mood sank.

Although it was compelling to do so for the sake of reducing the loss, such an outcome really made him devastated.

He had been waiting for the boss to play the so-called trump card, but so far, there was nothing.

Buy back the stocks at a higher price...

This was equivalent to giving up.

According to his own estimation, this wave of Yangwei Capital’s loss would have to be at least 3 billion credit points.

Looks like I can forget about the end-of-year bonuses...

...

Song Yangwei didn’t want to think about the short-selling for the time being. After returning home, Song Yangwei took a shower and changed into clean clothes. He called the Security Bureau and reported his position.

Although he was out of jail, it didn’t mean that he was completely free. He just changed to a slightly more comfortable place to continue watching.

Not only did he have to report his position every 24 hours, but the time for outing activities was limited to 2 hours.

To be honest, Song Yangwei was desperate for his crimes to be pardoned.

Although he was not an information technology expert, as a person in the financial industry, he knew the danger of the ALPHA virus better than anyone.

In the 22nd century, apart from a few countries in Africa that had not yet popularized robots, almost the vast majority of countries around the world had popularized robotics technology.

Even some small countries in the North Sea Alliance were negotiating to grant basic citizenship to robots of a certain working age.

Given the current degree of dependence on robots in the tertiary and secondary industries of major economies, once this AI virus spread, the global economy would be hit hard.

Therefore, the Security Bureau would definitely not let him get off the hook easily.

Thinking of this, Song Yangwei, who hung up the call and leaned on his chair, sighed in his heart.

If I knew this would happen, I would never have signed my name on that document.

As for why he wanted to research the virus at that time, that was a long story.

Although it was the request of the foundation, he also did it out of his own selfishness.

Although the economic crisis was a disaster for most people, it was an opportunity for a few people!

Especially for those who could predict the arrival of a crisis!

The vast majority of assets would become very cheap during the economic crisis. As long as adequate preparations were made before the crisis occurred, he would be able to stand at the top of the world in a new round of wealth shuffling.

Financial means wasn't the only thing that could trigger an economic crisis. Song Yangwei believed that technical means were also possible.

However...

Thinking about these things now was useless.

The Security Bureau had warned him not to spread the news about the ALPHA virus, which was tantamount to confiscating his trump card.

He didn't even want to think about Yangwei Capital. There was only one thing that was flashing in his mind.

In order to have a chance of being released from prison for the rest of his life, he must find a way to mitigate his crime before the sentence was issued.

After hesitating for a few minutes, Song Yangwei finally made up his mind. He reached out his hand and pressed it lightly on the desk. He then activated the holographic conference system.

With the emergence of a blue light beam, a man with no facial features sitting on an office chair slowly emerged in his study room.

Anonymous.

Or... Mr. D.

Song Yangwei had always called him that.

Although he was curious about what kind of person was hidden behind the holographic image, the people at the foundation seemed to have never cared for his curiosity.

Seeing the faceless man appearing at the desk, Song Yangwei cleared his throat and said in a gentle voice, "Long time no see."

"Yeah, long time no see."

When saying this, although Song Yangwei could not see the slightest smile from the face of the faceless man, he heard a cruel tone from the voice.

After leaving the strange thought behind, Song Yangwei took a deep breath and reported.

"Academician Lu has taken control of East Asia Energy. I tried to use my influence, but unfortunately, I failed.

"And judging from the papers he published, the second-generation controllable fusion project seems to have a great chance of winning. If he

completes the project of this century, his prestige in this century will undoubtedly reach the peak, even more than he was a century ago.

“I can’t beat him with my own strength. I need the help of the foundation.”

The faceless man looked at Song Yangwei quietly, waiting for him to finish speaking.

After a long time, slight laughter suddenly floated from the holographic image.

Confused by the laughter, Song Yangwei, who had a bad feeling, was about to ask him what he was laughing at.

At this moment, the faceless man spoke with a calm electronic sound.

“Now you want help?”

Song Yangwei: “I certainly don’t want to trouble you, but now that the situation has arrived, we have to join forces to restrain Lu Zhou’s expanding influence in East Asia! Speaking of which, do you have time over the next few days? We might as well talk in person.”

“Talk in person?” The faceless man said with a faint smile, “Then I can watch as you sell me to the Security Bureau?”

When Song Yangwei heard these words, his heart suddenly shook, and he immediately denied it.

“What! And what are you talking about, what does this have to do with the Security Bureau?”

“Don’t pretend, I know exactly where you were and what you said these days. You thought you were careful enough, but I’m sorry, I’m not a simpleton.”

As if looking at a prey, the faceless man looked at him blankly. After a pause, he let his voice down and continued, “Let me guess what deal the Security Bureau has given you. Money? Not realistic. Or... some kind of promise? As long as you can provide them with more valuable clues, they will consider releasing you?”

After a drop of cold sweat rolled down his face, Song Yangwei looked at the faceless man with a dazed expression.

“I do not know what you’re talking about...”

“You don’t need to know, because it’s almost over.” He slowly got up from his chair. The holographic image strolled to his desk, looking down at the old man sitting behind the desk.

“You have forgotten your vows and betrayed our cause.

“Hell is not enough to punish your sins. The Void will be your final destination. What awaits your soul will be eternal exile.”

Song Yangwei panicked and stood up from his office chair. He looked at the faceless man in front of him in fear and said calmly, “What do you want to do?”

Although he didn’t think that this guy, who was just a holographic image could hurt him through the network cable, he couldn’t help but feel full of panic when he thought about the foundation.

He looked at the button on the desk, which could turn off the holographic conference system. He then quickly tried to turn it off.

A faint smile appeared in the face of the faceless man as he threw out a cruel answer.

“What do I want to do?

“Of course it is to punish a traitor.”

Chapter 1500: Implant

Outside the courtyard of the mansion.

It was crowded with messy footsteps and women crying.

A stretcher was quickly rushed into the yard, then dragged out of the mansion by two robot ambulance personnel headed towards the direction of the ambulance.

Two police cars parked at the entrance of the courtyard. They pulled up the cordon to block the scene while calming the emotions of the families.

About 5 minutes ago.

Song Yangwei, the boss of Yangwei Capital, was found dead in his home.

There was no trace of any blows on his body and no deadly toxins were found in his blood. If it weren't for the look on his face, almost no one would doubt that this was just an accident.

It happened so suddenly that everyone did not have time to react, and they were left without a trace of defense.

It wasn't until the detectives deployed nearby discovered that something was wrong and contacted Song Yangwei to confirm the situation, only to find that the person was dead.

Standing next to the cordon, Xing Bian took out the electronic cigarette from his pocket. After inhaling, he stuffed the cigarette back.

Seeing Shi Jin walk towards him, he spoke in a deep voice.

"How did he die?"

Shi Jin didn't speak. He silently handed the sample bag containing the integrated circuit in his hand to the captain.

The moment when Xing Bian saw the chip stored in the sample bag, his eyes gradually became serious.

After a while, he said in a heavy tone, "Implant?"

"Yes, Song Yangwei had an artificial heart implanted in his body, but it was turned off half an hour ago..."

Shi Jin nodded; his expression also full of solemnity. After a pause, he continued with a complicated tone, "We might be in trouble."

...

Northwest China.

Far away from the city, a four-wheel off-road vehicle was galloping on an empty road in a nature reserve.

Wang Peng looked at the positioning system on the car. He then cast his gaze to the rows of woods outside the window with a shocked expression on his face.

“After a century, the desert in the northwest has become a forest.”

“It was like this a long time ago, and this can be regarded as one of the legacies left by Academician Lu, although most of this was done by his descendants... We are here.”

After passing the checkpoint at the road, the car continued along the path for a while. It then stopped in front of a military base that was not marked on the map.

To be honest, the construction of these buildings did not feel like a military facility at all.

And the reason it was obvious that this was a military base was purely because of the instincts of a soldier.

Opening the car door and stepping out of the driver's seat, the man who drove squinted his eyes, looked at the military base in front of him, and said with some nostalgia.

“This was the largest special forces training base in Pan-Asia, it was also the most advanced training base in the world... As for why I say that, you will know when you enter.”

Wang Peng: “The Security Bureau is a special force?”

“No, but most people graduated from here.” The man with a weathered face was standing beside the car door with a grin. He continued, “No matter what kind of training you have received before, this place is a new beginning. I hope you can forget those outdated technologies and earnestly pass the assessment.”

Wang Peng smiled lightly and said, “Although this is a new beginning, some things don't change.”

The man shrugged his shoulders and said nothing.

Wang Peng looked at him curiously and continued, "Speaking of which, you didn't tell me your name."

"Hunter, my friends call me that, and you can call me that too." Shaking hands with Wang Peng, the man grinned and continued, "Anyway, good luck to you. If you can do well and pass the assessment, we should meet again soon."

"Thanks."

After shaking hands and letting go, Wang Peng cast his gaze to the military base not far away and asked casually, "May I ask, how long is the training time? Or when did the assessment you mentioned start?"

Hunter laughed and said, "It's already started. As for when you pass, it depends on when you can reach the average standard of a Security Agency agent."

Wang Peng: "I mean, what is this standard?"

"Then you have to find it yourself."

The man made a farewell gesture. He then turned and walked towards the off-road vehicle.

With the sound of the engine starting, the car quickly turned onto the highway and disappeared from Wang Peng's vision.

Do I need to do the handover work myself?

Wang Peng watched the car go away. Just as Wang Peng was thinking about it, a voice calling his name suddenly came from behind him.

"Wang Peng?"

He turned around and looked back. A strange man was standing there, and there was a holographic screen floating on his left wrist.

Although he couldn't see what kind of text was displayed on the front of the screen, he guessed that it should be his own resume or identity information.

"Yeah."

Wang Peng originally thought that the person would ask for his information thoroughly. He didn't expect that after checking his name, he just glanced over and put away the holographic screen.

"A little bit earlier than expected. Come with me."

After this, he turned around and walked towards the military base.

Wang Peng did not hesitate for long. He followed with the suitcase in his hand.

Passing through the checkpoint in front of the door, the moment he followed the strange man's footsteps into the base, everything in front of him suddenly became clear.

It was at this moment that he finally understood why the agent who claimed to be Hunter called this the most advanced training base in the world.

The man seemed to have noticed the expression on his face. He glanced back at him and said with a smile, "You look a little surprised?"

"I am quite surprised." Wang Peng continued, looking around the empty hall, "If I didn't already know where I am, I would never imagine this is a military base."

Although he had not visited the military facilities of other countries in this era, everything in front of him had subverted his understanding of military bases.

The most common people here were not soldiers in military uniforms. Instead, they were researchers in white coats. From what he saw, the ratio between the two was almost one to one.

The weird technologies along the way, as well as some confusing gadgets, made it hard to imagine that this was a military camp; it was more like a laboratory.

Reading the surprise on Wang Peng's face, the man smiled slightly and continued, "In this era, the vast majority of military conflicts occur in space far away from the ground and in remote Mars colonies. And even if there is a military conflict, most of the fights are done by AI."

“However, there are still some tasks that are not suitable for AI to complete. My name is Lin Feng, and I am your instructor. If you don’t understand anything, you can consult me.”

Wang Peng couldn’t help but ask when looking at a man who walked by with an exaggerated arm, with painted skin and visible metal bones.

“Is that a robot soldier?”

“Strictly speaking, we do not have purely robot soldiers. Firstly, it is against human relations, and secondly, it is unnecessary. On the frontal battlefield, different types of drones and all-terrain remote-controlled vehicles are better than two legs. The humanoid soldier is more reliable on a non-frontal battlefield, and the memories of the robots cannot be perfectly adaptable, which is a problem in most AI programs today.”

After a pause, Lin Feng continued, “As for the things you saw, they’re called implants”

Wang Peng: “Implants?”

Lin Feng nodded.

“Yes, something that is very common in this era, and it can even be said that it has become a fashion trend.”

“Natural organs will always have various problems, including virus infection, functional failure, or pure damage caused by some force. Therefore, the implantation of prosthetic bodies has become a new fashion... Of course, military use will actually be earlier, dating back to the 2020s of the last century, when the first application case of bionic prosthesis appeared.”

Wang Peng: “... I may know the person you mentioned.”

It was because Biosphere A was attacked by an organization of unknown forces that Li Gaoliang lost his legs.

At that time, neural access technology was in the ascendant. After Academician Lu heard his situation, he personally designed a bionic prosthesis for him. Li Gaoliang, who was fitted with a bionic prosthesis, went back to normal, and his legs and feet even functioned better than before.

If he remembered correctly, this caused a lot of heated discussion at the time.

After hearing Wang Peng's words, Lin Feng showed a surprised expression on his face and said with a smile, "I almost forgot that you were from that era."

Wang Peng: "I have a question."

Lin Feng: "What?"

Wang Peng: "Are you a robot?"

"My cover has been blown..." Lin Feng was slightly stunned. He then smiled and nodded. "This was originally part of the assessment, but I didn't expect you to pass it on the first day. It seems you are of the higher insight type. I will recommend a few suitable types of equipment for you."

Although it was expected, he didn't expect that even places like "recruitment camp" would use robots.

It seemed that the reliance on smart tools in this era was really to an extent he couldn't imagine.

Shaking his head in his mind, Wang Peng glanced at the side glass window behind the soldier who had undergone regular inspection and maintenance of the prosthesis and said casually, "By equipment, if you mean the implanted prosthetics, then forget about it. In contrast, I still believe in myself more."

Lin Feng shrugged.

"It seems that stubbornness is also one of your characteristics."

"But it doesn't matter. This is a personal choice. Although I recommend you to accept the convenience of technology in this era. After all, it will make it easier for you to pass the assessment."

"There are no shortcuts to some things. This sentence was told by a friend of mine." Wang Peng smiled lightly and continued in a calm tone, "Take me to the dormitory. After that, I want to visit the training ground."

Lin Feng smiled slightly, nodded, and said, "No problem."