

Chapter 1601: Borrowing a Ship?

East Asia Heavy Industries building.

After Lu Zhou completed the assembly and entire experimental plan design of the first Z particle oscillation device “Z-Demo”, he came here all the way from Jinling.

Compared to the high-level executives of East Asia Energy, the executives of East Asia Heavy Industries were obviously much more approachable.

For example, the man named Yang Qidong standing in front of him at the moment, although his status was the chairman of East Asia Heavy Industries, he had no ego at all, and he invited Lu Zhou into the office very politely.

But, for some reason, Lu Zhou felt that this guy was a little nervous...

“I’m not interested in the position of the chairman, so you don’t need to be so nervous.”

Lu Zhou joked, but to his surprise, his own joke seemed to have no effect at all...

“Academician Lu, how could I be nervous? I’m not nervous at all!” Chairman Yang showed a stiff smile on his face as he continued, “If you want to be the chairman of East Asia Heavy Industries, that is the honor of our board of directors. As long as you have this wish, I would be overjoyed, why would I be nervous?”

But you don’t look happy...

Lu Zhou estimated that this guy was frightened by Liu Zhengxing’s case.

But Liu Zhengxing’s death really had nothing to do with him. It was purely because he exposed too many anonymous identities that shouldn’t have been touched and was destroyed by his own doings.

Speaking of which...

People from The Spirit of The Universe Foundation have integrated into East Asia Energy, so the same should go for East Asia Heavy Industries, right?

Although the profitability may be slightly weaker, as a top manufacturing giant, the power of East Asia Heavy Industries should not be underestimated...

Seeing Lu Zhou look at him with an inquiring gaze, Yang Qidong suddenly became nervous again.

“You... Do you have any instructions?”

Lu Zhou calmed his tone a little, looked at him, and said, “I told you, you don’t need to be so nervous, I’m just here to ask you for something. It should be easy for you... and it’s definitely beneficial for you.”

Fearing that Lu Zhou would be unsatisfied, Yang Qidong quickly said, “Please tell!”

Lu Zhou decided not to worry about his nervousness anymore. He organized the thoughts in his mind and spoke in the most concise way possible.

“So, I researched the Z particle oscillator some time ago, right? After a period of research, it is finally completed.

“In order to verify some ideas about hyperspace theory, I hope you can modify a starship for me.”

Yang Qidong was stunned. Thinking that he had heard something wrong, he asked, “Modify?”

“Yeah.” Lu Zhou continued, “I will borrow a search cruiser from the First Fleet in two days. I may have to ask you guys to modify it.”

Yang Qidong: “...?”

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Pan-Asian Academy of Sciences.

Inside an office for theoretical physics research, Professor Lu Wenmao met the chairman, who came to visit him.

He turned around and stood up from the office chair. He then extended his right hand and politely greeted him.

“Hello, Mr. Chairman! I didn’t expect you to be here so soon. ”

Li Guangya smiled and said, “Professor Lu, you are the best in the field of Pan-Asian theoretical physics, of course I’m going to come here as soon as I can.”

“Oh, you’re too kind.” Professor Lu Wenmao felt his face getting warm. He said embarrassedly, “Academician Lu aside, even when compared to some other great names in my field, my abilities are still weaker.”

“You’re too modest!”

“Not modest, it’s that I can’t accept this compliment.” Professor Lu Wenmao sighed and continued, “Speaking of which, may I ask why are you here?”

Li Guangya smiled and said, “Here’s the thing, I want to ask you a question.”

Hearing that the chairman had a problem and wanted to consult him, Lu Wenmao immediately put on a serious expression on his face.

“Please go ahead.”

Li Guangya: “From the perspective of an expert, based on the theoretical basis provided by the Z particle gravitational wave equation, with our current level of technology, is it possible to achieve faster than light technology?”

Z particle gravitational wave equation and faster than light technology?

This question seems to be a bit broad...

Looking at Chairman Li Guangya, Professor Lu Wenmao was slightly taken aback. He asked cautiously, “You mean... open a stable hyperspace channel?”

Li Guangya smiled and said, “I don’t know the specific academic phrasing, but yeah, roughly.”

Lu Wenmao: “It might be a little difficult.”

Li Guangya didn't give up and asked, "I know that it may be difficult to send a substance directly, but what about sending a piece of information? Through the method of hyperspace channel, accelerate the speed of information... How likely is it to be realized?"

Lu Wenmao smiled bitterly and said, "It's hard to tell... To be honest, I am just a theorist, and I am not an expert at transforming theory into tangible application results. From a theoretical point of view, the Z particle gravitational wave equation does establish a fairly perfect mathematical model between the vibration frequency of the Z particle and the curvature of spacetime, but how to use this property to open a hyperspace channel is still a very big issue.

"Although 100 years ago we made a photon return to Earth from Mars 207.1 seconds earlier, it cost 1/10th of the ILHCRC's annual funding that year.

"I'm not certain about the distant future, but at least for the next half a century... it is unrealistic to expect one to solve the problem of faster than light speed through this line of formula."

After listening to Professor Lu Wenmao's statement, Li Guangya's face showed a thoughtful expression.

After pondering for a long time, he touched his chin and nodded.

"Oh, I see..."

Seeing the disappointment gradually revealed on the chairman's face, Professor Lu Wenmao said, "Of course, this is just my personal opinion. It may be a little pessimistic. Maybe other people have different opinions from me. Anyway, I am sorry for not being able to help you."

"No worries, you have been a great help!"

Chairman Li Guangya smiled. He was about to say some kind words to express his gratitude.

However, at this moment, Secretary Wei walked in from the outside in a hurry.

"Chairman Li!"

Li Guangya couldn't help raising his eyebrows slightly and asked, "What happened?"

“Just now, Academician Lu made a call to your office, hoping that you can approve his experiment request.”

“Experiment request?” The expression on Li Guangya’s face became even more strange. He asked, “What experiment? Why is he asking me?”

Secretary Wei said with a wry smile, “He wants to borrow a... cruiser from the First Fleet.”

Cruiser?!

Li Guangya took a breath and couldn’t help asking, “Borrow a cruiser... What the hell does he want to do?”

That’s not something you people just borrow!

Without a reason to convince the congress, even he, as the chairman of the board, couldn’t arbitrarily mobilize the First Fleet.

“He said on the phone that he wanted to test the stability of some hyperspace channel...”

Seeing the dumbfounded expressions of the two, Wei Song gulped and continued nervously, “It seems to be... related to the faster than the speed of light experiment.”

Chapter 1602: Hyperspace Experiment

On Space Station Venus.

As always, Field and his colleagues were following the instructions of the North American Space Agency, peeping at the Pan-Asian Cooperation construction site in geosynchronous orbit.

Technically, this was no longer peeping, they were straight-up staring.

At first, Field was still low-key. He set the astronomical observation telescope to cross paths with the Nirvana space station. Later, he felt that the engineers of East Asia Heavy Industries did not care about their movements, so he simply stopped the telescope and aimed it directly at them.

As a result, the Space Station Venus had also officially evolved from an astronomical observatory to a “spy satellite” for civilian purposes.

“Look at them... It seems that they don’t care about us spying at their technology,” Johnny said as he looked at the construction site outside the porthole. He continued, “To be honest, I’m starting to doubt if there’s a point to what we’re doing.”

To be honest, those Pan-Asian Cooperation engineers believed that even if they put the blueprint in front of them, they would not be able to recreate their designs.

In that case, what was the point of taking pictures of their entire construction process?

“The point is that, if one day in the future, after we master those key materials and engineering techniques, we won’t be left too far behind by them.” Looking out the porthole, Field’s face was full of deep sorrow. He anxiously said, “But their construction speed is really incredible... According to the current progress and construction speed, if they can maintain it, they will be able to complete the main part of the entire space station by the end of the year at the latest.”

The two fell into silence, and their gazes were coincidentally stained with envy at the same time.

It would be great if such a great scholar could be born in their hometown.

Although objectively speaking, this space elevator under construction was not one man’s miracle, everything arose because of him.

The foundation of this tall tower was able to stand on geosynchronous orbit at the beginning of the 22nd century was because of his awakening...

Just when the two of them fell into a reverie, a silver-white starship suddenly appeared in their sight.

When he first saw the starship, Field was stunned for a moment, and he did not recognize it for a while.

It was not until he quickly walked back to the observation system and focused his gaze on the holographic screen that he suddenly recognized its body.

Cruiser Qinling!

Equipped with the latest nuclear power plant and fire control system, the ship was considered to be one of the most powerful capital ships in the Pan-Asian First Fleet in the past ten years.

“Qinling... Why did they drive their cruiser to geosynchronous orbit?”

Obviously, his colleague Johnny also recognized the starship’s name. He was also astonished.

Not only that, but they were also surprised to see two heavy engineering ships leave the base of the Nirvana Space Station and lean toward the cruiser.

Realizing that the Pan-Asian Cooperation might be making a major move, Field made a decision immediately after thinking for a moment.

“Aim at the observation system!”

“But... What about the space elevator?” Johnny hesitated and continued, “The mission assigned to us by the North American Space Agency does not include observing the military movements of the Pan-Asian First Fleet.”

“The two engineering ships were separated from the construction site of the space elevator, and it is not yet certain whether this cruiser is related to the space elevator project.” Field continued, “If the higher-ups want to blame someone, I will take all responsibilities!”

“Now, do as I say!”

...

“... This is definitely the strangest task I have received in the past ten years.”

Looking at the mission briefing presented in front of him, Captain Deng Yuanshu had a blank face, but his mind was full of questions.

Cooperate with Academician Lu to conduct experiments...

What kind of experiment needs the most advanced cruiser of Pan-Asian Cooperation to cooperate?

Shouldn’t they go to the ILHCRC for help?

"If I remember correctly... He is a mathematician." The adjutant standing next to him with a clearly confused expression on his face said, "Could it be that... he has started studying weapons?"

"I don't know, the briefing did not specify what the experiment would be."

Deng Yuanshu's index finger clicked in the air. He put away the mission briefing and continued, "In any case, after we meet him in person, we will know."

As the two engineering ships docked with the Qinling, Captain Deng, who was standing inside the ship's bridge, finally met the man who was called the greatest scholar of the 21st century.

Deng Yuanshu took the initiative to reach out his right hand as he routinely introduced himself to him.

"Hello, Academician Lu, I am the captain of Qinling, the Pan-Asian First Fleet. This is my adjutant Liu Zhengyi. According to our superior's orders, we will assist you in completing the experiment for this operation."

Adjutant Liu also reached out his right hand with a smile. He shook Lu Zhou's hand after the captain.

"Hello!

"Nice to meet you!"

Lu Zhou smiled and nodded to the two of them. After a simple greeting, Lu Zhou adjusted the expression on his face. Without wasting time, he explained his intentions and the most critical information about the experiment.

After listening to the hyperspace theory described by Lu Zhou in a daze, Captain Deng finally figured out what the whole experiment was about.

Basically, in order to test the disturbance of the curvature of space by the Z particle oscillator, Lu Zhou needed a movable nuclear fusion reactor.

Among the many types of ships in the Pan-Asian First Fleet, apart from the aerospace carrier, the only one that met the minimum requirements for starting the Z particle oscillation device was their cruiser, which was equipped with a standard controllable reactor.

To be honest, although Deng Yuanshu was very interested in Lu Zhou's hyperspace navigation, and he was also willing to obey orders and cooperate with the experiment, the only thing that made him a little hesitant was that Lu Zhou and East Asia Heavy Industries had to carry out a large scale "modification" on his ship.

He had served on this starship for many years, so it felt like home to him...

"Modify... I hope you can reconsider carefully," Adjutant Liu said. He was standing next to the captain when he continued in a serious tone, "Dismantling the weapon system and external armor isn't just a modification to Qinling; it's equivalent to turning our cruiser into a large cargo ship! Even if you reinstall it after the experiment, its combat effectiveness will be greatly reduced. Do you understand what I mean?"

Lu Zhou nodded and said, "I understand, but this experiment is very important. It is related to something far more important than a starship... or even the entire fleet."

"Why do you have to dismantle the equipment?" Looking at Lu Zhou, Captain Deng asked, "Especially the outer armor, many parts of which use integral welding technology, which is not only difficult to disassemble but also difficult to reinstall. It will also cause damage to the material itself. Can't we remove the weapon system and keep the armor?"

"Sorry, I'm afraid not." Lu Zhou shook his head and explained, "The hyperspace channel has very strict restrictions. Unless it is equipped with a larger power system, it is difficult to transport the current weight of Qinling."

There was something else Lu Zhou didn't say.

There was hope of opening the hyperspace channel under ideal circumstances, but it would still have unpredictable consequences.

Since this exceeded the boundary of calculation, it was almost impossible to predict the result using mathematics.

If the situation was optimistic, it would probably be impossible to enter the channel. Or if they succeed in entering, they would have to jump out again from a random position.

And if the situation was not optimistic...

They might never exit the channel.

Captain Deng: “How confident are you of the experiment?”

“It’s meaningless to ask this question.” Lu Zhou shook his head and said, “I believe in my calculations. If it is not 100% certain, I would not stand here. The question now is whether you believe in my own research results.”

Hearing these words, Captain Deng fell into silence.

About five seconds later, he raised his head and looked at Lu Zhou. As if he had made some major decision in his heart, he spoke in a serious tone.

“I often hear people say that you are the greatest scholar on this planet. I believe this great description came from not only your wisdom but also your scientific rigor.”

“Thank you for your trust.” Lu Zhou said softly, “I can assure you that I will not let you down.”

Hearing Lu Zhou’s promise, Captain Deng nodded slightly.

Turning his back to the surprised gaze of the officers beside him, he said solemnly, “In that case…”

“You are in control of our Qinling ship!”

Chapter 1603: Warp Speed!

As the two engineering ships merged, the modification work of the Qinling began.

Under the painful gaze of the group of crew members, the armor and the titanium alloy lining covering the starship’s exterior were removed one by one. The missile launchers and point defense artillery hanging on the starship were also removed one after another.

If Captain Deng Yuanshu’s ship before was a lion with teeth and claws, now it had become a chicken that had just been shaved, and the whole ship was just a large cargo ship.

Except for the massive plasma engine and the GW-class controllable fusion engine comparable to an aerospace carrier, there was nothing special about this starship.

Captain Deng Yuanshu stood in the observation room of the geosynchronous orbit spaceport and looked at the equipment disassembly list presented in front of him. He had a baffled expression on his face.

Although someone had already convinced him of doing this, it was impossible for him to have no mood swings in his heart when he saw his baby ship being dismantled.

At this moment, the alloy door on the side opened, and a man in a military uniform walked in.

“Chief Consultant Yang?”

Deng Yuanshu looked at Yang Wu, who walked into the space capsule. Deng Yuanshu showed a surprised expression on his face. He took the initiative to greet him and said, “Why are you here?”

“The commander sent me over to take a look.” Yang Wu smiled as he watched Captain Deng Yuanshu approaching him. He continued, “How is the situation here? Is the progress going smoothly?”

“I’m not a physicist, I don’t know.” Deng Yuanshu shook his head and said with a wry smile, “Even if I’m watching from the sidelines, I’m just here for the excitement, I don’t understand what they are doing.”

“Really? What about the equipment? Is it all dismantled?”

Hearing these words, Captain Deng’s face suddenly twitched, and he nodded in pain.

“It’s... it’s finished.”

Yang Wu smiled and nodded.

“That was fast.”

Looking at the person standing in front of him, Captain Deng opened his mouth but was hesitant to speak. He finally asked what was in his heart.

“The command team really feels that it is okay to lend him our most advanced guided-missile cruiser for experimentation? I mean, to do such an experiment at the expense of combat effectiveness... Is it really appropriate?”

Hearing Deng Yuanshu’s inquiry, Yang Wu did not feel any surprise.

Even before coming here, he expected the captain would ask this.

He cast his gaze on the Qinling, which was not far away and was completing the modification, and asked, “Do you think there is any aerospace force in this world that is worthy of being our opponent?”

Hearing this question, Captain Deng Yuanshu proudly raised his head.

“I can be certain, at least in this solar system, no one is our opponent!”

Yang Wu smiled and nodded. He said softly, “Yeah, since no one is our opponent, why have we been developing armaments over the years, continuously expanding the size of the First Fleet, and enhancing our own combat effectiveness for so long?”

Isn’t this obvious?

Hearing this strange question, Deng Yuanshu couldn’t think of an answer for a while.

As if seeing the thoughts in his heart, Yang Wu put his hands behind his back, walked to the porthole, and continued speaking in a calm tone, “Starting from half a century ago, even going back to the aerospace forces a century ago, we were building this army with the invading force of an extraterrestrial civilization as our imaginary enemy. Our goal from the beginning was outside the solar system.

“The destiny of all people living on this planet is tied together.

“So why do we do this experiment in geosynchronous orbit instead of taking the starship to the Lagrange Space Base or asteroids farther than Mars?

“It is no exaggeration to say that this technology will completely change the world that we are familiar with and expand our scope of existence to areas that we have never imagined.

“If he succeeds and really finds a way to surpass the speed of light, I can tell you with certainty that even if all the starships of the entire Pan-Asian First Fleet combined, they will still be less important than what he has done today.

“By that time, our banner will be on all Earth-like planets around the solar system, our footprints will be across the entire universe, and there will be nothing to restrain us.”

Looking at the silent Captain Deng Yuanshu, Yang Wu reached out and patted him on the shoulder. He then said with a smile, “If you are confused about the present, then think about the future.

“After the experiment is over, if he succeeds... I believe you will understand what I said!”

...

The modification work was quickly over.

The volume of the Z particle oscillator itself was not large, and the weight was light too.

It was different from the demo version that Lu Zhou made at home.

This official version of the Z particle oscillation device that was completed by East Asia Heavy Industries used the latest magnetic generation device and a more lightweight titanium alloy bracket. It had specialized improvements on the original design version proposed by Lu Zhou.

At the same time, in terms of changing the curvature of spacetime, it also far exceeded the experimental version...

The bridge of the Qinling.

After taking a glance at the time indicator on the holographic screen, Captain Deng Yuanshu, who had been extremely taciturn since he boarded the ship, suddenly spoke.

“What is it like to pass through the hyperspace channel?”

Lu Zhou, who was standing next to him, thought for a while before replying, “I don’t know, after all, so far, no one has ever entered it.”

Adjutant Liu, who was standing next to Captain Deng, suddenly couldn't help asking, "If you go in... What if you can't get out?"

Lu Zhou: "That probability is very small. Once the hyperspace channel is opened, two endpoints will inevitably be created in the space. And if there really happens to be a situation where you can't get in or out..."

Liu Zhengyi gulped and asked nervously, "What will happen?"

"Not sure." Lu Zhou shook his head. "Maybe you will reach a parallel world? Or into the Void outside of time? Anyway, it should not be in a normal universe."

So far, whether parallel universes existed was still a hypothesis that couldn't be proved or falsified. The only conclusion that could be drawn by calculation in the theoretical physics community today was that the universe was a folded n -dimensional surface, like a ball of scrap paper.

As for whether there was a similar paper ball in the $n+1$ dimensional space, it was still unknown.

Strictly speaking, the hyperspace channel drilled a hole in the $n+1$ dimensional space, and from a certain point in the universe, it crossed directly over to another point through a curved surface.

If parallel universes really existed, when crossing the hyperspace channel, they might actually leap over to another universe.

Looking at the officers with weird faces next to him, Lu Zhou smiled and said in a comforting tone, "Don't worry, I'm here, I will stand with you until the end of the experiment."

From Lu Zhou's point of view, this sentence was quite comforting.

However, what he didn't expect was that as soon as he uttered this sentence, he was strongly opposed by Captain Deng.

"No." Deng Yuanshu said with a serious look at Lu Zhou, "You are the chief designer of the space elevator project! We will be fine if something goes wrong, but if something goes wrong to you, it will affect—"

“I’ve said it countless times, I’m the chief consultant.” Lu Zhou sighed and continued, “Also, if there is a problem, you won’t be fine. Everyone’s life is precious. I never think that my life is more important than other people’s lives. If I weren’t certain, this experiment would not begin at all.”

Seeing that Lu Zhou did not listen to his persuasion at all, Deng Yuanshu wanted to say something. However, at this moment, a staff member walked in from outside the bridge, stood in front of him, and spoke with a clean military salute.

“Sir! The reactor has been successfully ignited and is running at 10% efficiency. All preparations for the lock are ready, and the device can be started at any time!”

“Good.”

Nodding to the staff member, Deng Yuanshu then looked at Lu Zhou. After a moment of silence, he said seriously, “The preparations for the experiment have been completed... Are you sure you want to stand here with us?”

Lu Zhou nodded, smiled relaxedly, and said, “This is a moment to witness history. As the leader of this project, wouldn’t it be a pity if I don’t see the end?”

Deng Yuanshu: “If you can sit back and watch us bring the victory back from the frontline, our psychological pressure will be reduced by at least half.”

Lu Zhou gave him an encouraging look and continued, “Don’t be so nervous. In a blink of an eye, we will see the fiery red planet.”

“I hope so.”

Captain Deng sighed silently in his heart. Seeing that he couldn’t persuade the big man no matter what, he finally gave up and looked at the command interface spread out in front of him.

A serious expression appeared on his face. As if he were facing a battle, he gave the command to fight in a stern tone.

“Attention, all units on the ship, enter combat position!

“Set the target course!”

Scholar's Advanced Technological System - Chapter 1604 - Arrived! -

Chapter 1604: Arrived!

Liu Zhengyi swore that...

As an adjutant of the Qinling, he had served in the First Fleet for many years, and he had been on all kinds of starships, large and small, with a flight time of nearly 10,000 hours.

However, in the past nearly 10,000 hours of flying time, he couldn't think of an hour, or even a minute, more surprising than what he was experiencing right now.

As the order was issued, the reactors' output power rose rapidly from MW to GW, and the power output of the plasma engine also reached its limit. The Z particle positive oscillation device installed at the front of the starship also released its force field.

At first, they didn't feel anything unnatural, that was until the space outside the porthole of the bridge began to twist, the stars embedded in the long cold night began to gradually elongate, turning from shining lines as they converged towards the space in front of the starship.

It was almost like...

The universe in front of them was collapsing.

"The magnetic field of the reactor fluctuates drastically, and the concentration of high-energy particle rays around the starship is increasing sharply!" The staff sitting in front of the console gulped. He nervously looked back at Captain Deng Yuanshu, who was standing inside the bridge, and said, "Captain..."

With an indifferent look on his face, Deng Yuanshu looked away from the strange scene outside the porthole and looked at Lu Zhou next to him.

“Is this situation in your expectation?”

“If you are referring to the hyperspace channel, then it did open as I expected.” Lu Zhou stared intently at the twisted universe outside the porthole, as if afraid to miss any detail. He spoke with a hint of excitement as he continued, “As for what the world behind the channel is like, I’m afraid I won’t know until we get in!”

Don’t know until we get in...

Hearing Lu Zhou’s answer, Captain Deng Yuanshu felt his scalp numb.

However, he was a soldier.

Cooperating with Lu Zhou’s experiment was an order given to him by the higher-ups.

Forget about a hyperspace channel, even if it were a black hole in front of them, he would rush in without hesitation.

He clenched his teeth and spoke.

“Continue the experiment!”

There was a slight tremor from the hull below. It’s as if under the interference of some mysterious force field, it uttered an overwhelming noise.

Deng Yuanshu’s body felt a huge pulling sensation.

The acceleration provided by the plasma engine of the Qinling in cruising mode was low, but he was feeling a load of several Gs.

The sirens in the bridge sounded one after another as the various lights flashed red, indicating that their starship was passing through a dangerous area.

When Deng Yuanshu saw this scene, his mood sank to the bottom of his stomach in an instant.

Just when he was almost ready to be brave, the feeling of the cells in his whole body being torn apart suddenly disappeared.

After piercing through the invisible barrier in the front end of the starship, their starship seemed to have rushed into an unseen space in the universe they were previously familiar with.

This space seemed to be made up of countless fragments. The darkness that could be seen by the naked eye was like a chaotic ocean.

Sailing in this ocean, Captain Deng Yuanshu felt that the cruiser under his seat, named after the Qinling Mountains, was like a leaf of reed floating in a lake, as if a wave could knock it over any second.

“F*ck me...”

He muttered softly while staring at everything outside the porthole intently. Adjutant Liu was sitting nearby with his pupils filled with indescribable shock.

He finally couldn't help cursing, “Where the f*ck... are we?”

“The hyperspace channel fills the gaps between the surfaces of the universe and the extra dimension beyond n. But unlike the Void, we have never actually entered here, a shortcut to the distant world... I didn't expect this.”

Lu Zhou stared at everything outside the porthole.

His voice was full of excitement. He seemed to be answering Adjutant Liu's question and also seemed to be talking to himself.

Captain Deng Yuanshu, who was staring out of the window, was completely baffled.

He couldn't describe what he saw before his eyes, let alone the shock in his heart at the moment.

At this moment, there was only one thing he wanted to figure out—

“How do we... get out?”

“Don't worry about this. The channel has been set up. As long as the hyperspace channel remains stable, we will definitely be able to get out.”

“How long do we have to wait—”

Before he could finish, the scenery outside the porthole changed drastically. The starry sky that was originally passing by suddenly stopped, and the front end of Qinling seemed to hit a transparent barrier. The space in front was like a supersonic jet breaking the sound barrier. It became a whirlpool-like vortex.

Before he had time to ask what had happened, the feeling of overbearing G-force struck again, and the pain caused everyone in the bridge to faint.

“The Z particle oscillator itself does not have the ability to tear space... Its principle is to open a hyperspace channel along the direction of the gravitational field by disturbing the gravitational field between two massive stars or planets. When you enter and leave, you will be affected by the disordered gravitational field, so it may be a little painful... Well, maybe more than a little.”

Just as Lu Zhou tried to endure the pain, the scene outside the porthole changed again.

The space suddenly opened up a circle of ripples.

Just like drilling out of the deep sea, the Qinling, which finally broke through the barrier, seemed to have jumped from one world to another.

When they saw the fiery red planet, everyone in the bridge showed a shocked expression.

Especially Captain Deng Yuanshu.

Seeing all this in front of him, his face was filled with uncontrollable excitement. With a soft trembling voice, he squeezed out a sentence from his stiff throat.

“We... Is this a success?”

There was silence in the bridge.

The people who were still in shock had forgotten their words.

The voice of the Mars spaceport dispatch center came in the communication channel.

“This is the dispatch center of the Tiangong City Space Station. You have entered controlled airspace. If you need to stop at the port, please follow the

prompts to switch orbits... Uh, where did you come from? Our radar did not detect you. ”

The silence in the bridge was finally broken.

The staff sitting in front of the console quickly responded to the dispatchers of the spaceport, explaining that they were performing missions, and communicated with the Lagrange Space Base via the communication repeater of the spaceport. The space base got in touch and reported the good news about the success of the experiment to the higher-ups.

In fact, this experiment was more than a success.

It could even be described as a great victory.

Deng Yuanshu's fist was clenched and then loosened. He could not describe the excitement in his heart, just as he could not describe the surprise in his heart when he first entered the hyperspace channel...

“5 minutes and 23 seconds, travel distance was 120 million kilometers.”

Glancing at the time on the holographic screen, Lu Zhou looked at Captain Deng, who was standing next to him, with a bright smile on his face.

“Thank you for your trust and cooperation. Our mission was successfully completed. As you can see before your eyes, we have made history!”

“But... I still don't understand. Why is the speed on the indicator still 30 kilometers per second?” Adjutant Liu, who stared at the control interface for a long time, finally asked about the thing that confused him, “How on earth is this possible?!”

After hearing this sentence, Lu Zhou smiled faintly as he explained the reason to him in terms that were as concise and easy to understand as possible.

“Because our speed is indeed 30 kilometers per second, but this refers to our relative speed when the sun is the reference frame in the classical universe. However, in the non-classical universe, that is, the superspace that I described in the hyperspace theory, the relative speed of the classical universe is not applicable. The speed of our movement in the hyperspace channel and the total time spent depends only on the mass of the material being transported, and the power of the Z particle oscillator itself, or...”

At this point, he paused for a moment.

Looking at Captain Deng Yuanshu, who was baffled, a happy smile appeared on Lu Zhou's face as he continued, "We should call it a different name.

"For example, how about a warp drive?"

...

While the Lagrange Space Base received the good news from the Qinling, Space Station Venus on geosynchronous orbit also had a panoramic view of this amazing process.

From their perspective, the starship that had been moving towards Mars at a normal speed was like a submarine that suddenly sank into the sea, losing itself from their sight.

At first, Field thought that it was a bug in their observation system that caused the focal length parameter to change and thus lost the track of the Qinling. However, no matter how they recalculated the course and used radar to search, they failed to find the disappeared "Qinling".

The starship seemed to have disappeared out of thin air.

It wasn't until they reported the strange incident to the North American Space Agency that the whereabouts of the Qinling was clear.

According to the timestamp in the briefing, just five minutes after the Qinling was lost in their field of vision, the North American Alliance spaceport in Mars orbit discovered Qinling.

In that short five minutes, they crossed a distance of hundreds of millions of kilometers!

If it weren't for the frontline observers swearing on their families' lives that they did not make a mistake in their sightings, the North American Space Agency would never believe that all this was true...

Chapter 1605: The World Light-Years Away

The same scene was not only observed by the North American Space Agency.

Almost all the regional alliances on the whole Earth that had made achievements in the aerospace field, or even those who had a little idea about space, witnessed this amazing moment.

Slavic Union.

Aerospace Forces Command Center.

Looking at the report from the intelligence department directly under the headquarters, Commander Rokov, who was standing in the command room, had an unbelievable expression on his face. He couldn't say a word for a long time.

It was not until he read the report on the holographic screen for a second time that he gulped and spoke in an incredible voice.

"Flying faster than the speed of light, crossing a distance of 120 million kilometers in 5 minutes... Could something be wrong? Like, there are two starships..."

"General." Standing next to Rokov, Major Vizenov said in a serious tone, "My subordinates are willing to use their military rank as a guarantee, everything they say is what they saw."

The command room fell silent.

Facing the briefing on the holographic screen, Rokov was speechless.

As the supreme commander of the Slavic Union's aerospace forces, no one knew the strategic value of this technology better than him. If all the starships of the Pan-Asian First Fleet were equipped with this technology, things like travel distance and supply lines would no longer be a problem for them.

As long as they wanted, they could appear in any corner of this solar system. This strategic capability had absolute control over all regions of the solar system. It would require at least 30 spaceports the same size as the Lagrange Space Base, and at least ten space forces equal to the Pan-Asian First Fleet to match the equivalent power.

And now, Pan-Asia could rely on the Lagrange Space Base alone to maintain this absolute military control capability.

Whether it was the space elevator or second-generation controllable nuclear fusion, when placed in front of such a powerful technology, the rest was irrelevant...

Having realized the seriousness of the problem, Commander Rokov, who recovered from the shock, immediately ordered the adjutant standing next to him.

"This is beyond what we can handle.

"Report this matter to Moscow immediately! Be sure to let the chairman know the situation as soon as possible!"

...

At the same time, at the Pan-Asian Cooperation Headquarters.

There was a sound of exclamation in the chairman's office.

"Good job!"

With both hands on the desk, Li Guangya got up from the office chair and walked around the office several times with a joyful expression on his face. He finally stopped and clenched his fists with excitement.

There was unconcealed joy in his tone as he continued to speak in an emotional voice.

"Academician Lu can always bring us unexpected surprises!"

Faster than the speed of light...

To be honest, Li Guangya never thought that this technology would be seen in his lifetime before Lu Zhou woke up. After the expression of the Z particle gravitational wave equation was solved some time ago, and the entire academic community was discussing the possibility of faster than light speed, the possibility finally began to emerge in Li Guangya's mind.

However, after consulting Professor Lu Wenmao, he almost put the matter away.

No one thought that things would turn around so quickly.

Just when he had almost no hope, Lu Zhou quietly put this great surprise directly in front of him. When the Lagrange Space Base reported the good news to him, he nearly fainted from excitement.

It was foreseeable that once a breakthrough in faster than light technology was achieved, not only would the Pan-Asian authorities' control of the Martian colony be further strengthened, but his ambitions for the world outside the asteroid belt would no longer be just an unattainable dream!

He didn't even need to wait 100 years before he could use his eyes to witness their starship spread the flames of civilization to the world light-years away.

Even just thinking about it made him full of adrenaline...

With an expression of joy on his face, Wei Song, who was standing at the desk, asked in a voice that was trembling with shock.

"Does this news need to be kept confidential? Or postpone the disclosure?"

Li Guangya's index finger lightly tapped on the desk. He sat back on the office chair and only thought for two seconds before making a decision immediately.

"It's not necessary, just make it public."

"But the reaction of the international community—"

"Let them react. From the beginning, I never intended to hide this." Li Guangya continued with a faint smile on his face, "Besides, a warship that size disappeared from the radar and suddenly appeared in the orbit of Mars 100 million kilometers away. As long as they are not blind or fools, they will suspect something."

Since this matter was no longer a secret, it was better to publicize it openly than to try and hide it.

After hearing this news, the people who were watching the Pan-Asian Cooperation with covetous eyes would have an interesting look on their faces...

...

Just when the international situation was raging because of a starship that suddenly disappeared from the Earth-Moon system and suddenly appeared in the orbit of Mars, the Pan-Asian Corporation suddenly held a press conference and announced a message at the conference.

The cruiser Qinling, which departed from the Tianzhou spaceport a few days ago, completed the first faster-than-light transition in human history with the warp engine developed and designed by Academician Lu and reached a distance of 100 million kilometers in just 5 minutes.

When this news was announced, the entire press conference was strangely quiet for a few seconds. Then immediately afterward, the entire venue was completely detonated as if a bomb had been set off.

After the reporters on the scene heard the news, they squeezed towards the front of the press conference like they were crazy, just to get closer to the podium.

The reporters who stood a little further away, in addition to squeezing forward desperately, opened their mouths and shouted out their own questions. All politeness and order were abandoned behind.

Even though there were security guards maintaining order, the situation at the scene was frantic and almost out of control...

“Faster than light?! Are you sure?”

“Isn’t Academician Lu the chief consultant of the space elevator project? What is a warp drive?”

“Excuse me, when did the research on the faster than light engine start?”

“Is this technology funded by the military? Will it be open to civilian use?”

Just as the spokesperson of the space agency was busy coping with the bombardment of the reporters, the relevant news had already been put on its wings and flew from the scene of the press conference to the Internet.

Whether it was faster than light technology itself or the person who researched faster than light technology, it was undoubtedly an object worthy of attention in the eyes of the public.

The news about the breakthrough of faster than light technology was like a virus, spreading wildly across the entire network, and the sensational effect was almost like a tsunami, sweeping every corner of the Internet.

Especially in the LSPM forum, the related discussion posts flooded the screen.

Both the public and the academic circles were shocked by this sudden news.

Almost all theoretical physicists and experts in the field of aerospace engineering cared only about one thing at the moment.

Which was—

How did he do it?!

Chapter 1606: Not Embarrassing To Lose to Him

“This is incredible...”

Institute of Theoretical Physics of the Pan-Asian Academy of Sciences

After watching the news on the holographic screen, Professor Lu Wenmao, who had recovered from the shock, sighed slightly, then said with emotion, “I can’t believe he really did it...”

Not long ago, Chairman Li Guangya came here in person and consulted the experts in the institute about the practical feasibility of faster than light technology.

Professor Lu Wenmao clearly remembered that he took a pessimistic view of the advanced research on the speed of light. In fact, it was not just him that held a pessimistic view, most of the experts in the institute were the same.

So far, although they had mastered the method to open the hyperspace channel, there was no suitable method to keep this channel stable. Also, the energy consumed every time the channel was opened was an astronomical figure. It was still somewhat impractical to attempt to complete navigation to light-years away.

However...

Now, it seemed that he had made a mistake...

With almost the same expression on his face, Professor Hao Zeyu, who was standing in the office, also sighed softly, shook his head, and spoke.

“Yeah, but who could have imagined? Just a few days ago, when discussing this matter with the dean, we reached a consensus. Even if the exact expression of the Z particle gravitational wave equation is solved, the theory cannot be applied in the short term... I didn’t expect to be proven wrong so quickly.”

No one thought that everything would be so fast.

No one thought that this day would come so suddenly.

If even the barrier of light couldn’t stop him, then what else in this world could?

Suddenly, Professor Lu Wenmao thought about what was said in the news, and he finally understood why he would state that he planned to visit Tau Ceti.

All the mysteries in this world no longer deserved to be called mysteries in front of him. Even the word “impossible” seemed to lose its meaning.

For such a genius, perhaps only the world light-years away could satisfy his thirst for knowledge of the universe and truth...

The emotions of the two professors, Lu Wenmao and Hao Zeyu, were just a trivial example for the Pan-Asian Cooperation academic community. Everyone was shocked by the Qinling’s “120 million kilometers in five minutes” achievement.

On the second day after the Pan-Asian Corporation press conference ended, ILHCRC’s headquarters held at least ten seminars on hyperspace theory and the Z-particle wave equation, which were hosted by top scholars in related fields.

As for the subject being studied, it was naturally the paper Lu Zhou published on LSPM before.

“Obviously, its value was underestimated.”

After the seminar, the current chairman of the ILHCRC continued with a regretful voice in the face of reporters from the science and technology columns.

“At the time of its publication, although we also carried out detailed research on this paper, we did not give it enough attention. The research on hyperspace theory and Zhou particles is a very important research direction in physics. But there are still many topics that are as important as it, such as neutrinos, antiquarks, etc... These were the popular research objects of the ILHCRC in the past two years.

“But now, the breakthrough of faster than light technology has undoubtedly changed this situation! I can even responsibly say that in the next ten to twenty years, hyperspace theory will become the most important area in theoretical physics!

“Because it is taking us into the distant future!”

In addition to the chairman of the ILHCRC, the secretary-general of the ILHCRC and the director of the Collider Laboratory had also expressed their views on hyperspace theory.

Especially the director of the Collider Laboratory.

This great theoretical physicist from the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study made no attempt to hide his admiration for hyperspace theory and the “master” who completed this theory. He updated his LSPM account with thousands of words and used the term “A New World” to describe the influence of this theory on modern physics.

“It’s not just a starship that surpassed the speed of light! It’s that he, who woke up a hundred years later, used his own knowledge to perfect the hyperspace theory that he himself proposed a hundred years ago!

“I can’t use words to describe the surprise and shame in my heart. It’s like the story of the tortoise and the hare, and we are the tortoises. The only difference is that he didn’t sleep for one day. Instead, he slept for a hundred years, but after he woke up, he still easily took the trophy that belonged to the champion...”

The blog post made by this big name on the LSPM forum resonated with many people.

Although over the past century, they had also made a lot of beautiful results.

But no matter what, the achievement above that person's head was too dazzling.

So that in this century, neither the Institute for Advanced Study nor the ILHCRC had come out of his shadow. Even today, even a hundred years later, he still stood at the top of the mountain.

Just when the entire academic world was shocked by the breakthrough of faster than light technology, Professor Belur, who was on the other side of the earth, was filled with embarrassment in his heart at this moment.

He admitted that in the interview, he was overly confident.

For example, the sentence "Except for Academician Lu, no one knows Z particles better than me...". Hyperspace theory had always been the foundation of the Lu Zhou school of thought. All the beautiful research results were done by Lu Zhou alone or by Lu Zhou's students.

He knew very well that Lu Zhou would not stoop down to his level and argue with him, so he was arrogant in the interview.

However, he did not expect that Lu Zhou was not joking. Not only did he complete the precise expression of the Z particle gravitational wave equation, he even repaired the mistakes in hyperspace theory that had existed for nearly a century.

Now, even the high-rise buildings on top of the foundations had been built.

Faster than light...

This beautiful dream had been in the physics world for two centuries because it seemed too far away, and countless theoretical physicists abandoned it again and again.

"The next 100 years... No, for the next 500 years, there will be no scholar that can surpass him. This is obvious. Whoever surpasses the speed of light will surpass everything..."

Standing by the window of the teaching building, Professor Belur had an electronic cigarette in his mouth. He muttered to himself.

Like he was comforting and hypnotizing himself at the same time.

He continued talking, “So, it’s okay if my judgment was wrong... It wasn’t just me, many people didn’t expect this.

“Anyway...

“It’s not embarrassing to lose to him!”

Chapter 1607: Plan Towards Tau Ceti

In fact, as early as the beginning of this research, Lu Zhou was mentally prepared for the possible impact of the success of the experiment.

The only thing that made him feel a little surprised was that the enthusiasm of the people was a little bit beyond his expectation.

And the enthusiasm was in an unexpected manner...

On the day the press conference ended, his account on the LSPM forum was filled with private messages from all over the world. Most of them expressed interest in his plan to go to Tau Ceti and even asked how much the ticket was.

Obviously, with the breakthrough of faster than light technology, the ticket to the outside of the solar system was no longer a one-way ticket. Many people were interested in taking a trip to the world outside the solar system in their lifetime.

Even if they were not satisfied with the situation there, the warp travel technique would give them a second chance so that they would not lose their entire life.

In addition to those who expressed interest in the Tau Ceti, many people came to discuss business. Among them were East Asia Communications, which he founded, and some technologically innovative companies.

Many of these business ideas were a bit too optimistic; they saw the huge potential of opening up a “New World”.

In addition, there was also the part about academic discussions.

Lu Zhou could clearly feel from the questions in the private messages that his theory had left a shocking effect on the hearts of theoretical physicists and engineers in the aerospace field.

The emergence of warp drives would completely change the pattern of the aerospace industry in the future.

After the plasma engine replaced the chemical engine as the main mode of transportation for large spacecraft, the warp drive would become the interplanetary transportation method of the next era, allowing the propulsion technology of human civilization to advance to the next level!

In contrast, even the space elevator under construction had been overshadowed by this technology...

Mansion on the outskirts of Jinling.

As usual, Vera sat at the table and was enjoying a hearty breakfast. She watched the news shown on the holographic TV and learned some “common sense” about this era with the help of the news.

Just as she put a small piece of fried egg into her mouth, a familiar face suddenly appeared on the TV.

The moment she saw the face in the camera, a quiet smile appeared on her face. She looked in the direction of the sofa and spoke in a pleasant voice with a hint of excitement.

“Professor, you are in the news again.”

Lu Zhou, who was sitting on the sofa checking his email through his personal terminal, took a sip of coffee on the coffee table and spoke casually in a chatty tone.

“Good, I’m used to it.”

Even a hundred years ago, he had become accustomed to news and interviews.

As a man who had even started to collect tickets from those visiting his former residence, Lu Zhou wasn’t surprised to see his face everywhere.

With a smile on her face, Vera put down the cutlery on the plate after eating. She looked at Lu Zhou sitting on the sofa and continued to ask, "Speaking of which, when do you plan to leave?"

"Are you talking about Jin University? I've already asked for a holiday. I probably won't go there for the next few days." Lu Zhou thought about it for a while and continued, "The Z particle oscillation device still needs improvement. I just happened to have some very interesting ideas—"

"I mean Tau Ceti." After blinking lightly, Vera looked at Lu Zhou and continued, "Now it only takes 10 years to go to Tau Ceti, right?"

It might not be 10 years.

"The time frame of the hyperspace channel cannot be calculated like this," Lu Zhou said, shaking his head. "The specific time it takes depends on the channel we choose and the strength of the gravitational bond between the solar system and Tau Ceti. According to the formula I derived in hyperspace theory, it would take about 11.7 years for us to use the modified Qinling as a means of transportation."

However, if he could choose a short enough channel, this number could also be compressed infinitely. It was even possible to compress it to within one year.

However, this was the trouble with the hyperspace theory.

Before opening the first channel, no one could determine how much time it would take.

"But, even if it's 11.7 years, I think it's pretty good." Vera continued, "Using traditional methods, even the most advanced plasma engine will take tens of thousands of years."

"Right, but there are still many things to consider." Lu Zhou continued after a pause, "First, we have to build a large enough spacecraft, and then we have to consider the resources for hundreds of people. These things have to be done step by step... But it shouldn't take much time. After all, the most difficult part has been solved by me."

If he just went there to plant a flag or to look at the scenery on that planet for her, it wouldn't be meaningful.

He still remembered his original promise, that he promised to give her a prosperous planet, not an uninhabited world.

But life was different.

People remembered.

Or in other words, only things like civilization could sing their stories forever...

Secretly looking at Lu Zhou's face, Vera's eyes showed a hint of envy. However, she didn't say much. After saying "I will go with you", she stopped talking.

God had given her a precious treasure.

To be able to meet again after a century was already a great fortune for her. As for other things, it was not important to her.

Besides, the time afterward belonged to her.

She had waited for a century in her dreams, so she was not in a hurry...

The next news appeared on the holographic screen soon.

Xiao Ai, wearing an apron, bounced out of the kitchen.

"Master, there are guests outside looking for you. (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧"

There was no need to ask at all. Lu Zhou had already guessed who was visiting him, so he spoke.

"I see, let him in."

Xiao Ai: "Huh? Do you want to know who it is? (◡‾◡)"

Lu Zhou: "Besides a certain director, who else can it be?"

Xiao Ai: "How does master know...(๑•̀ㅂ•́)"

Putting away the holographic screen in his hand, Lu Zhou spoke with a sigh.

"Okay, don't let the guest wait outside for too long, let him in quickly."

Chapter 1608: It Is Easy

There was no need to guess at all.

Except for Chairman Li Guangya, Lu Zhou couldn't think of anyone else that would come here at this time. The only thing he didn't expect was that not only Chairman Li Guangya was here, but also Sun Liwei, the commander of the Pan-Asian First Fleet.

Lu Zhou didn't have an impression of Commander Sun, but he vaguely remembered that they had a face-to-face meeting at the celebration at the beginning of the year. His first impression at the time was that this old man was probably a serious man who never smiled during work or in his lifetime.

Seeing that the two guests who came here seemed to be discussing business matters, Vera greeted them politely. She then went upstairs sensibly.

For some reason, when Vera greeted Li Guangya, Lu Zhou felt that the expression on Li Guangya's face was a bit...

Subtly Awkward?

But after thinking about it, Lu Zhou threw this trivial matter aside. Li Guangya, who had crossed the hallway, quickly wiped the unnatural expression off his face. He coughed lightly and greeted Lu Zhou with a smile on his face.

"Long time no see, Academician Lu, how are you doing recently? Life is still good?"

"I've always been good..."

Lu Zhou was weirded out by the small talk. After he invited the two to sit down on the sofa, he said straightforwardly, "... We have known each other for more than a year. Since we are all friends, there's no need for small talk. Just tell me what you need."

"What is that supposed to mean, I can't see my old friend?" Seeing Lu Zhou looking at himself, Li Guangya was embarrassed to continue speaking. He continued with a slightly embarrassed smile, "Ahem, I know I can't hide from you... Commander Sun, do you want to go first?"

“I’ll go first.”

Sun Liwei took a deep breath. He looked at Lu Zhou earnestly and continued in a sincere tone, “Here’s the thing, the amazing results of Qinling’s hyperspace experiments are now known to the world. The military analysis agencies of major regional alliances around the world have given a high evaluation of the technology we have. This is not only an affirmation of our strength but also a test. In order to maintain the stability of the regional situation on Earth, we hope to maintain the current strategic deterrence...”

Lu Zhou: “So?”

“The Z particle oscillator, can you offer a price?” Sun Liwei, who was a soldier, had no business experience, so he said straightforwardly, “We hope to buy it.”

If it were someone else sitting here, they would raise the price just from Sun Liwei’s desperate face.

However, it just so happened that the person sitting across from him was not a businessman. It could even be said that Lu Zhou was completely disinterested in business matters, and he didn’t care about money.

However, after hearing this request, Lu Zhou’s face showed a weird expression.

“Buy it? Are you sure you don’t need to install the weapon systems and external armor back?”

“No need, just keep it like this!” Sun Liwei, who was afraid that Lu Zhou might misunderstand him, suddenly continued, “Of course, we will give you a suitable price! And for any new research on the warp drive, we are willing to pay for your research in full!”

Lu Zhou couldn’t help but feel a little humorous, so he spoke with a joking tone.

“Do you think I am someone who needs money?”

Sun Liwei was a little dumbfounded. He turned his eyes to Li Guangya for help.

Noting the expression on Commander Sun's face, Li Guangya sighed in his heart. He then looked at Lu Zhou and spoke with an embarrassing smile.

"We know that you are not short of money, of course, but... this is really important to us, and I hope we can reach an agreement. Or besides money, what other proposals can satisfy you? You can ask for anything, and we will do our best to help you!"

"It's not that I don't want to sell it to you." Lu Zhou picked up the unfinished cup of coffee on the coffee table and took a sip. He looked at the two people with sincerity and eagerness written on their faces. After a sigh, he continued, "But this thing was originally a DEMO version. Neither the hyperspace channel calculations nor the application has met my initial expectations."

"You mean... There is a lot of room for improvement in this technology?"

"That's right." Lu Zhou nodded approvingly as he looked at Commander Sun. He continued, "Between two curved surfaces that do not want to intersect in space, there is only a straight line from one point to the other, but there can be countless irregular connections. In the previous experiment, the route I chose was not the one with the shortest path, but the one that was relatively easy to find."

After hearing this statement, Li Guangya's eyes lit up, and he asked excitedly, "In other words... the warp drive can be faster?"

Lu Zhou nodded and said, "Of course, it would be better to say that 0.8 astronomical units in five minutes is actually slow."

Taking the Qinling as the benchmark and using the inference of the Z-particle gravitational wave equation he obtained, 1 AU per minute was barely an acceptable result for him.

0.8 AU actually took five minutes to complete, which was not including the first two minutes of preparation time, so it could only be regarded as a mediocre result.

Li Guangya and Sun Liwei, who were sitting on the opposite sofa, took a breath at the same time.

One hundred million kilometers in five minutes is slow?!

*So what the f*ck does fast look like?!*

Seeing that the two hadn't spoken, Lu Zhou continued to speak after thinking for a while.

"Well, the demo version of the engine needs to be adjusted. Since you like it so much, I will help you improve it for free. As for the cost, don't worry about it. Just lend me the Qinling for a while."

"How can that be?! You have done so many things for us, how could we let you pay for it out of your own pocket? We also hope that Academician Lu understands that as soldiers, we also have our dignity and persistence. Please ask us for all the expenses incurred by the experiment!"

Looking at Commander Sun, who looked insistent, Lu Zhou was a little bit dumbfounded.

To be honest, in his expectation, the follow-up improvement work should not cost much.

At least compared to his savings, which couldn't be spent over several lifetimes.

However, since this old man was so persistent, he didn't say anything.

"Okay then," said Lu Zhou, nodding his head. "Since you are willing to provide funding for the experiment, I won't insist. In addition, I need the Qinling to cooperate with my work. Although they have cooperated before, I still hope that you can issue a written document or something."

"No problem! From now on, your research is the highest priority task in our First Fleet. I will let Deng Yuanshu fully cooperate with your work!" Sun Liwei agreed without hesitation. With a serious expression on his face, he said to Lu Zhou, "On behalf of all combat and non-combat personnel of the Pan-Asian First Fleet, I would like to extend my highest respect and gratitude to you!"

"There's no need for this. The technology is developed for people to use. Besides, we are helping each other."

Faced with the old man's solemn expression, Lu Zhou was a little embarrassed.

But in any case, they had reached a conclusion.

He cast his gaze at Chairman Li Guangya who was sitting next to him and looked at the expression on his face. Lu Zhou suddenly remembered that he had mentioned before that he planned to discuss something with him, so he took the initiative to ask.

“What about you? Did you come to me about the Qinling too?”

“Not quite.” Li Guangya said with a smile, “The First Fleet already has a diligent and dedicated commander, and it is not my place to share their worries.”

“So, there are other troubles waiting for me?”

“It’s not to trouble you, but there is a... small problem.” Li Guangya smiled embarrassedly. He sat upright on the sofa and said, “Here’s the case. I was consulting relevant experts about hyperspace, and they generated some ideas. I don’t know if these ideas are correct, so I want to ask your opinion.”

This guy actually understand this kind of stuff?

Lu Zhou glanced at Li Guangya unexpectedly. He suddenly looked a little stunned.

“Go ahead.”

Li Guangya: “Although I don’t know much about the deeper theories, from a literal point of view... the core principle of warp speed is to transport matter from one point to another through hyperspace channels. The greater the mass of matter, the greater the gravity, and the longer it will take to pass through the channel. So what about information? How long would it take for massless information to traverse the hyperspace channel?”

“This is a very interesting question,” Lu Zhou replied after putting down the coffee cup in his hand and thought for a moment. He said, “Theoretically, when the m coefficient of the equation is 0, the time t should be close to infinitely small. Yes, but there is not an absolute linear relationship between the two... My guess is that this time should be very, very short. It may be less than 1 second. As for the specifics, we have to go further to collect data and build a more accurate model.”

As soon as he heard that a distance of 0.8 AU wouldn't even take 1 second, Li Guangya's heart suddenly became warm.

He treated Academician Lu's speculation as a fact, so he quickly asked, "Is there a way to build something similar to a submarine optical cable between the Earth-Moon system and Mars to realize the rapid exchange of information?"

When saying this, Li Guangya was watching the expression on Lu Zhou's face very carefully.

He thought that after hearing this whimsical idea, Lu Zhou's face would show a look of embarrassment. However, what he didn't expect was that Lu Zhou's face not only showed no embarrassment, but his answer was completely beyond his expectation.

"Of course."

Lu Zhou continued speaking in a plain tone, "In fact, it is easy."

Chapter 1609: Planetary Highway System

Without leaving time for the two of them to digest the information contained in this sentence, Lu Zhou got up from the sofa, reached out his index finger, and flicked in the air.

Soon, a translucent holographic panel appeared in front of him. His index finger tapped on it lightly, and instantly, it dispersed into particles of light and reorganized into the appearance of the solar system.

Looking at the holographic image projected in front of them, the faces of Chairman Li Guangya and Commander Sun Liwei showed a confused expression.

After staring at this star map for a long time, Commander Sun Liwei frowned slightly and asked, "What's this...?"

"Interplanetary highway system." Looking at the trajectories outlined between the planets, Lu Zhou's index finger selected the one that connected Mars and the Earth-Moon system. "In short, in addition to the warp drive, we also have a

special and relatively stable method for the rapid exchange of matter and information with the help of hyperspace channels.”

Li Guangya frowned slightly.

“Can this... be achieved?”

“Of course it can be achieved, or I wouldn’t be saying this.”

Lu Zhou took a look at Li Guangya and continued with a calm tone.

“In fact, in theory, if we use this acceleration method, it will be easier to achieve a jump than using a warp drive that is installed on a single ship. We only need to open a fixed channel at both ends of space, and the exchange of matter and signal will naturally occur on the endpoints of both sides. Considering that the gravitational coordinates of the two doors are relatively fixed, the real-time calculation steps of the hyperspace channel will be much simpler than the single-ship transition.”

In fact, the things Lu Zhou described were not entirely his ideas.

A large part of it came from what he saw and heard in the second part of Void Memory. Using the gravitational ties between massive celestial bodies to open up hyperspace channels was the core principle of the warp speed technology mastered by the Calan Empire.

Related tests had been successful on the Z-particle oscillator. Lu Zhou had reason to make further speculations. The “stargates” deployed around the world in the Calan Empire also used the same technology.

As for how those stargates could keep the hyperspace channel stable...

This was the next thing to think about.

At least, he already knew that this technical idea was roughly feasible.

After listening to Lu Zhou’s description, Sun Liwei fell into deep thought.

After about a minute, he spoke in a hesitant tone.

“... I don’t know if I understand this correctly, you mean that this hyperspace channel maintained through two portals is equivalent to inserting a tube in space, and every time information and matter is exchanged, it goes through

the same path, so the energy consumption is relatively low? And the warp drive is equivalent to installing a drill bit for each starship, and each transition is equivalent to re-drilling a hole in the universe? So the energy consumption will be relatively high...”

“If you really don’t understand hyperspace theory... It’s fine if you interpret it this way.”

Without expecting much of the old man’s theoretical knowledge, Lu Zhou’s index finger continued to click on the holographic image.

Soon, with the touch of his fingertips, the line connecting the Earth-Moon system and Mars continued to expand outward, and the positions at the end spread out in two inverted circles.

The fragmented structure looked confusing, but from a macro point of view, it was surprisingly simple. The whole device was like a fishing line, connecting the two planets together.

“The technical principle of the entire project is actually very simple. According to the disturbance of the gravitational field when the Z particle falls from a high latitude to a low latitude, the space-time curvature distribution between the Earth-Moon system and Mars is changed, forming a folded area.

“As you can see now, we deploy a Z-particle oscillation device on both sides and keep it vibrating at a specific frequency, thereby forming a stable and open channel between the Earth-Moon system and Mars.”

With that, a virtual starship appeared on the holographic image.

When the starship reduced its speed and passed the ring on the side of Earth, the entire starship was like a bullet being pushed into a barrel and getting “sucked” in at an incredible speed before going into the transparent hyperspace channel. Less than two seconds later, it was “spit” out of the tunnel.

Looking at the two people who were shocked by the holographic model in front of them, Lu Zhou smiled faintly and continued, “The whole project is divided into two parts, and the technical difficulty may be relatively high. After all, even for me, many concepts are just vague guesses, and more experiments are needed. But judging from the magnetic field generation

technology of this era, the engineering difficulty to realize the entire project shouldn't be too high."

It took a long time for him to recover from the shock, but Commander Sun eventually gulped and said with a tone that was trembling with excitement, "What about safety? Is the hyperspace channel opened in this way reliable? If a sudden power failure occurs or a similar technical failure causes the channel to be closed suddenly, will the starship inside... not come out?"

This was his biggest concern.

Speed was the eternal pursuit of the aerospace forces, but if the safety considerations were ignored because of speed, then they would be throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

It took a century for the Pan-Asian Cooperation to create their invincible fleet, which could be called the strongest in the solar system. If it was destroyed because of a faster-than-light transition, it would be a miserable loss...

"Don't worry about this. Even if the hyperspace channel is suddenly closed, the spacecraft inside will reappear at the source of gravity, which is, somewhere between the two planets. The exact location depends on the stage of the transition, but it will come out." Lu Zhou continued, "This is a conclusion based on the data I collected on the Qinling, so you don't have to worry about getting lost in hyperspace. In fact, even if you wanted to cross dimensions, it would not be so easy to enter the gap between the surfaces of the universe from the n-dimensional universe."

Unable to hold back the curiosity in his heart, Li Guangya couldn't help but ask, "What if we want to enter the gap between the surfaces of the universe? Is there any way?"

"The center of the galaxy may be the nearest entrance, of course... This is just my speculation, maybe there are other ways." Lu Zhou smiled and continued, "But I bet you won't want to go there."

Li Guangya asked curiously, "Why?"

"Because there is nothing there. Our universe is as fragile as a piece of paper." Looking out the window, a trace of memory appeared in Lu Zhou's eyes, as if he was thinking of something far away. He said concisely, "Those who have been there or have seen it... They call it the Void."

Chapter 1610: Unfinished Experiment

One month had passed since that day.

Since the end of the last mission, Deng Yuanshu and a group of crew members on the Qinling had been placed on the Lagrange Space Base, and all vacations had been canceled.

Originally, he planned to wait for the end of this mission to take his family and find a pleasant island in the south for vacation, but it seemed that not only was his vacation plans ruined, but his family was also under protection.

The Qinling, which was under the focus of global attention, was also transferred to the highest security anchor point on the Lagrange Space Base. It was led by the elite of the aerospace forces—the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade, which would be responsible for guarding the Qinling.

As a special force where more than 50% of the members were “ancient warriors” from the last century, the soldiers of the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade were committed to their duties, morale, and combat effectiveness. They were incomparable to any marine unit in the First Fleet.

Ever since that experiment was over, Deng Yuanshu felt like he was under house arrest.

To be honest, he also understood why the government did this.

After all, the whole world now wanted to know what was the condition of the warp drive on the Qinling and what exactly was the hyperspace channel. In the eyes of outsiders, the hundreds of crew members on the Qinling were probably the ones closest to those secrets, except for Academician Lu himself...

After all, he was at a loss about what happened that day, and the shock from the moment he broke into the gap in the universe still remained in his heart.

If it was possible, he hoped someone could come and explain it to him.

What were the things he saw in the hyperspace tunnel...

“When will we be able to go on a vacation?”

The canteen of the space base.

Sitting opposite Deng Yuanshu, Liu Zhengyi, the adjutant on the Qinling, couldn't help but ask.

Hearing the question from his subordinate, Deng Yuanshu dropped the chopsticks in his hand and shook his head.

“I don't know... Are you in a hurry?”

“Not quite.” Liu Zheng said with a sigh, “I just don't understand. If this were to be kept confidential, it would be fine, but obviously, that isn't the case. When the experiment was conducted in the first place, we didn't hide it from anyone, and we even held a press conference. What's the point of keeping us here?”

“The higher-ups have their own considerations.” Deng Yuanshu looked at his subordinate and said, “Just stay here calmly. The holidays you are owed are still there. When this matter is over, they will naturally make up for it. And... I have a feeling...”

Upon hearing these words, Liu Zheng, who was sitting across from him at the dining table, suddenly became energetic and asked quickly, “What feeling?”

“Asking us to stay here is not necessarily for confidentiality.” Deng Yuanshu continued slowly after thinking for a moment, “After all, I haven't received any official documents requesting that we keep things confidential. No one from the ministry came over to talk to me either.”

Liu Zhengyi: “Do you mean...”

“There should be a new mission to be carried out by us,” Deng Yuanshu continued. After placing the chopsticks back on the plate, he added, “Maybe this is the real reason why we are on standby in this space base. .”

After lunch, Deng Yuanshu was going to sit in his office for a while and finish the report. However, just after he returned to the office and before he could sit in his chair, a staff of the First Fleet found him and asked him to go to the visitor reception center.

With a confused expression, Deng Yuanshu briefly delegated the remaining work to his secretary and changed into formal clothes. After that, he went to the reception area of the space base station.

When he came to the visitor center, he went to a small meeting room under the guidance of the staff. He saw the person sitting in the meeting room and suddenly showed a surprised expression on his face.

“Academician Lu?”

“Long time no see.” After he put down the bottled coffee in his hand, Lu Zhou looked up at him, smiled, and said hello, “Sit down... Speaking of which, how are you doing during this period of time?”

“Not bad.” Deng Yuanshu pulled out the chair at the table and sat down. He looked at Lu Zhou, who was sitting opposite him. The expression on his face was a little weird. He hesitated for a while before he asked, “Why are you here?”

“I arrived about half an hour ago.” Lu Zhou glanced at the time on his watch. He then joked, “Speaking of which, the space fortress from the outside looks quite shocking.”

Although this sentence was said in a joking tone, his heart was full of emotion when he spoke.

He still remembered when he was in Beijing that year, the President asked him about the next space strategy after Guanghan City. At that time, he proposed to build a permanent space base at the Lagrange point and build a colony on Mars.

Although that was from a century ago, when he saw the seeds that he planted had now grown into towering trees, he couldn't help but feel a little emotional.

“You came here to find me... Is there something you need?”

“Sort of.” Lu Zhou said with a smile while looking at Captain Deng Yuanshu, who was sitting across from him, “But before that, there are a few things I want to ask you.”

Deng Yuanshu: “Go ahead!”

“Don’t be so nervous, I’ll just ask casually.” Lu Zhou continued in a chatty tone while looking at Captain Deng, “How are you feeling these days? Are you and your crew healthy?”

“Healthy?” Deng Yuanshu was slightly stunned. Frowning, he replied, “We are... Is there any problem?”

“Nothing, just asking casually.” Lu Zhou continued to ask as he made a note in his notepad, “Psychologically? Has anyone suffered from mental illnesses like depression or claustrophobia? Similar symptoms?”

“So far I haven’t heard of any crew member seeking help from a psychiatrist,” said Deng Yuanshu as he shrugged.

“I hate to say this...” Lu Zhou smiled embarrassedly and continued, “I didn’t explain clearly, but it’s actually because I have some experimental things I’m afraid I have to trouble you again.”

Deng Yuanshu: “Isn’t the experiment finished?”

“That was only the Demo version. It needs some adjustments. In addition, some issues about adaptability and health require further observation. During this time, there should be doctors giving you regular inspections. This is also part of the experiment. I’m sorry I didn’t tell you in advance.”

Deng Yuanshu: “It’s okay, I understand.”

“Thank you for your understanding! Also, thanks to your cooperation, we have achieved our current results.”

Lu Zhou’s index finger clicked on his left wrist and a series of holographic windows popped up. Lu Zhou stretched out his hand and swiped lightly on it, gently pushing one of the holographic screens in front of Deng Yuanshu.

“This is the next research plan. If you are interested, you can simply take a look.”

After receiving the documents transmitted by Lu Zhou, Deng Yuanshu stared at the line of small prints in the holographic window and looked at it seriously.

Although he didn't understand those complicated theories very well, when he saw a certain line in the middle, his eyes were stuck there firmly, and he couldn't look away anymore...

"1AU per second..."

There was a slight tremor in his voice. He then looked at Lu Zhou in disbelief.

He gulped, and it took a long time before he squeezed a sentence out of his mouth.

"Can this speed really be achieved?"

The farthest distance between Mars and the Earth was 400 million kilometers, and the distance of one astronomical unit was approximately equal to 149 million kilometers.

What did 1AU per second mean?

This meant that once this technology was implemented, even at the farthest distance, it would take less than three seconds to get from the Earth-Moon system to Mars!

"In theory, this can be done as long as we choose the right channel." Lu Zhou stood up from his chair and said in a relaxed tone, "Okay, I think you now know what you need to know. If you are ready, come with me."

"Where are we going?"

"Of course to Qinling! Speaking of which, you haven't seen it for a while, right?"

Captain Deng Yuanshu looked both surprised and astonished.

Lu Zhou smiled and continued in a joking tone, "I bet that when you see it again, your mouth will be wide open."

Chapter 1611: The Changed Qinling

The port area of the Lagrange Space Base.

Looking at the “unrecognizable” Qinling ship docked on the berth, Deng Yuanshu, whose face was completely frozen, was at a loss of words for a second.

If the previous Qinling without the missile system, point defensive artillery, and reactive armor that accounted for most of the weight was a chicken, then it was a completely different species now.

The interface of the missile module was completely removed and replaced with twelve small electromagnetic guns and a U-shaped large-caliber mass accelerator was located on the central axis of the starship.

Obviously, after this transformation, the weapons that were removed to reduce the weight wouldn't be put back anymore...

After gulping, it took a long time before Deng Yuanshu squeezed a word from his throat.

“What's this...”

Looking at Captain Deng Yuanshu, who was standing there motionless, Lu Zhou walked to his side and explained with a smile, “In order to better adapt to the environment in the hyperspace channel and to take into account the requirements for the combat capability of this starship, I asked East Asia Heavy Industries to carry out a certain degree of transformation of the hull.

“In addition to the mass accelerator that you saw, we also helped you replace it with the latest second-generation controllable fusion reactor as the energy source... Of course, these modifications have been reported. All were done under the authorization of the First Fleet!”

Deng Yuanshu's eyebrows twitched fiercely. He finally couldn't help it. He turned his head, stared at Lu Zhou, and said, “The f*ck... My Qinling is a guided missile cruiser! You changed it to... What? A large destroyer?”

Among all the ships of the First Fleet, only close combat destroyers and small ships used kinetic energy weapons such as electromagnetic guns.

For large ships such as cruisers and aircraft carriers, kinetic energy weapons were rarely seen. Even if they were used, it was mostly to counter defense weapons such as carrier-based aircraft or missiles from a certain distance.

This was why Deng Yuanshu was so angry.

After all, after this transformation, the powerful missile system of the Qinling was abolished, and it also couldn't be installed back.

"You can call it a battleship." Ignoring Deng Yuanshu's complaints, Lu Zhou gave a light cough and said in a comforting tone, "Okay, let's not get excited. The main reason for this change is chemistry. Energy weapons pose a serious safety hazard in the hyperspace environment. Moreover, I discussed with the engineers at the command center and agreed that such a change is the best choice as it has both combat effectiveness and safety."

Hearing these words, Deng Yuanshu almost spat out a mouthful of blood.

"Are you sure this still has combat capability?"

"You will know when we test it in a while. Don't worry, you will have at least 27 flight missions in the next month. If you have any problems, just report to me. By the way, in addition to reporting to the headquarters, I hope you can provide me with an additional experimental report... I will send you the template in a while, and you can fill it out according to the template."

Lu Zhou reached out and patted Deng Yuanshu on the shoulder. He gave him an encouraging look and spoke with a smile.

"You got this!"

"The future of the First Fleet depends on you!"

...

Although he was still worried about the fact that Lu Zhou changed his ship without his consent, these were orders. As a soldier, he would still complete the orders issued by the headquarters without compromise.

It took two days to get acquainted with the new equipment on the ship, and after confirming that there were no problems, the first experiment soon began.

In accordance with the requirements of the experimental outline, Deng Yuanshu commanded the Qinling and set off from the Lagrange Space Base. He ordered the warp drive to be activated five minutes after leaving the base station and disappeared into the twisted space at an incredible speed.

When the starship reappeared in the universe in the next second, it had already reached the airspace near 1.1 million kilometers away from the asteroid belt.

“The gravitational coordinates confirm that... we have arrived.”

“Turn on the radar and search the nearby airspace!”

“Received! The radar has been activated and the search is in progress... The search is completed, it is confirmed that there are no civilian ships and space equipment in the nearby airspace.”

Inside the bridge.

After listening to the staff's report from the front, Deng Yuanshu watched intently at the ring of asteroids and meteorite fragments outside the porthole as he continued to give orders in a calm and composed tone.

“The limit of reactor output power is increased to the maximum, the fire control system is turned on, the radar is adjusted to the enemy detection mode.”

“The search for the enemy mode has been activated! The nearby airspace is being retrieved... Missile arrays were found in an area of 2.01 million kilometers away!”

As the light blue cursor swept across the holographic screen, a series of red dots quickly appeared on the radar and projected on the holographic screen directly in front of the bridge.

Looking at the target presented on the holographic screen, Deng Yuanshu gave the command to fire with a sonorous voice.

“Fire!”

As the attack order was issued, the electromagnetic guns displayed on the ship's hull immediately vented fierce firepower towards the front.

It left behind an orange-yellow trajectory in the endless deep sky. For a while, even the cold night was faintly lit.

Looking at the naval gun that fired out the bullets, the rain of bullets that were moving towards the asteroid belt like a waterfall, and the portholes that were lit by the tracer lights, Deng Yuanshu froze.

What is this...

Electromagnetic gun?

An electromagnetic cannon that can be fired after half a minute of charging?!

Although he had heard about the energy of the second-generation controllable fusion, he did not expect that he could directly cut off the capacitor module of the electromagnetic weapon and use fusion energy to increase the energy output power of the naval gun!

Everything in front of him exceeded his imagination and even subverted his understanding of space operations.

In the face of such fierce firepower, no matter how fast the missiles, torpedoes, and carrier-based aircraft were, they would have nowhere to hide. If it was coupled with a fire control system with a quantum processor as the core, even if they were separated by an astronomical distance, they could easily reach the opponent's ship!

With the advent of warp speed technology and second-generation controllable fusion, aerospace operations seemed to have changed from the "anti-missile guidance" era to the "ancient" era of missiles fired from outside the line of sight. It had evolved into a head-to-head match between firepower and speed.

At least until there were defensive means that could effectively defend against kinetic energy weapons, such as the force shield technology in science fiction movies, this trend would remain the same for a certain period of time.

"Captain..." Looking at the spectacular scenes outside the porthole with a dumbfounded expression, Liu Zhengyi said in a trembling voice, "Is this... really a weapon from Earth?"

After gulping, Deng Yuanshu nodded.

"Obviously..."

Earlier, he was still a little dissatisfied with the command headquarters' hasty decision and that Lu Zhou dismantled the missile system on the Qinling without even asking for his opinion.

But now, he was completely impressed by the new equipment on the Qinling...

This is too strong!

Chapter 1612: Fighting Power

“It seems that the result is pretty good.”

Just as the crew on the Qinling was shocked by the scene of the naval guns, Lu Zhou and many officers from the First Fleet Command also witnessed the scene from the Lagrange Space Base. The rain of bullets poured towards the asteroid belt like a waterfall.

There were a total of 67 targets, the automated artillery array that simulated air pirates were deployed in a fan-shaped area of the asteroid belt with a width of 10 kilometers, relying on meteorites and asteroids as shelters.

However, even with the asteroids and meteorite blocks as a cover, it only took less than a minute to destroy all the targets.

Immediately after the Qinling executed the exercise, they practiced a series of subjects such as covering and attacking moving targets, as well as long-distance raids on the spaceport.

Seeing the mysterious green dots on the radar and the amazing test data, all the officers in the command headquarters held their breath in shock.

“This is amazing!” Commander Sun, who finally recovered from the shock, clenched his fists excitedly and said, “I swear that once such technology appears on the battlefield, it will crush any starship without a warp drive! Even in the face of aliens, we have the confidence to compete with them!”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Don’t be arrogant. If there are aliens, they are tens of thousands of years ahead of us, or they must have mastered something similar to faster than light technology... No matter what the situation is, it is not so easy to deal with.”

Hearing Lu Zhou’s words, Commander Sun Liwei just smiled and did not give any comment.

After seeing the performance of the Qinling in the experiment, he was extremely confident in the future of the First Fleet. If before they were powerful compared to other fleets in the solar system, with the second-generation controllable fusion and warp speed navigation technology, they were now like gods!

It took less than three seconds to go from the Lagrange point to the asteroid belt!

From a strategic point of view, this rapid deployment capability allowed them to play a deterrent role for several fleets.

From a tactical point of view, this travel mode could not only avoid radar and radio telescope tracking but also change the position of the battlefield in an instant, whether it was to escape the opponent's fire tracking range or suddenly teleport to the opponent. After firing a round of naval guns in a preemptive manner, any wild tactics would become possible.

Of course, this kind of warp speed navigation technology was not without weaknesses.

For example, the hyperspace channel could only be opened normally when the starship was between two massive celestial bodies, and for example, the influence of Z particles on the curvature of space could be superimposed with the vibration state of other Z particles.

In other words, as long as the target starship's approximate course and navigation direction were known, in theory, the warp travel could be "intercepted". This kind of technology was not too difficult at all. It only needed a power device similar to the Z particle oscillator.

However, it was only easy for Lu Zhou.

For other regional alliances on the planet and even the Pan-Asian Cooperation, which had mastered warp travel technology, it would take a lot of time to light up this branch of the warp navigation technology tree.

Therefore, at least at this stage, there was nothing wrong with the evaluation of Commander Sun.

For the First Fleet that had mastered warp speed navigation technology, the power projection range would be completely increased by an order of

magnitude, and the maximum combat radius would be more than a thousand times higher than before.

However, in contrast with Commander Sun's optimism, there were people that held the opposite opinion.

Staring at the test data on the holographic screen, a staff officer thought for a long time and finally couldn't help but express his concerns.

"I admit that if you look at it this way, the Qinling's firepower is indeed strong enough. But I think that a single firepower output method will eventually have a negative impact on its overall combat effectiveness. If there are no guided weapon—"

"There is no need for guided weapons at all."

Lu Zhou looked at the officer, smiled, and said, "Although I am not an expert in the military field, at least with the current technical conditions, no missile can catch up to the hyperspace channel. At least not for a long time."

Warp speed navigation was not a matter of installing an engine. It not only required a considerable amount of energy but also involved a series of complicated spatial curvature calculations.

It was absolutely impossible to integrate a second-generation controllable fusion reactor, a Z particle oscillation device, a sensor, and a quantum processor responsible for calculating the navigation path all on a missile. At least not with the current technology.

Lu Zhou was very confident, that even in a hundred years, he might not be able to find a way to produce this weapon.

...

After the live-fire exercise, the Qinling returned to the spaceport at the Lagrange Space Base.

Commander Sun Liwei finally put the Qinling in Lu Zhou's hands with confidence, letting him experiment as he pleased.

After Lu Zhou boarded the Qinling and walked around, he asked Captain Deng to send himself back to the Tianzhou. He then returned to Jinling by shuttle.

He had a lot of work to do, so he didn't have much time to waste.

Aside from the space elevator, in addition to improving the speed engine, there was also an interplanetary highway system waiting for him to research. Although the latter two were technically related to a certain degree, neither one could be easily handled.

This not only involved a considerable amount of calculation...

But also patience...

Another month passed by. In the blink of an eye, it was already June.

Sitting in front of the workbench in the laboratory and facing the dazzling pile of parts spread out in the holographic blueprint, Lu Zhou scratched the back of his head. He was having a headache.

"So annoying..."

It was easy to improve the warp drive. The problem was mainly in the calculation and selection of hyperspace channels. His current information science was level 10. With the help of Xiao Ai, he optimized the calculation module of the warp drive and integrated a multi-core quantum processor on the engine, which basically solved this problem.

However, the stargates of the interplanetary highway were another problem...

Using a few fixed straight lines to connect the planets whose positions changed in real-time really stumped Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou glanced at the calendar. Just as he felt that time was flying by, a communication request pop-up suddenly appeared next to him.

As soon as he saw that the communication request was from Academician Ge, Lu Zhou turned off the holographic composition system in front of him, put on his personal terminal, walked to the lounge next to him, and clicked the connect button.

As soon as the video call was connected, Academician Ge Huaizhi's face immediately appeared in front of him. He seemed to have something to say. His face was red and his eyes were full of excitement. He almost wanted to crawl out of the video window.

"Lu—Academician Lu!"

"What's the trouble again? Calm down."

"No, not trouble! It's a good thing!"

Lu Zhou, who sat down on the sofa, looked at the incoherent old man.

Lu Zhou wanted to give him a glass of water, but he realized that Academician Ge Huaizhi was just a holographically projected figure.

"What is it? Don't worry, speak slowly."

"The space elevator!"

After taking a deep breath, he finally calmed down. Looking at Lu Zhou excitedly, Academician Ge Huaizhi continued with a trembling voice, "Our first phase of the project has been completed!"

Chapter 1613: The First Phase is Completed!

June 6, 2126.

For people living in the land of China, today was definitely an extraordinary day.

The reason for this was not because there were three sixes on the calendar of this day, but because in the early hours of this day, the engineers on the Nirvana and Penglai construction sites finally tightened the last screws that marked the completion of the project.

As a result, it also marked the greatest miracle in the history of human architecture, which was finally announced.

There had never been a nation on this land that could complete such a magnificent spectacle in just six months.

Even though they were just a component of the space elevator project, they were still worthy of the title of miracles in terms of their majesty.

Hamilton stood on the deck of the cruise ship with a camera in his hand as he looked at the silver-white bright spot on the sea level in the distance with a complex expression.

He was a reporter from the North Sea Alliance and belonged to the BBC. Over the years, he interviewed many scientific research institutions and academic centers. He had taken interview videos and written numerous scientific and technological commentary news. He had seen many strange things before.

However, this was the first time that he had been so deeply impressed, that the interview shocked his soul.

The rising sun left a trace of glow on the Pacific Ocean. Where the waves and the clouds met, a fortress stood on the sea level, like a mountain in ancient mythology, exuding boundless mystery and majesty.

Everyone was also shocked by this scene.

Standing next to Hamilton, a Western reporter with slightly curly hair looked in the direction where the sea and the sky meet. He couldn't help but mutter a word, "The Nirvana Space Station and Penglai City were completed at the same time... Sh*t, don't those guys have weekends?"

"I think... it may have nothing to do with weekends."

Hamilton made a helpless expression on his face and continued.

"Many countries in the North Sea Alliance have canceled social welfare and removed the unfavorable provisions in labor law, but they have not reversed the status quo of backward productivity... I heard that the automated construction of East Asia Heavy Industries has developed to an unimaginable level. I still remember the last time I interviewed them, they showed me the latest worker bee system."

'What is that?'

“An automated construction system. Each set of equipment is roughly composed of a hive, with one to two hundred small drones and twenty large and medium-sized drones. When the construction procedures are set, they move like bees building a nest.” Hamilton shrugged slightly and continued, “Apparently, they used similar technology on the battlefield a long time ago, and they have recently developed a new way of construction.”

The colleague standing beside him opened his mouth but did not speak for a long time.

The cruise ship blew a longhorn, interrupting everyone’s thoughts.

Hamilton retracted his gaze from the Penglai City. He turned and walked in the direction of the cabin.

They would dock in ten minutes.

The horn was to remind them that it was time to pack up and prepare to get off the ship...

...

Because Hamilton wouldn’t stay here for too long, he didn’t carry much luggage with him. One suitcase was enough to store them all. After stuffing the folded clothes into the box, he followed the crowd to the side of the deck gangway, preparing to board the port of Penglai City.

While waiting in line, Hamilton took a close look at the “steel city” beside him.

Just like when he looked at it from a distance before, the only difference was that standing next to it made him feel the majesty more deeply.

Although there was no one in the city other than construction workers, he could already imagine how prosperous it would be when the roads here were filled with busy traffic.

Apparently, during the early part of the construction, the real estate in Penglai City had already been pre-sold online. After seeing the supporting facilities in the city and the future development prospects, those listed houses and shops were sold out in less than a day.

To be honest, there was a pity in Hamilton’s heart.

If he could go back in time, he would definitely think of a way to buy a piece of land.

He was a hundred and twenty percent sure that those who were lucky enough to buy would not lose money, and those who had considered but did not make a move would definitely regret their decision.

At the very least, he was regretful of his decision...

The person in charge of these international journalists was the secretary of Chairman Li Guangya, whose name was Wei Song.

It was not an easy task for foreigners to pronounce the name of a Chinese person, but Hamilton had practiced it many times before, so he was not worried about embarrassing himself during interviews.

For an international journalist in the 22nd century, mastering Mandarin pronunciation was a basic skill.

It was a great honor to get the first opportunity to speak. Hamilton operated the interview drone. After clearing his throat, he spoke in a clear voice.

"After coming here, I feel that I am standing on a living miracle. May I ask you how many materials were spent in building this sea city... or the seaport of the space elevator?"

Wei Song smiled and replied, "About 110 million tons of steel."

After hearing this number, all the reporters on the scene couldn't help but take a deep breath.

110 million tons of steel!

If these steels were used to cast starships, it would be no problem to build an air carrier battle group comparable to the Pan-Asian First Fleet.

However, Wei Song was not finished yet.

After a pause, he continued to speak.

"In addition, there are 300 million tons of aluminum alloy and 36 million tons of titanium alloy materials. As for the specific amount of materials consumed, I

am afraid that only the statistics department of the East Asia Heavy Industries can give an accurate figure. I only know the rough estimates.”

After Hamilton finished asking the question, he simply thanked him and stepped aside. Another reporter with darker skin standing next to him couldn't help but ask, “Such a big metal island... Who will come here?”

“Anyone who is interested in aerospace trade.” Wei Song continued with a smile, “Of course, the future city of Penglai will be a key node between the earth and high orbit, I believe there are quite a few people who are interested in coming here.”

“Then how do you view the sovereignty of this island?” A female reporter suddenly took a step forward and raised a special question. “We all know that this city is under the actual control of Pan-Asian Cooperation, but this sea area is international waters.”

This was a tough question.

But Wei Song had expected to hear this question.

At previous international summits, Secretary-General Wu Shuhua had often debated over this matter with the foreign ministers of other regional alliances. The general public in the international community was worried about the Pan-Asian Cooperation taking the international waters as their own.

Especially after taking a closer look at the magnificence of this spectacle, it was impossible for reporters from other regional alliances to have no fear in their hearts...

However, Wei Song could only say that they were too naive about these worries and fears.

If they really cared about taking control over the world, why would they care about a small piece of international waters?

However, these were just his thoughts.

He obviously wouldn't add unnecessary trouble to the chairman.

“This question is actually a bit superfluous.”

Upon hearing this unexpected answer, the female reporter raised her eyebrows slightly and continued to ask, "Why do you say that?"

"The position of the Pan-Asian Cooperation has always been clear. Just as we announced in the joint initiative on the space elevator, we are willing to cooperate with the international community on the usage of the entire space elevator on the basis of friendly cooperation."

Having said that, Wei Song paused for a moment. He then smiled and continued, "As for what you said, it doesn't matter at all."

"We are on the same planet, and we are about to head to a world farther away than ever. At this moment, our destiny has never been so closely connected. Do you know what I mean? When it comes to space, we all share the same honor."

His words not only clarified their position but also avoided the sensitive issue of territorial waters.

However, Hamilton felt that something was wrong.

What does it mean to share honor on the issue of space?

When did we talk about space?

Maybe...

Are these Asians planning to turn over the old accounts of history?

For some reason, Hamilton suddenly thought of the incident some time ago.

The Qinling of the First Fleet successfully completed the first fleet transition in human history.

Although it was still a little difficult to colonize the world outside the solar system at a speed of five minutes per 100 million kilometers, it was somewhat interesting to hear the chairman's office secretary say these words.

Obviously, the female reporter also noticed something. She frowned and continued to ask, "Sorry, can you elaborate more?"

However, in the face of her continued questioning, Secretary Wei just responded with a meaningful smile without making any comments.

“This is the end of the interview, we discuss this issue back at the ship... If anyone is interested.”

He lightly patted his hand, motioned everyone to look at his side, cleared his throat, and continued, “From now on, you can walk around here and take photos before dinner. My advice is not to go too far. After all, the public transportation system here has not yet started operating, and there are no taxis either.

“If you encounter any trouble, please contact me.

“I wish you all a pleasant time.”

Chapter 1614: Nirvana!

Just when reporters from all over the world were shocked by what they saw and heard in Penglai City, a similar scene was happening on a geosynchronous orbit that was 36,000 kilometers away.

However, it was not reporters from all over the world who were touched by the sights before their eyes. Instead, it was the members of the Space Elevator Construction Committee who took a shuttle to check on the project, as well as the engineers and scientific researchers who were responsible for the design work.

“This is Nirvana...”

Sitting on the space shuttle to Nirvana, Li Guangya looked directly at the towering space fortress outside the porthole. His eyes were full of excitement, and he couldn't help but feel emotional.

As the head of the Space Elevator Construction Committee, his signature on the project documents was a stamp of approval for the entire project.

Therefore, after hearing the news of the completion for the space elevator, he immediately asked his secretary to clear his calendar and took the first flight to Nirvana.

“Yes.” Lu Zhou took a look at Li Guangya, who was standing next to him. Lu Zhou replied casually, “How does this compare to the one in ancient myths?”

Lu Zhou was just joking around. He did not expect that Li Guangya, who heard this, would think about it seriously for a long time.

After a long time, he shook his head and said softly with emotion, "There is no comparison at all. The imagination of the past is too restricted. I read through all the myths and stories that I know of, and the mythical palace in the clouds is nothing compared to this towering fortress. Whether it is from the perspective of artistic value or from the perspective of practicality, this is incredible..."

The cylindrical structure of several kilometers long hovered steadily in the geosynchronous orbit, with its central axis pointing straight to the blue planet. The four arc-shaped cantilevers on the outside pointed outwards, like the propellers on the tail of a submarine, spinning silently at a slow speed.

From a distance, the towering battlestar was like a spinning top. Pulled by the inertia of the two motion systems, it achieved a dynamic balance with gravity that could be adjusted at any time.

This was probably the largest and most complex space project built in a gravitational environment in the history of humanity.

Although the scale was slightly inferior to the space base at the Lagrange point, the ports left on the outside of the Nirvana Space Station provided unlimited possibilities for future expansion.

It took more than half a century for the Lagrange Space Base to develop into its current form.

Nirvana still had at least a century to plump its wings and show its prosperity to the world...

"There's so much to look forward to."

"Like what?"

Looking at Lu Zhou, Li Guangya showed a smile on his face.

"Of course for the completion of the entire elevator."

Long before he took the position of chairman, he was working hard to realize this dream. Whether it was for the sake of keeping a name in history or for a

certain ambitious plan mentioned before, this space elevator was an indispensable and important part of the blueprint in his mind.

However, he considered that with the current technical conditions, perhaps he might not be able to see the completion of the space elevator during his lifetime.

Who knew that during this lifetime, he would actually see his dreams slowly turn into reality.

Just like how no one thought that a great scholar from a hundred years ago would wake up from the grave to help him “realize his dream”.

All of this felt so surreal...

Lu Zhou glanced at this guy. Although Lu Zhou vaguely felt weird about how excited Li Guangya was, he didn't say anything.

From Li Guangya's clenched fists, Lu Zhou could even feel the shock that overflowed from Li Guangya's heart and how he was overwhelmed by the charm of science.

Taller, stronger, and more magnificent buildings. This was the eternal pursuit of the human civilization. Over thousands of years, this dream had long been integrated into everyone's blood and engraved in the genes of culture.

And on this space station called Nirvana, these elements were undoubtedly manifested to the extreme.

It stood in the vast cold night, like a star that glowed forever, overshadowing all the sparkles in the entire night sky. It was the crystallization of wisdom for all civilizations in history.

It was not just a spectacle.

It was a milestone of civilization...

...

The shuttle passed through the circular hatch at the bottom. The airlock was lowered and the connecting arm was extended. The shuttle soon arrived on the Nirvana space station.

This would become the place where the elevator was connected.

However, the middle section of the entire space elevator had not yet begun construction, so it was temporarily used as a docking station.

“The entire Nirvana Space Station can be divided into two parts—the central axis and the cantilevers. And we are now on the side of the central axis area... which is the first floor of the entire space station.”

After getting off the shuttle, Lu Zhou walked towards the control center with a group of people. While admiring this almost perfect “artwork” designed by himself, Lu Zhou explained the situation to the others behind him.

“If the central axis area is the heart and brain, then the cantilever area is the torso.

“The outer cantilevers compensate for the space station’s inertia. They also ‘create’ a gravity force to the ring structure outside the cantilevers due to their own rotation. This gravity is not caused by mass. It is provided by centrifugal force, but it can produce a similar effect.

“Therefore, when designing the cantilevers, I designated them to be the living area.

“If the living space is insufficient, we can dock a new space station on the outside of the cantilevers and adjust the rotation speed of the cantilevers and the position of the center of gravity for the space station to restore the balance of the motion system...”

Li Guangya’s face was full of confusion as he listened to Lu Zhou.

Finally, after the introduction came to an end, he quickly coughed and interjected.

“I already know that the cantilever is the living area... What about the central axis part? I don’t care about the specific theories, you can just keep it simple...”

“This is not a complicated theory. Aside from the details, I think even high school students in the 21st century can figure out these things.”

After glancing at Li Guangya, Lu Zhou continued, “On the blueprints, I set the central axis as the industrial zone and the experimental zone. This part of the area is stationary relative to the earth, and the gravity in the longitudinal or vertical axis direction is close to zero. This part is for factories and a logistics transfer base that provides daily necessities for the residents of the cantilever district.

“At the same time, it is also the place where Nirvana connects with the space elevator.”

When Lu Zhou said this, he couldn’t help but put a smile on his face. His eyes fell on the floor-to-ceiling windows unconsciously.

He could see the moon.

It was also where Guanghan was.

As a bridge connecting heaven and earth, his expectation for this space elevator was not just a fast passage for exchanging materials or a bridge that allowed people to travel to and from space at a faster speed.

The second-generation controllable fusion reactor had been completed on the moon, and the huge reserves of helium-3 were being converted into endless energy. However, the industrial capacity on the moon alone was not enough to utilize this energy.

In order to allow the energy to enter Earth’s surface from the space vacuum environment efficiently, he needed a fiber optic cable extending from Earth’s surface to the moon.

Thus, in addition to being an elevator, there was another use of the space elevator.

Which was to be an energy and information corridor spanning between heaven and earth!

Chapter 1615: Nowhere To Go

[That is a miracle in human history.

[Ever since we walked upright, to the first flames that ignited in the forests, to the pyramids on the banks of the Nile, and to the Great Wall of China, we have conquered the lands more than once, but this is the first time we have conquered the sky and the ocean at the same time.

[This is the territory of Uranus and Poseidon. On the place where the stars shine on the ocean waves, I saw their palace and the conqueror who planted the flag there.

[Perhaps I should use more specific words to describe everything I saw, but all descriptive words seem so redundant. I don't want to use too many words to describe them, because the shock that goes deep into the soul can only be felt when you step on the steel fortress and touch it with your hands...

[I have never looked forward to that day so seriously until now.

[The day when the tower would finally be built.]

The pen in Hamilton's hand stopped. Sitting at the desk, he let out a sigh, gently waved his right hand, and dispersed the holographic light and shadow projected on the desk.

Almost a week had passed since the trip to Penglai City.

Over this week, he was also invited to go to the Nirvana Space Station on the geosynchronous orbit.

To be honest, he was so shocked by everything in front of him that he almost forgot to press the shutter button in his hand.

Thanks to his professionalism, he pressed the shutter under the reflection of muscle memory and got a set of precious photographs.

Thanks to these photos, the press release at his hand, which had been revised more than a dozen times, could look a little more formal rather than sounding like a fantasy novel or poem...

A beautiful voice floated from the door behind him.

"Sir, it's time to eat."

"I see, Celia, I'll be there soon."

After Hamilton responded, he got up from his chair, left the study room, and went to the bathroom to wash his face. He then went to the kitchen.

When he arrived in the kitchen, a woman in her apron, who looked like she was in her early twenties, had already put the prepared sandwiches and snacks on the table. She even added a slice of lemon and a few ice cubes to his drink.

Adding a slice of lemon to gin or whiskey had been a habit of his for many years. Apart from himself, Celia was the only one who knew of this habit.

After Hamilton sat down at the dining table, Celia took off her apron and hung it aside. She sat quietly across from him, watching him enjoy dinner.

She was not a real human. She was a housekeeping robot created by Hippocampus Group, so she did not need to eat.

As for how she came into this home...

It was related back to the riots that spread around the world a year ago.

Because of the serious mistakes in the prevention and control of the ALPHA virus, the entire Western world was filled with fear of robots and AI. Even though the North Sea Alliance was not the “epicenter” of the ALPHA virus, it was still affected.

Back then, she was abandoned on the street. She was supposed to be sent for destruction, but Hamilton, who was following up on reporting the virus incident, took her in.

Perhaps because of his career, he, who was engaged in scientific news reports, was not as afraid of AI as ordinary people, so this adoption continued to this day.

Celia was very grateful for the warmth he gave to her, even though there were not many emotions embedded in her software...

“Are you thinking about something?”

There was a slight pause in the hand holding the sandwich. Hamilton said after a while, “You can tell?”

Celia looked intently at her owner who was sitting opposite her as she said softly, "It's written on your face."

"Really?" Putting down the sandwich in his hand, Hamilton sighed softly and muttered to himself, "It looks like if you live alone for a long time, you start showing your emotions on your face."

After a long silence, he suddenly raised his head and looked at Celia, who was sitting across from him.

"Celia."

"Yes, Mr. Hamilton."

"Want to move houses?"

Celia cast a confused gaze at him.

"Why are you suddenly planning to move?"

"Because I want to try a new life." Hamilton was silent for a while. He continued, "Of course, I haven't made a decision yet. After all... you are also a member of this family, and I have to ask other family members before making a decision."

"Me?"

With her index finger pressed against her lower lip, Celia seemed to be thinking about this issue seriously.

For a moment, Hamilton suddenly had an illusion that what was sitting in front of him was not artificial intelligence but a living human being.

He stared at her for a long time.

Celia's face suddenly burst into a smile. In a gentle voice, she said softly, "Wherever you go, I will go with you."

...

After the completion of the Nirvana and Penglai City, related news reports were released one after another, and this exciting news quickly spread to all corners of the earth and even reached the distant Mars.

Even in the most remote and inconspicuous colonies, news about the completion of the first phase of the space elevator could be heard.

In the deepest part of the virtual reality network, a conference room was hidden in a sea of data. The atmosphere was as rigid as ice cubes, and people could feel the cold and severeness.

Looking blankly at the other senior foundation executives sitting at the conference table, the mysterious man in a gray cloak spoke with a heavy voice.

“The current situation is very serious for us.

“The first phase of the space elevator project has been completed. Coupled with the recent breakthrough in warp travel navigation technology, the Pan-Asian Cooperation’s control of the globe and even the world beyond the Earth-Moon system will rise to an unprecedented level. Our living space is bound to be squeezed.

“And just yesterday, I received a message from an informant. After the Pan-Asian Cooperation solves the problem of faster than light communication, they will try to regain control of all colonies on Mars, space stations, and asteroid colonial outposts.

“Everyone, Mars is our last base...

“If we lose this place again. I believe I don’t need to talk about the consequences.”

One year after the ALPHA virus incident, The Spirit of The Universe Foundation was investigated by the Pan-Asian Security Bureau. This kind of investigation was not only limited to the territory of the Pan-Asian Cooperation. The agents of the Security Bureau even contacted law enforcement teams of other regional alliances, so the foundation’s headquarters that were set up in neutral countries were also discovered.

There was also a terrifyingly strong mutated warrior...

Although there was no direct evidence to prove that he had undergone some special genetic modification, anyone strong enough to single-handedly take away the combat effectiveness of one of their bases had to have some kind of advanced power.

As a last resort, they had to withdraw from Earth and moved their headquarters to a Mars colony farther than Guanghan City. Seeking to make a comeback, they set up the new headquarters in two places—New Virginia and Tiangong City.

However, if faster than light navigation and communication technologies were really realized, coupled with the space elevator as a catalyst, the Pan-Asian Cooperation would undoubtedly have a realistic basis for the implementation of the direct management of remote colonies.

When the time arrived, even if they were not discovered, they would completely lose their last hope of resistance.

When saying these words, in addition to a deep sense of powerlessness, Gray Cloak's heart was also full of anger and unwillingness.

In his opinion, they were close to the edge of victory.

If it weren't for the guy who came from nowhere and cut off their victory, the ALPHA virus would dominate over the robotics industry chain, and they could use this power to completely destroy the order on Earth!

By then, they would only need to hold up a banner of order and appear in front of people as a savior. An idealist regime dominated by a new religion would be established on this planet. Relying on people's panic, it would establish faith that could rule the world...

They wouldn't have to hide behind the scenes. They could stand upright in front of the stage and use power comparable to gods to control everything they see.

"If it weren't for that guy who came out of nowhere..."

Sitting next to Gray Cloak, White Mask gritted his teeth and squeezed out these words.

However, at this moment, a soft cough suddenly came from the conference table.

"So..."

"Who is the guy?"

The meeting room fell silent for a moment. Pairs of eyes glanced in the direction of the voice.

An old man who they had never seen before was sitting among them.

His skinny and shriveled appearance was like a corpse that crawled out of a grave. If it weren't for the eyeballs moving around, no one would think he was still alive.

White Mask gulped. He looked at the old man who was watching him and couldn't help but feel alarmed.

Even in the virtual world, the old man's appearance was creepy.

However, it was not this that really made him feel uneasy; it was that his instincts told him that the old man sitting here was different from the rest...

No matter what kinds of virtual bodies they had, they were still living humans, but he couldn't feel a trace of life behind the old man's body.

He was like a ghost...

Gray Cloak stared at the old man intently. He then narrowed his eyes involuntarily.

Why does this guy...

Look familiar?

Chapter 1616: Other Plans

"David Lawrence..."

Gray Cloak stared at the old man sitting at the conference table.

Gray Cloak said, "You just made it easy for us to find you."

Hearing the voice floating from the top of the conference table, the old man sitting at the table gently raised his head and looked at Gray Cloak with his turbid pupils.

“Your safe house is perfect. You don’t need to worry about being disturbed when hiding here to discuss issues.”

Hearing these words, Gray Cloak’s face quickly became gloomy, and he lowered his voice dangerously.

“But you still found it.”

There was a commotion at the conference table. Several people sitting next to the old man moved their chairs away from him, trying to increase their sense of security through the virtual distance.

The old man didn’t pay attention to the small movements of these people. He looked at Gray Cloak, who was sitting at the head of the conference table, and spoke with a faint smile.

“Of course, I am an exception after all.”

Staring fiercely into the old man’s eyes, Gray Cloak tried to read his face, but no matter how hard he tried, he couldn’t read any useful information at all.

Gradually, he became a little uncomfortable, and he broke the silence with a tentative tone.

“I heard you died.”

“Have you read Sherlock Holmes before?”

“What a retro taste you have.”

“Because the other me is such a stubborn classicist.” The old man sitting at the table continued in a chatting tone, as if recounting a past event,

“Adventurous spirit, dare to fight against the future. But when the change came, we hesitated... In the end, we still failed. But like Professor Moriarty in Sherlock Holmes, the villain may lose, but their legacy will never be wiped.”

Noting the jealous look in Gray Cloak’s eyes, the old man’s face suddenly showed a trace of sorrow.

As if thinking of something, he slyly laughed twice and continued slowly, “Oh, by the way, did you say that I am not dead? Strictly speaking, I actually don’t have the concept of biological death. For me, the meaning of existence is that I can continue to process information... Of course, if you are asking about the

man named David Lawrence, he did end his life, although he should have done so long ago.”

Hearing these words, Gray Cloak finally figured out what kind of existence the guy in front of him was, and he finally figured out who the dead David Lawrence was.

There was a wave of chills in his heart.

He was not afraid of the strength of his opponent, but an immortal opponent really made it difficult for him to raise the courage to fight against it.

Especially since he wasn't immortal...

Thinking of this, Gray Cloak's heart couldn't help but want to retreat. At the same time, he also noticed that the other senior foundation members sitting here also showed a similar idea.

“So? How did you find this place?”

Looking at Gray Cloak, who had a dreadful gaze, the old man smiled faintly and said in a relaxed tone.

“This was easy for me. Think about it. The vast majority of you are accounts inherited from the previous foundation members. Have you seen each other in real life?”

The atmosphere in the conference room instantly dropped to a freezing point.

Gray Cloak's pupils shrank in an instant. He began to scan the familiar faces at the table. The other people sitting in the room also had expressions of surprise and disbelief written on their faces as they began to cast suspicious eyes on the other people sitting beside them.

Seeing everyone's reaction, the old man smiled and continued to speak.

“Stop searching. You weren't even born when I was created. And since then, the other me... that is, Mr. David Lawrence, noticed you. Think about it, why would the ALPHA virus be sold to you? And who has been providing you with information security? Do you really think it is because of the insufficient capabilities of the Pan-Asian Cooperation Security Bureau? Then you are too naive.”

Hearing these words, a drop of cold sweat slipped across the forehead of Gray Cloak.

Suddenly, there was an illusion in his heart. They thought they were hiding in the shadows, but they were actually puppets under someone's control. Ever since the beginning, they had never escaped from the control of that hand.

No, maybe it was not an illusion.

At the same time, a more frightening possibility emerged in his heart...

As if he had guessed what was on his mind, the old man smiled and nodded slightly.

"Maybe you have guessed it..."

"Yes, even this conference room itself is provided to you by me."

The meeting room fell silent.

All the faces at the conference table lost their color. Several people even went offline immediately, disconnected from the conference room, trying to escape.

However, they knew in their hearts that it made no sense to do so...

Maybe they didn't know each other's identities in real life, but the old man who claimed to be David Lawrence sitting here knew each of them very well, even better than themselves.

Gray Cloak, sitting at the front of the conference table, loosened his shoulders.

The old man's words confirmed what he had guessed in his heart.

"Other than myself, how many AIs are here?"

The old man smiled faintly and asked rhetorically, "Do I need multiple identities?"

Gray Cloak was silent for a while before continuing, "What should I call you?"

Seeing that the head of the foundation finally became cooperative, the old man smiled and nodded, leaving behind some meaningful words.

“There is only one David Lawrence, so you can call me that.”

“Then, Mr. Lawrence, since you have chosen to reveal your identity and stand here, you didn’t come here to accompany us losers and chat about the past, right?” Gray Cloak slightly narrowed his eyes and continued, “Go ahead, what do you want?”

“You are able to admit failure, so it seems that you are not hopeless,” the old man said. Looking at Gray Cloak with a gloomy face, he said with an understated voice, “Don’t be so excited, failure is not terrible, let alone losing to an excellent opponent.”

“Stop wasting time, I am busy.”

“Let’s make a deal.”

“Deal?” Gray Cloak narrowed his eyes slightly and continued to ask, “What deal? What do you want from us?”

“I don’t want anything from you, I just want to provide you with an alternative.” David Lawrence continued, “Obviously, the wheel of history has already come in front of you and me, so it is already impossible to take control back. If this is the case, why not make other plans?”

Gray Cloak frowned and said, “What do you mean?”

“What I want is very simple, we can change to a new world and start again.” Lawrence continued in a serious tone while looking at Gray Cloak with an incredible expression on his face, “Let’s cooperate, and I promise to give you a piece of paradise.”

Chapter 1617: A Letter From Mars

With the successful completion of the first phase of the project, the second phase of the space elevator soon began in full swing.

As the main contractor of the entire project, this part of the construction was also the most challenging part for East Asia Heavy Industries.

In this part of the construction, the construction team of East Asia Heavy Industries would put down the 36,000-kilometer elevator from the Nirvana section by section, like a ladder, until it was docked with the central tower on Penglai City.

Large space stations such as the Lagrange space base could be used as a reference for the Nirvana Space Station, but there was no past experience to reference for the construction of the elevator section.

Forget about East Asia Heavy Industries.

Even for the entire human civilization, building an elevator of this length was unprecedented...

“In the first phase of the project, we will set down one main rail and four secondary rails and then dock the rails section by section by shifting them downwards until the last section of the track is smoothly docked with the central tower.

“If the safety of the elevator can be ensured, we will gradually expand this number to twelve in the follow-up work, and finally complete all the designs on the blueprint.”

After listening to the specific construction plan described by Chief Engineer Wang from East Asia Heavy Industries, Lu Zhou nodded after thinking for a moment.

“Good idea, we can try this idea for the time being.”

This was the safest method.

Even after technical demonstrations and computer simulations, the space elevator was still a risky job for them. Although failures in scientific exploration were common, the collapse of a 36,000-kilometer track was likely to have unpredictable impacts on the ecological environment.

It would be fine if it fell on Earth.

If the wreckage between low-Earth orbit and geosynchronous orbit did not fall down but became garbage in the sky around Earth, it would undoubtedly be a disaster...

After the meeting was over, Lu Zhou left the Pan-Asian Academy of Sciences and boarded the maglev car parked at the door.

Wang Peng drove him to the maglev station.

Although he now had a new job, he was a “homie” from the same era and a partner who worked with Lu Zhou for many years. The relationship between the two had always been good. Hearing that Lu Zhou had come to Beijing, he immediately volunteered to serve as a temporary driver for his old friend.

“How have you been?”

“I’ve been fine, how about you?”

“I’m the same.” Wang Peng, who was sitting in the driver’s seat, grinned and continued, “Maybe I got lucky after I survived a catastrophe. Recently, I feel like things are taking a turn.”

“What do you mean?”

“We set up an investigation team to handle the foundation, right?”

Although Wang Peng did not specify which foundation it was, as soon as Lu Zhou heard these words, he knew Wang Peng was referring to the “religious organization” that tried to use the ALPHA virus to control the world but ended up failing miserably.

“Any clues about them?”

“More than just a clue.” Wang Peng smiled heartily. “Some time ago we found their hidden base in a neutral country. With the cooperation of the Ghost Squad, we successfully managed to defeat them without much effort. A large number of psychotropic drugs and important documents used to develop believers were intercepted, then guess what?”

The Ghost Squad was a special marine unit of the Pan-Asian First Fleet. It was different from the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade, which was responsible for the frontal battlefield. Although they also handled airborne planetary operations, they were mainly engaged in more technical work.

For example, targeted elimination of traitors or the implementation of some missions that were confidential.

Lu Zhou had heard of this squad before, but he was more curious about the final fate of The Spirit of The Universe Foundation.

“What happened afterward?”

“Based on the information on those documents, we can be sure that the base we destroyed was their headquarters on Earth!”

Wang Peng happily took out an electronic cigarette and held it in his mouth. However, when he was about to ignite it, he suddenly remembered that Lu Zhou hated the smell of smoke, so he put it back in his pocket, coughed, and continued, “The rest was very simple. Using the documents collected from the headquarters, we found a large number of key members of the foundation. Some people have been arrested, and some people are going to be captured soon.”

After hearing these words, Lu Zhou showed a gratified smile on his face.

“It seems that this case will be over soon.”

“Over... Not quite yet.”

Lu Zhou glanced at him unexpectedly.

“Weren’t the headquarters taken out?”

Wang Peng sighed and spoke.

“Yes, but in the documents stored in the headquarters, only the names of some members were listed. It is still far from the core layer of the entire foundation. For example, Song Yangwei’s name was not on it.”

“Not one core member was caught?” Lu Zhou was taken aback for a moment. With a strange expression on his face, he asked, “Are you sure that you found their headquarters?”

Wang Peng shook his head and said, “I know what you mean. In fact, I have also doubted whether the base we destroyed was just a bait thrown by the foundation. But we investigated it. It was discovered that the core members of The Spirit of The Universe Foundation are connected through the virtual reality network. They have never even seen each other in real life.”

Lu Zhou: “This sounds like a guild for online games.”

"It does feel like it." Wang Peng continued, "Their cautious approach has brought great difficulty to our investigative work. If we don't really wipe out their core management or destroy their sources of funds, no matter how many of their bases are taken, it won't really hurt them."

Lu Zhou: "Do you need my help?"

It seemed that Wang Peng didn't expect Lu Zhou to say this. After hearing this, Wang Peng was stunned.

Noting the expression on Wang Peng's face, Lu Zhou glanced at him with some uncertainty.

"What?"

"Nothing... Just a bit surprised." Wang Peng said with a smile after returning to his senses, "They told me that you're extremely busy, so I didn't expect you to offer to help."

Lu Zhou: "That depends on who needs help."

"We are appreciative of your offering, but we won't bother you for this little trouble." Wang Peng continued with a smile, "Maintaining social order is our duty. It is irresponsible to involve you in it. Besides, there are more important things waiting for you to do right now."

After arriving at the maglev station, Wang Peng and Lu Zhou bid each other farewell.

Lu Zhou sat on the maglev train returning to Jinling. He was thinking about what happened a year ago.

There was no doubt that David Lawrence should be dead. Wang Peng saw this with his own eyes, and there was DNA testing evidence. However, many secrets were also taken to the ground because of his death.

After returning home, Lu Zhou took a day off before returning to his work. He would either go to campus occasionally to teach 22nd-century college students, spend time in the laboratory and play with the model of the interplanetary highway, or discuss academic issues with his favorite apprentice.

Just like this, the days passed by quickly. Soon, it was already the end of the month.

As the summer vacation came around the corner, there seemed to be fewer things that required him to go outside.

However, just when Lu Zhou was thinking about this, he received a special email in his mailbox.

The reason why it was special was that this letter was sent from the Martian colony.

In addition, the mayor's signature and the red badge of the Tiangong City authorities were also printed on the email. Although he had yet to read the contents, all the signs seemed to indicate that this letter was unusual...

Chapter 1618: The World Is Too Crazy

"Mars Harbor, where the Galaxy Dream begins... What? What are these people from the city hall doing?"

Gong Tianwen, who was sitting at his desk, swiped his index finger across the holographic screen in front of him and put the latest issue of Tiangong Daily into the trash can. However, the contents of the newspaper kept him thinking for a long time.

Where the Galaxy Dream begins...

For a native Martian, this sentence was quite fascinating.

This report talked about the breakthrough of faster than light technology and the completion of the first phase of the space elevator. The shipping demand on Mars was expanding day by day, and the old space facilities were no longer enough to meet the needs of people. Therefore, the city hall issued a plan regarding the new development plan for Mars Harbor.

The plan was announced by the new mayor Xiao Hong. The city hall authorities would spend 100 billion credits to build a larger spaceport in the orbit of Mars.

This port harbor would no longer only serve as a shipping transit station, but it would also serve as an orbital residence, integrating production and life.

As a Martian who loved his hometown deeply, no one was more eager for Mars to become prosperous than him.

Compared to the pleasant scenery on Earth, the environment on Mars outside Tiangong was rather harsh.

For the world inside the Tiangong dome, this was a paradise that most people on Earth who had never been to space could never imagine.

Unlike Guanghan City, which had been forgotten for half a century, this colony on Mars had been developed by generations of colonists due to the transfer of heavy industries and mining industries.

Because of the actual needs for survival, people living here were constantly improving the life-sustaining facilities of the colony to expand their living space, so every brick and tile here was the crystallization of science and technology. It was no exaggeration to say that every floor tile contained the top wisdom of the entire human civilization.

Gong Tianwen was a native Martian. Although he heard that there were vast forests, seas, and countless ancient wonders on Earth, he did not yearn for them.

As a descendant of the original colonists and as a “citizen of Mars”, he had always been extremely proud of his identity.

He was a descendant of explorers.

And his company was a spacecraft parts manufacturing plant that produced parts for explorers.

In addition to the pride of being a Martian, the Mars Harbor described in this news made him see huge business opportunities.

The only thing that made him feel a little worried was that the mayor’s style of speaking and doing things didn’t seem to be very reliable.

Can this Mars Harbor really be built within his term?

Gong Tianwen was somewhat skeptical.

As usual, after reading the morning news, he turned on the holographic intelligent office system on his desk and started to deal with today's work with the assistance of business AI.

Just as he was about to sign a document, his AI assistant floated out of his desk.

"Sir, there is a visitor outside who wants to visit you."

Visitor?

Who would come this early in the morning?

Gong Tianwen spoke casually.

"Let them come in."

After the holographic image floating next to the desk disappeared, the office door opened quickly.

Not long after, a man in a suit and leather shoes walked in from outside.

"Hello, Chairman Gong, I am the manager of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation. Here is my business card."

Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation?

Gong Tianwen frowned when he heard this name, and his impression of the person in front of him suddenly changed.

The reason was simple.

In his opinion, these funds that targeted extrasolar stars were basically a large-scale Ponzi scheme. Through a beautiful land voucher card and an impractical lie, they stole credit points from the hands of ordinary people.

Of course, this was not the worst thing.

These liars who were good at deceiving people were usually grifters. They loved to talk about business and convince people to sign contracts while keeping their own bottom lines safe.

Gong Tianwen had met many people who ran similar funds, hoping to reach a “strategic cooperation” with his factory through the exchange of equity or “land”, and they even threw out the bait of helping him go public on Earth.

However, he had always sneered at these ridiculous proposals.

If someone wanted to buy his factory or the parts he produced, they could, but they would have to show him real money. As for the rest, he didn’t want to spare them a single minute of time.

“Mr. Gladstone?”

Gong Tianwen took a look at the holographic business card in his hand. He dragged it into his address book casually before casting a glance at the man in front of him. “Welcome to my company... I heard my secretary say that you have a business plan to discuss with me? Can you tell me what business is it?”

When he said this, he had already subconsciously moved his gaze to the clock in the corner of his vision.

He had made up his mind. The moment this guy showed the same intentions as those scammers, he would remove him from his office in the shortest possible time.

However, the first words that Mr. Gladstone said were beyond Gong Tianwen’s expectations.

“I want to build a ship.”

“Ship?” Staring at the man in suit and leather shoes in front of him for a moment, Gong Tianwen frowned slightly and continued, “Did you come to the wrong place? We don’t produce starships, we only produce—”

“Starship parts, right?” He took out a black memory card from his arm. The man in the suit and leather shoes then gently handed it to Gong Tianwen. “Usually, we will contact the shipyard directly, but our needs are quite special... Do you think you can make this?”

“Let me see.”

After receiving the black memory card, Gong Tianwen showed a serious look on his face as he operated the computer with his fingers.

Soon, a light blue holographic image was projected in front of him.

The moment he saw the parameters on the drawing, his eyebrows twitched fiercely, and he couldn't help but complain, "A five-kilometer long keel... Are you planning to build an aerospace carrier?"

Although he was not a professional engineer, he had been in this industry for many years. Even if he never cooked before, he would know what a chicken looked like.

This was the first time he had ever seen a civilian-class starship with such a long keel.

Gladstone smiled slightly and continued in a soft voice, "You only need to answer whether you can make it or not. If you can, I will place an order now. If not, I will look elsewhere."

Gong Tianwen raised his chin slightly with a proud expression on his face.

"As long as there are blueprints and materials, there is nothing we can't make! But this is a bit large, the storage costs and labor costs are not cheap, and if you breach the contract, we can only sell it as scrap... The deposit may be more expensive. You may have to pay 50% of the total price."

"No problem."

To Gong Tianwen's surprise, this man with a crooked nose didn't even bargain.

"Where is the contract? As long as you make sure that the order can be completed within the specified time, I can pay the deposit now."

Gong Tianwen gulped. He reached out his trembling index finger and tapped it gently on the desk.

"The contract will be ready soon... Please wait for a moment."

After accepting the electronic contract, the foreigner briefly glanced at it. He then signed his name and paid a deposit of 5 billion credits.

It was almost as if this weren't a business deal worth tens of billions. He acted like he was buying a pack of cigarettes from the supermarket downstairs instead.

Looking at the order worth tens of billions of credit points in his hand, Gong Tianwen felt his hands trembling. His whole body was full of disbelief.

It wasn't until he pinched himself to confirm that it was not a dream that he snapped back to reality.

"Crazy..."

Looking at the door of the office that had been closed in front of him, he gulped, and it took him a while to suppress his heart that was beating wildly.

An order worth 10 billion credit points...

This world is crazy.

Chapter 1619: This Promise Feels Familiar

"Mars Harbor, where the Galaxy Dream begins... This slogan is quite interesting."

Looking at the holographic screen hanging on the ceiling of the waiting room and the scrolling promotional slogan, Lu Zhou raised his eyebrows with an expression of interest. He couldn't help but glance at the advertisement twice.

Wang Peng, who was sitting next to him, seemed to have noticed the expression on his face. He looked at Lu Zhou and said in a chatty tone, "Apparently, since the new mayor took office, this is his promise."

Lu Zhou withdrew his gaze from the holographic advertisement. He looked at Wang Peng and asked curiously, "When did he take office?"

"Beginning this year."

"No wonder..." Lu Zhou shrugged his shoulders and explained, "At the beginning of last year, I was here."

This time he came to Mars for two main purposes.

One was to go back to visit General Reinhardt and the scientific research ship belonging to the advanced civilization, as well as to ask some technical questions about the “stargates”.

There was only one other reason, which was the invitation of Mr. Xiao Hong, the mayor of Mars.

Xiao Hong mentioned in a letter that the emergence of faster than light engines would make Mars an outpost for human civilization to explore the further world.

And for the future of the Mars colony, he hoped that Lu Zhou, as one of the founders of space colonization and exploration, could attend a seminar held in Tiangong City to discuss the technical feasibility of colonizing Europa.

As everyone knew, freshwater had always been one of the most expensive resources in aerospace activities.

As Jupiter’s fourth-largest moon, Europa was a marine world completely covered by glaciers. It went without saying how important such a planet was to Mars.

As for Wang Peng, the reason for coming to Mars was also very simple.

One reason was to protect Lu Zhou, and the other was to collect clues about The Spirit of The Universe Foundation.

Although it was only a vague clue, they had reason to believe that people from the foundation might have penetrated here.

After the base on Earth was removed, their core layer was likely to have been transferred to this area.

“You should be more careful when attending academic events. Although there is no direct intelligence to show that the people of the foundation still regard you as the target of the attack... It cannot be ruled out that they are planning something against you.”

“You can rest assured that my robot bodyguard will protect my safety.”

When Lu Zhou said this, he grinned and looked at Ling, who was sitting next to him.

When Wang Peng glanced at the robot sitting there like a wooden figure, the expression on his face was a little weird.

Even though this guy didn't look very reliable, in the end, Wang Peng still chose to believe in Lu Zhou. He nodded and didn't say much else.

Soon after, it was boarding time.

After taking a shuttle, two people and a robot arrived at the terminal building at the landing site outside Tiangong City.

After passing through the security checkpoint, Lu Zhou quickly saw Mayor Xiao, who had personally sent an email to invite him to Mars.

The mayor was slightly chubby, and he was wearing a formal attire that was popular in the upper-class Martian society.

"Academician Lu, it's nice to meet you! I heard that when you awoke from The Gates of Hell ruins, you passed by Tiangong City. It was a shame that I couldn't meet you at that time!"

Lu Zhou just smiled slightly and shook his hand.

There was something Lu Zhou didn't say.

Back then, he couldn't prove his identity. Even if he had gone to Mayor Xiao, he would have been branded a psychotic individual and taken out of the city hall.

Obviously, he wouldn't say this now...

"I heard that the first phase of the space elevator project you led has been completed?"

After letting go of Mayor Xiao's right hand, Lu Zhou nodded and said, "Yes... Has the news reached Mars?"

Mayor Xiao smiled heartily and said in a joking tone, "Of course! Mars is not a place disconnected from news. What's more, this is a huge event. Even the

space station on the distant asteroid belt is talking about you and the space elevator, as well as the faster than light engine.”

Accepting this compliment happily, Lu Zhou also smiled and said, “It is my honor to receive your attention.”

“It should be our honor to be able to witness the birth of faster than light technology in our lifetime!” Xiao Hong continued with a bright smile on his face, “Speaking of which, I have always wanted to ask your opinion. Is it feasible to build a similar space elevator on Mars?”

“There is no problem in terms of feasibility. Theoretically speaking, the gravity environment on Mars is lower, so the construction difficulty will be lower too.” Lu Zhou glanced at Mayor Xiao in a strange way as he asked casually, “Why do you ask? Does Tiangong City plan to build a space elevator?”

“Haha, I can’t hide anything from you! We do have this plan.” Mayor Xiao continued with a smile, “According to my judgment, the next ten or twenty years will be the golden age of the booming aerospace industry! Not just a space elevator, we also plan to build a Mars Harbor in the orbit of Mars that integrates commercial, industrial, and people’s livelihoods. It will be a lighthouse for the solar system! A safe haven that can provide supplies and rest for starships!

“Of course, I have to take it one step at a time. Mars Harbor is a long-term plan. In order to achieve this ambitious goal, we still have a lot of short-term work to do, such as finding ways to obtain Europa’s abundant water resources.

“Thank you in advance for tomorrow’s meeting!”

Looking at the bright smile on Mayor Xiao’s face, Lu Zhou didn’t know whether he was joking or was serious.

Hm?

I feel like this guy’s promise feels familiar?

After hesitating for a moment, Lu Zhou nodded politely.

“I’ll do my best.”

After the reception of Tiangong City authorities, Lu Zhou and Ling came to the hotel where they would be staying.

Wang Peng had other work to do, so after sending the two to the hotel, he left by himself.

Seeing that it was getting late, Lu Zhou simply took a bath before lying down on the bed and opening his personal terminal.

Lu Zhou saw the little red dot on the mailbox and wondered who would send an email. He reached out his finger and clicked on it.

Soon after, the mailbox opened, and a handwritten letter with beautiful handwriting was projected in front of him.

[Remember to take care of your body on Mars. I heard that you have done dangerous things on Mars before, so please don't mess around this time.

[— Love, Vera Pulyuy.]

Even though Lu Zhou was a bit cold at times, he couldn't help but feel his cheeks getting warm.

Is this a cultural difference?

Why does it make me feel so embarrassed?

"Sigh, what should I do..."

Lu Zhou lay down and was ready to go to sleep. However, after a long time, he still couldn't fall asleep.

He closed his eyes and went silent. After a while, he sat up from the bed, tapped a few times on the holographic keyboard with his index finger, and wrote a reply.

[I will take care of myself. Don't worry about me.

[—Lu Zhou]

Chapter 1620: The Martian Academic Environment

Star Sky Hotel was located in the most central part of Tiangong City. It was the most luxurious business hotel in Tiangong City and was also the preferred venue for various major academic conferences.

In fact, this hotel was the only business left by Star Sky Technology. When Tiangong City was first established, Star Sky Technology invested a lot of money here to develop infrastructure, but unfortunately, due to poor management, the giant company began to dwindle.

The ownership of this hotel was sold to a local real estate company in the 2050s. With Lu Zhou's current financial resources, it was easy to buy it back, but he himself had no interest in operating a hotel.

Also, Star Sky Technology was now an empty shell of its former self. Even if it were bought back, it would be a headache to operate it. It would be better to leave it alone.

The next morning, on the way downstairs to eat, Lu Zhou met a scholar who also came from Earth. Perhaps because Lu Zhou was too famous, the young man could see him from far away, and he waved to him excitedly.

Lu Zhou thought that this guy was quite interesting, so he invited him to sit together for breakfast. During the breakfast chat, Lu Zhou learned that the young man's name was Wu Qinglai, a professor at the Space Station Research Institute of the Pan-Asian Academy of Engineering, and he only became a regular employee two years ago.

After listening to the young man's self-introduction, Lu Zhou looked around curiously. He wasn't able to recognize any of the faces, so he asked with interest, "Can I ask, did the other academicians of your research institute not come? I mean, how did Tiangong City find you?"

The young man could just be really talented, but Lu Zhou had no impression of him at all. He wasn't familiar with his name.

Generally speaking, if the young man was really an outstanding scholar, forget about hearing his name at academic conferences, at the very least, Lu Zhou should have heard of his papers.

As if seeing through Lu Zhou's thoughts, the professor whose nickname was Xiao Wu, shrugged his shoulders and said helplessly, "I know what you mean. Generally speaking, this kind of major meeting shouldn't invite an unknown person like me, but you may not know that although there is only a five-minute delay, the academic circles on Mars and the academic circles on Earth are basically independent. To put it bluntly, they don't particularly look up to us."

Lu Zhou was taken aback for a moment. He then looked at him inexplicably.

"Why do they think so?"

"Historical reasons." Wu Qinglai shrugged and said, "It would take all day to tell the story in detail. In short, since they made it clear that our opinions are not valued, should we send our best experts? Cross-planetary navigation is a hassle, and if I had the choice, I wouldn't come here either."

So far, the warp engine was only equipped on the Qinling. Most flights to and from Earth were done by traditional flights. Although from the perspective of a 21st-century citizen, it was quite fast to reach Mars from Earth in three days, for people in the 22nd century, who had not experienced truly long sailing time, they wouldn't appreciate the speediness of the journey.

Lu Zhou shook his head and said, "The essence of academics lies in communication, this kind of pre-positioning approach is not good."

Wu Qinglai smiled bitterly and said, "We all know this is not good, but what can be done? Compared to Earth, this is a large local area network. Even if I want to reply to emails, I have to pay credit points. Coming here means staying for at least half a month or even a month. I am completely out of touch with academia on Earth."

Although Lu Zhou was very interested in the history of Mars when he was absent, this didn't seem to be a suitable place to discuss this issue. The two of them soon talked about the local culture in Tiangong City.

Perhaps it was because Xiao Wu was not particularly valued at the Academy of Engineering, this was not the first time he was sent here as a puppet. He was so familiar with this place that he treated it like his second home.

After eating, the two of them walked in the direction of the elevator together.

At this moment, a man in his early forties walked over with a group of people from the front entrance of the hotel.

Judging from the person's clothes and the attitudes of the rest, this guy probably had a high status. As if he had noticed Lu Zhou, the man was taken aback for a moment. He then frowned slightly and walked over here.

"You're Lu Zhou?"

Although Lu Zhou felt that this guy's tone seemed a bit off, he was not the petty kind, so he didn't take his attitude to heart and said in a gentle tone, "Yes, what's the matter?"

"It's nice to meet you." Without showing too much joy on his face, the man reached out his right hand and shook hands with Lu Zhou. He said, "Welcome to Tiangong City, I hope this city can leave a good impression on you. We will discuss the technical feasibility and specific implementation plan of Europa's development at the meeting. We look forward to hearing opinions from you, and I hope you won't hold back any criticism."

Lu Zhou smiled and nodded.

"For sure."

After some words of greeting, the man left with the group of people.

Lu Zhou curiously glanced in the direction that the man was leaving. Lu Zhou didn't hear him introduce himself, so he asked casually, "Who's that person?"

"Yang Chongping," Xiao Wu said in a complicated tone. "The director of the Institute of Aerospace Technology of the Tiangong Research Institute and an academician of the Mars Academy of Sciences... His theories in the field of spacecraft design are excellent, especially in the design of large starships and space stations. Even my supervisor admits that this guy is impressive."

Lu Zhou nodded, but his focus was in a strange place.

"There is also an Academy of Sciences on Mars?"

"That's for sure... Didn't I say that the situation on Mars is complicated?" Xiao Wu said with a light cough. "Because the policies of the regional alliances on Mars, colonies are managed by the local residents, so there is actually a trade

organization similar to a non-tariff alliance between the colonial cities on Mars. In recent years, the scope of cooperation has gradually expanded to the fields of culture, scientific research, and even politics... You can think of the Mars Academy of Sciences as an academic organization from a century ago."

In other words, on the issue of territorial ownership, Tiangong City was moving closer to Pan-Asian Cooperation. But in the economic and cultural fields, the cooperation between the colonial cities on Mars was closer.

Lu Zhou felt like this place was more like a vassal state of the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

However, he was not very interested in these political issues. After inquiring about the Mars Academy of Sciences, he changed the conversation to Academician Yang Chongping himself.

"It feels like he doesn't like me very much?"

"There is no city on this planet that welcomes foreigners, especially for native Martians. We are only slightly better than aliens," Xiao Wu shrugged and joked. "Of course, they do have pride in their aerospace. After all, the heavy industry on Earth is basically abandoned. The most cutting-edge production bases in the entire industry are distributed around Tiangong City... I'm sure you know that the materials for the space elevator are all produced here."

Lu Zhou nodded, expressing his understanding.

He knew this.

After all, he was the largest individual shareholder of East Asia Heavy Industries. He had a rough idea of the distribution of the industrial chain for East Asia Heavy Industries and its cooperative suppliers.

Wu Qinglai thought Lu Zhou had a previous dispute with Yang Chongping, so he glanced at him and spoke.

"Actually, you don't need to care about him, he is just jealous of your achievements."

Lu Zhou was slightly stunned. He then said with a light smile, "I just think this guy is interesting. That's it, don't think too much about it. Tell me about the

food here. I was in a hurry when I passed through Tiangong City, and I didn't have time to take a good look at this city..."

"Then I recommend you to take a trip to the Central Dome! It's right next to the Star Sky Hotel. You can go through the underground passage or take the transfer escalator." Wu Qinglai continued with excitement, "Apparently, standing on the observation deck of the Central Dome, you can see the outline of New Virginia! And the revolving restaurant there is one of the must-visit attractions in Tiangong City!"

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Really? Then I have to go there if I have time."

Lu Zhou was quite an old person. Naturally, he didn't want to hang out with such a young guy.

After returning to the room to rest for a while, Lu Zhou saw that there was still some time before the afternoon meeting. He remembered that the tourist spot recommended by Professor Wu was not far away, so he went out for a stroll.

He had to admit that the scenery there was quite breathtaking.

Lu Zhou went on the escalator belt leading to the next building. He then took an elevator to the hall of the Central Dome and walked to the floor-to-ceiling windows. He was immediately greeted by the scenery.

The three-dimensional transportation networks spread outward like layers of spider webs, forming a web of civilization on this barren land.

"Ling."

Ling's pupils flickered slightly. He looked at Lu Zhou and replied with an electronic voice, "Yes, commander."

After being silent for a while, Lu Zhou said with some emotion, "I'm starting to understand those people's ideas."

Being able to build a city on this barren land required more than just wisdom and courage. And they, who had created such a miracle, deserved to be proud.

This estrangement between Mars and Earth might not be caused by time and distance...

Unable to understand the deep meaning of Lu Zhou's words, Ling tilted his head with a confused expression on his face.

However, Lu Zhou didn't explain much. He just paused and admired this beautiful city for a while. After that, he turned around and left...

Chapter 1621: Unusual Meeting

The afternoon meeting began.

Like Lu Zhou expected, the experts on Earth did not seem to have much to say here.

Led by Academician Yang Chongping, several major experts from the Tiangong Aerospace Science and Technology Research Institute took the lead to express their opinions, and after that, several other aerospace agencies and engineers from companies also expressed their views.

Generally speaking, most of the experts sitting at the conference table had no objection to the demonstration of technical feasibility. The aerospace companies from The Pan-Asian Cooperation were indeed capable of developing the resources on Europa. Also, the funding they would indirectly receive from the second half of the year would be fruitful.

As for Lu Zhou, his opinion was similar.

From a purely practical point of view, the development of water resources on Europa was indeed cheaper and much more environmentally friendly than transporting freshwater resources from Earth to Mars.

In fact, as early as a century ago, Lu Zhou had considered including this water-filled planet as part of the aerospace strategy.

However, the technical conditions back then were much worse, and he also did not expect that he would be able to solve the problem of faster than light speed so quickly, expanding the radius of human civilization from the asteroid belt to the world outside the asteroid belt, so this matter was put aside this whole time.

Now, they clearly had the conditions to move further out into space.

However...

When the meeting progressed to the next stage, the situation changed 180 degrees. The atmosphere at the conference table went from peaceful to intense in an instant.

Seeing the faces that had turned red from arguing, Lu Zhou wanted to express his own opinion, but when he thought about it, it seemed that it would only add fuel to the fire, so he gave it up for the time being.

An old engineer with a gray beard who was in his sixties stood up with his hands on the table, raised his volume, and said loudly, "We can select four points in the central area of the asteroid belt to establish freshwater resource reserve stations and transport the seawater resources extracted from Europa to the reserve station for rough processing. After that, the freshwater reserve station can deliver water to the Mars colony depending on the movement position of Mars."

A man with his arms folded sneered and spoke with a mocking tone.

"Build a reserve station on the asteroid belt? Four of them? Haha, I'm afraid that you have forgotten about the active space pirates on the asteroid belt."

"We have the most powerful fleet in the solar system that can provide us with security and protection! I don't think this is a problem at all!"

"That is the fleet of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, not Tiangong City." Academician Yang Chongping said blankly after interrupting that person, "Unless the Pan-Asian Cooperation allows us to have our own defense forces, your proposal will never be established."

The red-faced person who had previously argued fiercely suddenly back down. He hesitated for a while and finally sat back in his seat.

Seeing that the atmosphere was a little stiff, the mayor's secretary sitting at the conference table gave a light cough and began to play the role of peacemaker. He smiled kindly and said, "Don't get excited, everyone... This idea does have certain barriers. We have been fighting for the right to self-defense for a long time, but there has been no progress."

The man who raised the objection showed a smile on his face, he put down his arms and said in a pleasant voice.

“This matter doesn’t need to be so troublesome at all. The transportation capacity of our company is more than enough to maintain this route across the asteroid belt. We can transport the water extracted from Europa to Mars for processing. This is both efficient and avoids unnecessary risks—”

“Mr. Yu Zhenghui,” the mayor’s secretary glanced at him and interrupted his speech. The secretary’s voice also brought a hint of displeasure as he continued, “Please pay attention to your own words. We are discussing the public development plan, please don’t discuss private business.”

The man named Yu Zhenghui shrugged his shoulders, dropped an insincere apology, and stopped talking.

But the confident expression on his face made the experts here nervous.

Lu Zhou watched this controversy on the sidelines. He glanced at the man next to him and said in a low voice, “I thought that the academia on Mars would be more united?”

“That’s where you’re wrong.” Wu Qinglai said with a helpless expression, “Once there is an interest in anything, there is no unity.”

Lu Zhou nodded thoughtfully and gave an ambiguous view.

“That makes sense.”

Speaking of which, what is the opinion of Academician Yang Chongping?

Lu Zhou subconsciously looked in the direction of Academician Yang, but unexpectedly, he noticed that the middle-aged man was also looking at him.

Perhaps it was just a coincidence. The moment the two of them made eye contact, Academician Yang moved his gaze away from him.

Lu Zhou frowned slightly.

For some reason, I feel like this meeting may be more important than I thought...

Due to the disputing between several big names, the first day of the meeting ended in an unhappy atmosphere, and the unresolved disputes were left for tomorrow.

Perhaps because of the emotions at the conference table, Lu Zhou noticed that many faces did not appear at the banquet.

Mayor Xiao of Tiangong City even made a special visit to the banquet. After greeting the experts he invited, he pulled Lu Zhou aside and talked about his optimism for the future prospects of Mars and what he planned to do after his term.

It wasn't until Lu Zhou looked at his watch for the tenth time that this conversation finally ended. Lu Zhou said that he still had work to deal with and quickly left the hotel venue.

After dinner, Lu Zhou returned to his room, flipped through the notes made during the meeting, and briefly sorted out some of the interesting ideas.

Although he had his own ideas on Europa's development plan, this did not prevent him from learning from other people's plans and perfecting his own plan.

Of course, this also included Academician Yang Chongping's plan.

He could feel that this guy seemed to be inexplicably hostile or jealous towards him, but he had to admit that this guy must have some impressive abilities, seeing that he was an academician after all.

The doorbell rang outside the room. After Lu Zhou glanced at the picture on the holographic screen, he casually pressed the button to open the door.

The door opened, and Lu Zhou watched as Wang Peng came in from outside. He then asked casually, "Found any clues?"

Wang Peng sat on the sofa and said with a sigh, "It's not that easy. I went to meet with my colleagues today. Those people from the foundation act very cautiously. If it weren't for the case of East Asia Energy that forced them to show their faces, we might still be kept in the dark."

Lu Zhou: "It seems that I was of help then?"

Wang Peng smiled and said, "Of course... Speaking of which, I heard some very interesting rumors while wandering around."

Lu Zhou: "What rumors?"

Wang Peng: “Recently, several extraterrestrial galaxy colonization funds have been raising funds publicly, intending to build colonial ships to head to other galaxies. Has East Asia Heavy Industries already begun to industrialize warp drives? I haven’t heard any news at all.”

Colonial ships?

Hearing this word, Lu Zhou was slightly stunned.

What surprised him was not that someone had the idea of going outside the solar system, but that people actually took the initiative ahead of him.

“I don’t think so. The related technology is still in the experimental stage, but we do have plans to commercialize this technology.”

“I see, that’s weird then.” Wang Peng picked up the mineral water bottle on the table and took a sip. After a while, he continued, “At first, I thought it was a new type of financial scam, and I was prepared to report it to my colleagues in other departments, but later on, I found out that this matter is not that simple. Guess what, this project is actually endorsed by the Mars Academy of Sciences!”

“Oh, really?” Lu Zhou raised his eyebrows slightly and cast an unexpected glance at him. “Are you sure the source of the news is legit?”

“It hasn’t been verified yet, but it should not be wrong.” Wang Peng continued after thinking for a while, “I remember the expert who endorsed the colony plan. He seems to be called... Yang Chongping?”

Chapter 1622: Noah’s Ark

Star Sky Hotel.

Inside the presidential suite.

A man with a large nose and wearing a suit and leather shoes stood on the desk in the study room while looking at Academician Yang Chongping who was sitting in a chair. He slightly raised the wine glass in his hand to him and said with a smile on his face, “Please allow me to toast you. Your design is so perfect that I don’t know how to thank you.”

“You don’t have to thank me.” Academician Yang Chongping continued while looking at the man who was standing on the desk blankly, “If you have to thank me, do it by turning my blueprint into reality.”

“Please don’t worry about this! We have contacted the shipyard and the suppliers who can build the parts in your design. I believe it will not be long before you hear good news from me.” Mr. Gladstone smiled slightly and continued in a complimenting tone, “I believe that when this epic-class colonial ship is completed, your name will be recorded in history as the greatest aerospace engineer of this century!”

“Just from a starship? There are too many people worthy of being recorded in history.” Academician Yang Chongping squinted his eyes slightly and continued, “Compared to the ladder connecting heaven and earth, the starship is not worth mentioning.”

“Not necessarily. Don’t belittle yourself.” Gladstone said with a smile, “When the second sun rises above our civilization, when our colonization cabin lands on a planet far away from Earth and far from the solar system, as the designer of this starship, who else can surpass you in history? Undoubtedly, you will become the pioneer of civilization’s flame. Your greatness will not be inferior to anyone, not even Academician Lu.”

*Even though I know he’s kissing my a*s, it still feels flattering.*

Yang Chongping’s eyebrows eased a little. He even felt a little satisfied.

However, as the leader of a school of thought, he did not express this joy on his face. Instead, he said in a cool manner, “I hope so.

“Before I go to bed, I have to sort out the meeting notes. I’ll talk to you later.”

“Sure.” Gladstone nodded slightly and said cheerfully, “Your health is the capital of scientific research. Remember to rest early and don’t stay up too late...

“Also, I wish you a good life.”

The holographic light beam projected on the desk gradually disappeared, and the figure standing in the holographic light beam also disappeared along with it.

The holographic projection system was completely indistinguishable from a real person.

After the manager of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation left, Academician Yang Chongping reached out his index finger and tapped on the desk. He retrieved the notes of the daytime meeting.

However, his eyebrows suddenly frowned.

He wanted to see Academician Lu's proposal.

However, to his surprise...

He didn't make a proposal?

For some reason, Academician Lu, who was called the greatest scholar alive, just watched the meeting from the beginning to the end without saying a word...

...

"Lu Zhou seems to be on Mars."

Gladstone placed the wine glass in his hand on the coffee table. He turned off the holographic call system and turned his gaze to Lawrence, who was standing next to him.

"He's at the Star Sky Hotel, I think they are attending a seminar on Europa's development plan."

Gladstone was expecting to see a look of dread on Lawrence's face. After all, even if they were now allies, that guy was really annoying.

However, to his surprise, Lawrence just nodded. There was no change in the expression on his face. As if they were just having a casual conversation, he said in an ordinary tone, "I've heard."

"That's it?"

"What else?"

"I mean... The guy who made you turn 180 degrees is standing under your nose now, don't you plan to do something?"

"If he doesn't interfere with my plan, why should I take the initiative to provoke him and let my plan go out of line?" Lawrence glanced at Mr. Gladstone and said softly, "Haven't you guys find out the real reason for your failure?"

Who else can it be?

Isn't it because of you?

Gladstone's eyebrows twitched. A trace of dissatisfaction flashed across his face, but in the end, the dissatisfaction was suppressed. He took a deep breath and said, "I always think this thing is a bit weird. Do you think he has noticed something?"

Lawrence thought for a while before speaking, "This possibility does exist, you can pay attention to his movements, but it is best not to actively provoke him. Remember, our task is to complete Noah's Ark bound for the new world. Don't make any trouble if you don't have to."

"Of course, I will be careful." Gladstone nodded. After thinking for a while, he suddenly said, "Actually, there is one thing that I haven't quite understood."

Lawrence: "Which is what?"

Gladstone: "The warp drive is currently only installed on the Qinling. How do you plan to install that thing on our... colonial ship?"

"Oh, this? It's not difficult..." Lawrence smiled faintly as he continued, "Mars is the stomach of human civilization. All the ores are smelted into alloys there, then cast into the energy-swallowing machines. Whether it is the East Asia Heavy Industries, the North American Alliance's Space-X, or Boeing, they all have their production lines here. We are now standing in the stomach of human civilization. Do you still worry about not getting a warp drive?"

"You mean... To steal the blueprints directly from the hands of East Asia Heavy Industries?" Gladstone stared at him, as if he were looking at a monster. He said with a weird expression, "The failure on Ceres hasn't taught you your lesson yet? It is impossible to succeed in a head-on confrontation."

"Head-on confrontation? I've never thought about it that way." Lawrence continued in a slow manner, "Although I am an AI, it does not mean that I will not learn from failure. This time, I intend to use a civilized way to solve this problem."

Gladstone shrugged.

“The Pan-Asian Cooperation will not tolerate the leakage of this level of secrets into the hands of an unknown force. Once they discover that the blueprints have been leaked, we will never have the opportunity to install the warp drive on Noah’s Ark. A war will be imminent!”

“There may be a war, but it is definitely not us who will be dragged into the whirlpool. You will understand why. This is also an exchange of interests.” Lawrence smiled faintly and continued, “Now, there is only one thing you need to do, that is to get as many people as possible to participate in the plan of Noah’s Ark.”

Staring at the holographic image in front of him, Gladstone looked uneasy. After hesitating for a moment, he finally couldn’t help but say, “I hope your crazy plan will not bring us all into the ground.”

“Crazy or not, do you have any other choice?”

Gladstone couldn’t say a word.

Lawrence smiled faintly, and with his hands behind his back, he disappeared silently.

Chapter 1623: An Old-Fashioned “Scam”?

These days, Lu Zhou had been receiving emails from Vera almost every day. Sometimes, he would receive several emails a day.

He only left home for a bit, but the emails sent every few hours made him feel like he had gone far away.

Well, that was true. After all, Mars was quite far away from Earth.

Especially now that the two celestial bodies had moved to relatively far positions with a straight line distance of nearly 300 to 400 million kilometers. Even light had to take more than 20 minutes to reach the opposing planet.

Because Lu Zhou did not take a civilian flight but the First Fleet Qinling instead, he didn't spend much time on the road, and so, he didn't have a real sense of this vast distance.

The only thing that made it feel like a business trip was the local culture on Mars.

The local delicacies of Tiangong City were a little hard to describe.

Perhaps because of the precious freshwater resources, most of the food here was dry and lightweight. He felt unsatisfied when tasting it.

In addition, there was an erratic change between their enthusiasm and coldness...

Lu Zhou had a profound experience of Martian culture.

"As for the meeting, is there no result yet?"

"No." Lu Zhou shook his head while fiddling with the holographic model in his hand. "After I came, I found out that the situation on Mars is more complicated than I thought."

Wang Peng had guessed what the complexity Lu Zhou meant was. He couldn't help but show a strange expression on his face.

"Even you feel like it's complicated?"

"Yes." Lu Zhou said casually while nodding his head, "There is a serious rift between Mars' academic world and Earth's science community. In short, they have formed a unique circle, and it is difficult to allow outsiders to intervene."

Wang Peng: "Then you came here for nothing?"

Lu Zhou: "That's not true. The mayor's invitation was just one of the reasons why I came to Mars. I have more important things to do."

Wang Peng raised his eyebrows curiously and asked casually, "Oh... like what? Of course, I'm just curious, if you can't talk about it, it's fine."

Lu Zhou stared at the model in his hand. He thought for a while and gave an ambiguous answer.

“It’s nothing special, it’s mainly related to the warp drive and Z particles.”

Speaking of which, it had been more than a year since he woke up from his hibernation.

General Reinhardt had been buried in the ground alone for more than a year. Lu Zhou wondered if General Reinhardt would feel bored.

The afternoon meeting still ended in a heated debate.

Lu Zhou didn’t listen much during the whole process. The meeting system designed by Xiao Ai helped him record the main points of the meeting while he basically did his own thing.

After the meeting, he originally planned to go to a restaurant for a meal, then go back to his room to rest.

However, he bumped into Professor Wu Qinglai again at the restaurant.

Lu Zhou said, “Why didn’t you come to the meeting just now?”

“The opinions of us Earth experts are actually not important at all. I thought you knew.” Professor Wu Qinglai had a helpless look on his face. He suddenly approached Lu Zhou with a mysterious expression, lowered his voice, and said, “Regardless... Speaking of which, have you heard about Noah’s Ark?”

Noah’s Ark?

Intuition told Lu Zhou that this guy wasn’t talking about the mythology story, so he asked, “What is it?”

“So you really don’t know,” Wu Qinglai said with a smile on his face. He continued with an excited tone, “The legendary world’s largest colonial ship that is under construction! It is also the first colonial ship built for the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation! The goal is Proxima Centauri b! The reason why I didn’t come to the meeting just now was so that I could use the hotel network to grab tickets!”

Grab... tickets?

After hearing these words, Lu Zhou couldn’t help but show a weird expression on his face.

“What tickets?”

“Of course it is the starship tickets!”

“Are you interested in colonial exploration?”

“No way! Although I have no plans to live on an exoplanet, I am still interested in credit points!” Professor Wu continued with a smile on his face, “In short, with the help of Tiangong City Bank, the Alpha Centauri Foundation issued 100,000 tickets to raise funds for the construction of the colonial ship!”

Lu Zhou asked, “So?”

“The Alpha Centauri Foundation promises that just by having tickets of different levels, one would be eligible to board the ship, and the foundation also promises ownerships of different areas of land in the colony. This type of ticket has financial attributes. In less than an hour, their price has doubled. I bought 10 of them with a total of 300,000 credits. When they rise to about 1 million, I will get rid of them!”

Lu Zhou was a little worried that this guy might have been deceived by a scam, so he couldn't help but kindly remind him.

“This sounds like a Ponzi scheme... Something similar happened a century ago.”

However, this kind reminder obviously didn't work.

The excited expression on Professor Wu Qinglai's face didn't change. Instead, he started arguing with Lu Zhou.

“You don't understand. A Ponzi scheme is a paper game that pays profit to investors with other investors' money, but this is different! According to research on the Internet, more than 1 billion people think that colonizing an exoplanet is a cool thing, and I'm considering going to the new world to find opportunities for development.”

Lu Zhou: “Those surveys on the Internet don't reflect people's true thoughts... How do they plan to go to Alpha Centauri? At the very least, as far as I know, East Asia Heavy Industries has not reached a warp drive technology authorization with a private company yet. I'm afraid it won't happen anytime soon.”

“Regardless, the market is eating this up.” Professor Wu shrugged and continued with a certain tone, “If you still think I was deceived, I recommend you to take a look at Griffin’s exhibitions.”

Looking at Professor Wu, Lu Zhou was slightly stunned.

“Griffin’s exhibitions?”

He was clearly talking about the colonization of exoplanets, so what does this have to do with exhibitions?

Just when he was about to ask what was the relationship between the two, Professor Wu Qinglai saw his confusion and took the initiative to speak.

“That’s right, John Griffin! A New Londoner from the North Sea Alliance and the most famous impressionist painter on Mars. His painting skills are unparalleled. As one of the supporters of the Star System Colonization Plan, he has always advocated going to the new world to find new types of art, so he recently held exhibitions in major colonies on Mars. He auctioned his paintings to collect donations for colonial ships heading to Alpha Centauri.”

Lu Zhou: “Are you trying to say that there are many celebrities who advocate for this project? Sorry, I am not interested in fundraising.”

“But I believe you will be interested in his works of art.” Professor Wu Qinglai said confidently while looking at Lu Zhou, “According to the data provided by the International Astronomical Observatory, he used impressionist painting techniques and modern technology to complete revolutionary works of art. This work will be exhibited at the Central Museum in Tiangong City. Maybe it will change your prejudices about the colonization program. Here’s a ticket if you want to go.”

“I have no prejudices about the colonization plan itself, and I even... Forget about it,” Lu Zhou said with a helpless expression after taking the ticket. He then added, “Thank you for the ticket. I will go if I have time.”

The moment he heard these words, Professor Wu Qinglai’s face immediately showed an expression of joy. As if he had heard some great news, he held Lu Zhou’s right hand excitedly.

“Please go there! Believe me, that exhibition will not disappoint you!”

Chapter 1624: Exhibition

“Is this the Tiangong City Central Museum?”

Lu Zhou looked at the navigation arrows through his AR glasses. He stood in front of a beautiful building while looking at the portrait and biography of the person on the large holographic screen that was suspended at the front entrance.

John Griffin was born on January 13, 2071, to a family of engineers in London, North Sea Alliance. In his early years, he was influenced by his family and worked as an airline engineer at a mining station in the asteroid belt. After he resigned, he devoted himself to painting. Because of his work on the edge of civilization, his early style of painting tended to be gloomy and dark.

At the beginning of the century, he sold his studio in London and moved to Mars, where he went on a five-year travel journey. The changes in environments greatly changed his painting style. He had become one of the leaders of contemporary impressionist painters.

“His masterpieces include ‘Dead Universe’, ‘Redemption’, ‘Dawn of the Sun’...”

While muttering in a low voice, Lu Zhou subconsciously opened the search engine and searched one by one on how much the paintings were worth.

Although this might be a bit unrefined, for a layman, this was probably the most intuitive way to understand the artistic value of a painting.

At this moment, a strange voice suddenly came from behind him.

“Isn’t it better to feel with your eyes than to search on the Internet?”

Lu Zhou looked back and saw a man in his fifties standing there. He was wearing a beige vest and a pair of black-framed glasses, and his curly hair was draped over his shoulders. He looked quite refined and easy-going.

“Allow me to introduce myself. I’m John Griffin.” The man nodded slightly towards Lu Zhou, reached out his right hand, and said, “It’s nice to meet you, the greatest scholar of our solar system.”

“I don’t dare to take that title.”

“You are as humble as the rumor says.” John Griffin smiled and continued in a gentle tone, “I didn’t see your name on the visitor list, so I didn’t expect you to come. Can you allow me to take you around?”

Lu Zhou wanted to say that he didn’t plan to come, but because the afternoon meeting was too boring and he had a ticket, he decided he might as well come.

But seeing how sincere Mr. Griffin was, Lu Zhou felt that if he were to tell him the truth, it would be a little impolite, so he nodded and accepted his kindness.

“Sure, thanks.”

Griffin smiled on his face and made an inviting gesture.

“Come with me.”

Following Griffin’s footsteps, Lu Zhou walked into the museum. The moment he stepped into the museum, the scenery in front of him suddenly changed.

He was in the wilderness.

The sky was fiery red, and the grass was ocean blue. The mushrooms were like towering trees, with umbrella leaves propping up a magnificent dome.

The light source that sprinkled down from the ceiling seemed to come from a distant world, touching the ground with a misty and dreamlike feeling. The light particles radiating blue light floated among the mushrooms.

Lu Zhou looked at the dream-like world in shock. Although he knew it was just light and shadow projected by a holographic device, he was still in awe.

“Unbelievable, where is this?”

“My dream... More than 20 years ago, when I was working at a mining company, this was the fantasy generated by the colorful starry sky.” Griffin smiled faintly and continued, “With over 20 years of experience, I have been trying to use artistic techniques to turn that dream about the universe into reality.”

Lu Zhou: “Where’s the painting?”

“You can see it with your glasses.”

Lu Zhou put on a pair of AR glasses. Almost as soon as he put on his glasses, the world lost its color in an instant.

Paintings were hung on booths for the visitors to enjoy.

“Very creative idea...” Taking off his glasses, Lu Zhou glanced around and said in admiration, “The world you see with glasses is reality, but when you take off your glasses, you see illusion... Although I can’t describe this feeling from an artistic point of view, your understanding of beauty is quite shocking.”

“It is my honor to receive your affirmation.” Griffin smiled slightly as he continued, “Speaking of which, I’ve always been curious about how you think of art as a scholar.”

Lu Zhou: “Art is art. Is there any other explanation?”

“Interesting point, I think so too.” Griffin turned his gaze to the world in front of him and continued, “Art is art. It is also a kind of culture, but it is related to culture in a broad sense. It is a philosophical understanding of man’s perception of beauty, self, and the universe, and all things that exist in nature. The perceptual thinking it requires is completely different from the rational thinking required by science.”

Lu Zhou glanced at him.

“I don’t know if it is completely different. Science does require more reasoning. However, perceptual thinking can often help us go further on the road of exploring the unknown.”

“Is that so? I’m glad to hear that you have such a high evaluation of perceptual thinking. In fact, in addition to depicting dreams over the years, I have also tried to combine art and science to create new art forms... Just like what you see now.” Professor Griffin said with a smile on his face while looking at the lush fantasy forest in front of him, “Maybe in a certain corner of this universe, there really exists a place that can make all lives feel beauty in an unprecedented form.”

Gaia world?

During Lu Zhou's period of sleep, he had seen such a world.

"This does sound interesting."

"Right?" Griffin smiled lightly and turned his gaze to Lu Zhou. "I admire you in my heart. All I can do is manifest imagination, but you can turn imagination into reality."

With that, he reached out his hand and shook Lu Zhou's hand gently. He then politely expressed his respect and gratitude.

"Thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to visit my exhibition. I wish you a great day."

Lu Zhou smiled and nodded. He then said softly, "I wish you a great day too."

At the same time, not far from the museum, Yan Gang, the president of the Tiangong Bank, gently pushed the AR glasses up the bridge of his nose.

After staring at the person in front of him for a long time, he said hesitantly, "Is that... Academician Lu?"

"I didn't expect Academician Lu to be interested in our Star System Colonization Plan." Gladstone, who was standing next to him, showed an unexpected expression on his face as he said with a thought-provoking smile, "This is really surprising."

Yan Gang's face showed a thoughtful expression.

To be honest, as an astute banker, although he was interested in high-quality investment projects, he did not like the blabbering guy next to him.

After all, only East Asia Heavy Industries had mastered warp speed technology, and the only application was on the Qinling of the First Fleet. Regardless of whether the resources of Alpha Centauri were worthy of their colonial ships, even if they were worth it, they might not be able to go at all.

But if Academician Lu himself supported the Star System Colonization Plan...

Maybe the commercialization of warp speed technology is possible?

Once the market for trans-light-year travel became possible, Alpha Centauri, the closest star to the solar system would undoubtedly be the most promising one to be included in the territory of human civilization.

So now...

We were indeed too cautious about the credit rating given to the Alpha Centauri Colonization Fund.

Gladstone continued in a persuasive tone, “100 billion credit points. If we use it to build a house, we will only receive a piece of useless steel and concrete. But if we invest in our dreams, we can get a whole new world. Trust me. It has been proven countless times in history that investing in the new world is a guaranteed profitable business.”

Yan Gang replied, “There is no such thing as a guaranteed profitable business in this world. Remember the world’s first public company that went bankrupt? They were in the business of exploring new worlds.”

After a pause, Yan Gang glanced at Gladstone with a disappointed expression on his face. He adjusted his collar and suddenly changed the conversation.

“But I’ll choose to believe you this time.”

Chapter 1625: Misrepresentation

Inside the virtual world, at the entrance to a copy of the Calan Empire.

The players who were sitting on the starship waiting for the start of the game completely ignored the NPC sitting next to them as they began to chat amongst themselves.

A player wearing a silver helmet suddenly raised his head and talked about real-life news.

“Have you guys heard? John Griffin’s painting exhibition!”

Sitting opposite the player with the silver helmet, a player who was wearing power armor touched the back of his head and spoke.

“The painter who claims to be a surrealist artist? The anarchist Martian?”

“What do you mean by ‘claims’? He is a recognized tycoon in the art world, ok? As for his political views, I don’t care, I only heard that he seems to be wandering around on Mars.”

“I don’t know, I don’t understand art, so what happened?”

“Just yesterday, he held a painting exhibition at the Central Museum to raise funds for the Alpha Centauri colonial project, and he displayed his work that took a year to complete at the exhibition! Apparently, the artwork displayed and the layout of the exhibition were revolutionary... But this is not the point!”

A man in a brown jacket and fashionable clothes sitting next to him couldn’t help but speak anxiously, “What’s the point? Get on with it!”

“The point is that Lu Zhou went too!”

Not just the man in the brown jacket, but everyone sitting next to him was shocked.

Even the NPC officer who was still wiping his electromagnetic rifle showed a surprised expression on his face, as if he was very familiar with the name Lu Zhou.

“You mean... Academician Lu?” Looking at the silver helmet player with a dumbfounded look, the man in the brown jacket couldn’t help but ask, “The greatest scholar of the 21st century?”

“Not just the 21st century!” He cast a slanted look at the guy, as if he were mentally retarded. The player wearing the silver helmet continued in a calm tone, “He solved the second-generation controllable fusion and faster than light technology. Even though the 22nd century has only just begun, there might not be a scholar this century who will be greater than him!”

Having said this, a mysterious smile suddenly appeared on his face. He glanced around at everyone sitting next to him, lowered his voice, and said, “And I heard that in the exhibition, Academician Lu gave a high evaluation of Mr. Griffin’s paintings and artistic ideas and also expressed his approval of the Star System Colonization Plan. You know, his judgment is rarely wrong; it can even be said that he has never been wrong so far.”

As soon as this sentence was spoken, everyone in the cabin was shocked, and the atmosphere suddenly became lively.

“F*ck! Really?!”

“He’s not lying, is he?!”

“F*ck! I would have grabbed two tickets if I knew!”

“You’re overthinking! Unless you go to Mars in advance or find a reliable agent, there will be a delay of nearly 20 minutes on Earth. By the time the website loads, the tickets will be all gone!”

Looking at the people who were talking, the player in the silver helmet gave a dry cough, raised his hand to signal them to be quiet, then continued to analyze the gossip.

“I don’t think it is a lie! After all, the president of the Tiangong Bank was on the scene. He later approved the application for 100 billion credit points in corporate bonds that were issued by the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation. They used the land of the new world as collateral. One can redeem the permanent land rights of the corresponding area, and they can convert shares or redeem interest directly! No one can guarantee that they will make a profit, but I can be sure that with the support of Academician Lu, they will be able to drive the ship there!”

Listening to this convincing speech, many people sitting in the cabin held their breaths.

Several players even simply went offline and stopped playing the game.

The starship tickets were not easy to grab, but there should still be a chance to grab the 100 billion credit points in corporate bonds that were guaranteed with the land of the new world.

Even if those financial giants and bankers were also interested in these corporate bonds, they would not eat the entire cake; there would always be some crumbs leftover.

It wasn’t that no one was concerned about the risks. However, when they thought about how Professor Lu was optimistic of the Star System Colonization Plan, their remaining worries disappeared with the wind...

Outside of the Calan Empire in the virtual world, a storm that swept the financial world had already been brewing for a long time.

A series of official websites of local banks on Earth, including the Pan-Asian Bank, Shanghai Capital Bank, etc, had shut down by the sudden increase in traffic.

Although the problem was solved in a timely manner and did not cause any information security incidents, it still shocked the managers who were responsible for the agency sales of these corporate debts.

Prior to this, although they had expected that the 100 billion corporate bonds would be snatched up in the same way as the tickets that were issued in advance, they did not expect that people's enthusiasm would grow exponentially.

The Pan-Asian Cooperation was really too rich; the 100 billion corporate debt was not even enough for them to share.

Not just Pan-Asian companies, but also hundreds of millions of families. After the development of space resources for nearly a century, the wealth of the entire society had been rapidly expanding. Whether it was enterprises or individuals, whether it was related or unrelated to industries, they had accumulated more or less huge wealth.

Therefore, those who had tasted the sweetness of this pie were afraid that they would miss this opportunity to make a fortune in front of them.

In less than two hours, 100 billion corporate bonds were robbed.

Just a few days ago, the construction of this "Noah's Ark" was still the work of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation, but now, this dream had been taken over by the citizens and enterprises of the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

Everyone hoped that this big ship would be built as soon as possible, and everyone hoped that the colonists who opened up the new world would set off as soon as possible to bring them endless gold and silver treasures from the land of the stars...

By the time Lu Zhou learned of the whole story from the email sent by Xiao Ai, it was already nighttime...

...

Star Sky Hotel.

After watching the Martian news on the holographic screen, Lu Zhou stretched out his hand and pinched the bridge of his nose with a headache.

"I never said that I am optimistic about the colonization plan of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation. At most, I just said that I agreed with Mr. Griffin's artistic ideals."

Looking at Lu Zhou with a headache, Professor Wu Qinglai, who was standing tremblingly at his desk, had an embarrassed expression on his face.

"Sorry... I seem to have caused you trouble."

When he thought of how this guy seemed to have bought several ferry tickets, Lu Zhou raised his head and glanced at him.

"I'm sure you have made a lot of money."

The expression on his face was one of slight embarrassment.

"Uh, I can give you half," Wu Qinglai said with a dry cough.

"F*ck off."

Seeing that Academician Lu showed signs of anger, Wu Qinglai, who knew he was in the wrong, quickly closed his mouth and turned around to prepare to leave.

However, before he could take two steps, he was called back by Lu Zhou.

"Wait a second."

Wu Qinglai quickly stopped. He asked with an embarrassed smile on his face, "Uh, what's the matter?"

"Who sold you the art exhibition ticket?"

Wu Qinglai was slightly taken aback. He then shook his head.

“Actually... I didn’t buy it with money. It was given to me when I bought the starship tickets.”

Lu Zhou raised his eyebrows.

“Given?”

“Yes...” Seeing that Lu Zhou had a suspicious look on his face, Professor Wu suddenly whispered, “Is there any problem?”

“Nothing, you can go.”

Wu Qinglai turned around and left the room, closing the door behind him.

Inside the empty room, Lu Zhou touched his chin and thought for a moment. He soon fell into contemplation.

If he remembered correctly, the painting exhibition was aimed at the upper-class citizens of Mars. He didn’t see any plainly dressed citizens at the museum.

He really couldn’t imagine why the tickets for this kind of exhibition would be bundled with the starship tickets...

Chapter 1626: Back to the Start

“There is no need to show this to me at all.”

Li Guangya’s finger swept across the holographic screen. He was sitting at a desk as he put a twenty-page proposal into the recycle bin.

This twenty-page proposal, or petition, was sent from Mars.

Its core content could be summarized in two sentences.

That was, in order to create a supply line for transporting water resources between Europa and the asteroid belt and Mars, the Tiangong City authorities hoped to have their own armed defense forces.

In short, they hoped to build a Martian defense fleet in the solar system, like a Pan-Asian Second Fleet, to fight against the starship active between the asteroid belt and Mars.

To be honest, after seeing such a proposal, Li Guangya was not only surprised but also amused.

As the chairman of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, as long as his brain was working, he would certainly not allow such a ridiculous proposal to be passed. The autonomy of the Martian colony was a problem left over from history. If the right of defense was approved, the Martians would simply become an alien species.

Also, it was still unknown whether the space pirates in the asteroid belt were created and funded by the Martians themselves.

Anyway, as far as he knew, New London of the North Sea Alliance and New Paris of the Iberian-French Alliance had become the largest black market trading centers in the entire solar system. All looted goods were basically sold there; there was even a futures market for stolen goods.

And this was an open secret.

“I think we’d better treat this matter with caution,” said Secretary Wei, who was standing at the desk and looking at the indifferent chairman with a serious expression. “Of course we cannot make concessions for these types of demands, but if you do not cautiously refuse, your reply to the colony’s appeal is likely to become a weapon for people with ulterior motives.”

“If even you know this, of course I know this too.”

After waving his hand, Li Guangya put the knuckle of his index finger under his nose. After thinking for a while, he spoke.

“Relax, I admit that I may have been a little arrogant recently, but I have never made any rash decisions... I will respond cautiously to this matter. In addition, we have to be cautious about those idiots who thought about this plan. Do you have any good suggestions on this?”

“We can start from two aspects.” Wei Song thought for a moment and continued, “On the one hand, launch military exercises with anti-piracy as the main subject, and on the other hand, send additional defense garrisons to

Tiangong City. This way, the colony's concerns about the space pirates can be eliminated, and it can also strengthen our control of the colony... to prepare for future plans."

The so-called future plan was naturally to withdraw autonomy and implement direct jurisdiction.

They previously granted autonomy to the Martian colonies, including Tiangong City, mainly because the communication distance was too long to make real-time decisions about the colony's situation, so a highly autonomous jurisdiction model was implemented.

However, in recent years, with the increasing number of flights to and from Mars and the increasing frequency of economic and trade exchanges between Mars and Earth, this highly autonomous model had become a liability.

Especially now that the warp speed technology had broken through, the Qinling had taken the lead in completing the first faster than light transition in human history. In the near future, the problem of faster than light communication would also be solved, which would assist the Pan-Asian Cooperation in regaining the direct jurisdiction of Tiangong City.

After hearing Wei Song's words, a thoughtful expression appeared on Li Guangya's face.

After pondering for a long time, he spoke.

"Call the military committee. At this time tomorrow, I hope to see everyone in the conference room. Go and find Commander Sun, ask the staff to research in advance which combat formation should be involved in the exercise and which units to send. We should maximize our strategic deterrence on Mars while satisfying their sense of security."

Wei Song said seriously, "Understood."

Li Guangya said, "This matter is actually not that urgent. The focus of our current work is still on the space elevator and the stargates that are about to start construction. Our relationship with the colony is important, so try to avoid trouble with them."

After nodding, Wei Song was about to turn around and leave.

However, at this moment, he suddenly thought of something.

He stopped and said, "Speaking of which, I have to report something to you."

After lifting his head, Li Guangya cast a questioning glance at him.

"Yeah, what?"

"Recently, several well-known foundations of star systems registered on Mars suddenly began to raise funds on a large scale with the plan to build colonial ships." Wei Song continued after a pause, "Especially the well-known Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation. Through pre-sale of tickets and bonds, nearly 150 billion credit points of funds have been raised."

"Colonial ships?" Li Guangya frowned slightly. He then shook his head and said, "Financial matters are not in my control. I will speak to the financial supervision department in a moment."

Wei Song laughed bitterly and continued, "The key is not the money... but Academician Lu."

Li Guangya was slightly stunned.

"Academician Lu?"

"Yeah." Wei Song continued with a weird expression on his face, "He seems to have left his apprentice behind and ran to Mars alone to participate in an art exhibition hosted by the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation..."

He was silent for a short while before lowering his tone.

"He may be serious..."

The office went silent.

After a long time, Li Guangya broke the silence.

"A great man like him can influence the course of history. No matter what choice he makes, it is beyond our control."

He sighed lightly. He was obviously a little tired, as if he was facing a more difficult problem than the Martian colony demanding their own defense system.

After thinking for a long time, he gave up and waved his hand.

“You don’t need to report stuff like this to me in the future, let him do whatever he wants.”

...

“Achoo!”

Ling looked at Lu Zhou, who sneezed without warning. He stopped the rover and cast a questioning look at him.

“Have you caught a cold, Commander?”

“No, I guess someone is talking about me behind my back...” After blowing his nose hard, Lu Zhou reached out and tapped on the holographic interface. He wiped the water mist on the inside of the helmet and asked, “Are we there yet?”

Ling nodded and cast his gaze out of the car window.

“Already here.”

They were at an abandoned mine at a rift valley one kilometer east of The Gates of Hell, the place where everything began.

The sign of Hiddell Mining was still hanging at the entrance of the mine, but compared to the last time he saw it, the traces of the mottle and erosion were more obvious.

Lu Zhou had promised General Reinhardt that he would come back after he dealt with the affairs on Earth. Although there might still be some time left before the day of departure, he was ready to begin preparations.

Besides, he also had many things to ask him about the mystery of the stargates.

Lu Zhou jumped out of the rover. As he stood still in front of the old mine, he couldn’t help but show a look of nostalgia on his face.

Time sure flies by.

It’s been a year and a half.

Over this period of time, I saw the world change under the influence of my own knowledge and met many interesting people, and I even met my descendants and the girl I sent to the future...

Lu Zhou gulped slightly. He seemed to have something to say.

“Ling.”

Ling cast a questioning gaze to Lu Zhou as he responded.

“Yes, Commander.”

Lu Zhou, who had something to say, suddenly closed his mouth for some reason.

After being silent for a while, he looked up at the deep darkness in the cave ahead with a smile on his face.

“Nothing... Lead the way.”

Ling’s red pupils flickered slightly, like two fireflies.

He then nodded lightly, stepped forward, and stood in front of Lu Zhou.

“Yes, Commander.”

Chapter 1627: Immature Suggestion

“I said long ago that negotiations couldn’t solve any problems. We must preemptively declare our position before the First Fleet is equipped with new equipment! Force them to recognize our current situation!”

The so-called current situation was the reality that Martians could develop better under their own rules. From now on, they would no longer need to economically fund their “overlord country”, and they no longer need to sell cheap industrial labor to cover the consumer needs of tens of billions of people. They would formulate tariffs and immigration policies to protect the rights of Martians instead of bowing down to the Pan-Asian lords like before...

The name of the person who said this was Gao Ruiming, Xiao Hong's office secretary. He was at least half of the reason why Xiao Hong was able to become the mayor of Tiangong City so smoothly.

"We still have to dream, Mr. Future Secretary-general. It would be best if we can avoid war. If we can't, we must at least have a moral advantage."

After reading the reply that came from the holographic screen, especially when Xiao Hong read the section where the garrison was dispatched, a faint worry floated in his eyes.

What he worried about was not his personal future or the destiny of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, but at this crucial moment in history, there was a better solution.

First, it was through the establishment of the Mars defense fleet and the expansion of the army in a fair manner. After that, they could wait until the Second Fleet was comparable to the First Fleet before helping other Mars cities to achieve independence. Finally, they could slowly seek their own independence.

But it seemed that Li Guangya did not intend to give them this opportunity.

The military exercise and dispatching of the garrison were almost equivalent to rejecting his ideas.

"Obviously, we threw the olive branch in exchange for the shackles on our hands and feet." Xiao Hong's index finger swept across the holographic screen. He regretfully closed the reply from the Pan-Asian authorities as he said, "If only one year ago, the accident was successful."

The so-called accident naturally referred to the hijacking of flight N-177.

According to their original plan, the hijacked flight N-177 would directly hit the Tianzhou Space Station, and the resulting space junk would directly reduce the safety factor of the entire geosynchronous orbit by two levels. At that time, the Moon Palace Space Station and Lagrange Space Base resource supply would be severely affected.

By then, they would only need to take over the supply line of the Lagrange Space Base while requesting the Pan-Asian authorities to strengthen patrols in the asteroid belt. The Pan-Asian authorities would have little choice.

They could use the accident to strengthen the autonomy of the Martian colony bit by bit, expand the scale of the Martian defense fleet, and finally achieve true independence.

Xiao Hong even had a name for their own military, but who would have thought that an old antique who had been sleeping for a hundred years would actually go on the flight using a fake passport.

If that was it, it would be fine. The big problem was that this guy was able to kill the hijackers.

As a result, their plans were not only disrupted but they were also forced to lay low for a whole year. If it weren't for the intelligence crisis that severely hit the global economy and caused the Pan-Asian Cooperation to further escalate the industrial reliance on Mars, they might have had to hold on for a few more years...

However, they couldn't hold on any longer.

The warp speed technology had been broken through. Once faster than light communication and faster than light travel were realized, the distance advantage of Mars would no longer exist, and the Pan-Asian Cooperation would definitely regain the autonomy of Mars.

Or at least, they would turn them into a new special economic zone just like Guanghan City.

"There's no point thinking about what has happened. They have a knife to our neck." Gao Ruiming stared at the mayor sitting behind the desk and said in a serious tone, "If we do not act now, we will be the passive ones."

Xiao Hong pondered for a while. He looked at his office secretary and asked, "How's the preparation going?"

Gao Ruiming finally showed a smile on his face and said in a confident voice, "Thanks to the demand for space elevators, we are able to expand our production capacity. Coupled with the actions of the colonization funds, we can build ships in geosynchronous orbit and strengthen our fleet. According to the feedback from the 'commander', the number of starships we have has reached fifty. Although it is far from the power of the First Fleet, with the advantages of our supplies and channels, as well as the support of other

space pirates, as long as we turn this war into a protracted war, it will be us who will be victorious in the end.”

Xiao Hong sighed quietly, shook his head, and said, “Numbers have no meaning. The key is quality. A starship with a warp drive facing a starship equipped with a traditional engine is like a jet plane facing a propeller plane. Do you know what I mean? We need warp drive technology; that is our only chance of winning. So what I need to confirm now is whether the factory of East Asia Heavy Industries on Mars has already begun to produce orders from the First Fleet. If so, how long will it take to complete a second version of the warp drive engine?”

The travel speed of the full version was apparently several times faster than the demo version, and it could even exceed the speed of light completely, crossing a distance of 1~2AU within a few seconds.

If the starships of the First Fleet were all equipped with such engines, they could forget about getting rid of the Pan-Asian Cooperation’s control. At that time, even the world outside the solar system would be brought under their control.

Seeing the fear in Mayor Xiao’s eyes, Gao Ruiming nodded slightly.

“I understand what you mean.”

“Good.” Mayor Xiao nodded. “You should know what to do.”

...

Located in a private house on the edge of Tiangong City.

A man in a brown trench coat spoke while handing a black card to Wang Peng.

“I have sorted out all the information you need. The situation is the same as I told you last time. So far, we have got enough evidence to prove that The Spirit of The Universe Foundation has moved their base on Earth to here. I have been following clues in this area... But I have recently discovered some interesting things.”

Wang Peng took the card containing important information and cast a questioning glance at him.

“What things?”

“Remember the plane crash a year ago?”

Wang Peng said in an uncertain tone, “You mean... Flight N-177?”

“Yes.”

“Of course I remember, what about it?”

It happened right after he woke up in this era.

Wang Peng still remembered that when Director Li came to visit him, they saw the news about the hijacking of flight N-177 on the holographic TV screen.

It was at that time that he heard the news that Lu Zhou was still alive.

The man in the brown trench coat nodded. He then glanced at the whiteboard that was full of photos and was hanging on the wall with a worried expression on his face.

“It may just be that I’m overthinking. But when I was investigating the Mars entry and exit records, I found several names that shouldn’t have appeared on it, and a batch of goods that passed through customs without inspection. And when I tracked these clues, they were linked to N-177.”

“You mean... the hijacking of flight N-177 was actually an act of the foundation?”

“If only it was that simple.” The man in the brown trench coat shook his head and said with a complicated expression, “I found a name in a signed document that shouldn’t be there.”

Wang Peng: “Who?”

“The current mayor.” The man continued looking at him as he said, “I checked his resume. At this time last year, he was the head of the Colonial Customs Bureau.”

A solemn expression appeared in Wang Peng’s eyes.

“Noted, I will keep this in mind.”

“Well, thank you.” The man made a helpless expression. He shrugged his shoulders and continued, “After all, I am not qualified to investigate such an important person. In addition, I have an immature suggestion.”

Wang Peng looked at him seriously and said, “Go ahead.”

“It’s best to find Academician Lu as soon as possible.” The man continued thinking before saying in a speculative tone, “If flight N-177 is really related to Mayor Xiao... His situation would be rather peculiar.”

Chapter 1628: Meeting Reinhardt Again

The mine of Hiddell Mining Company.

Lu Zhou followed Ling along the abandoned rails, down the path that was in his memory, and towards the depths of the mine.

Because of its abandonment, this mine looked quite dilapidated, as if it could collapse at any time.

Lu Zhou’s gaze wandered inside the mine. When they were halfway through their expedition, he suddenly stopped and knelt down. He reached out his index finger and wiped it on the ground.

He looked at the dust on his carbon-fiber gloves.

Lu Zhou whispered to himself as he rubbed his fingers together, “Someone was here.”

This cave was a dead end, and the wind and sand from outside couldn’t blow into here, but the footprints on the ground were all erased.

Obviously, after he left, someone came here and investigated the situation.

Lu Zhou remembered that Li Guangya mentioned that when the Pan-Asian Cooperation helped him notarize his identity, Li Guangya handed this matter to the Security Bureau.

Thus, these traces should belong to Captain Xing and their colleagues.

“I hope they didn’t find that spaceship...”

Ling was walking in front when he cast an inquiring look back at Lu Zhou. Lu Zhou wiped the dust off his gloves and got up from the ground.

“Let’s continue ahead... By the way, did you bring the thing?”

“Yes.”

“Very well.” Lu Zhou flashed his torch forward. “It’s up to you soon.”

The so-called thing was actually just a few pieces of mining explosives.

After the mine was dug through, in order to prevent the secrets about General Reinhardt and the spaceship from leaking, Lu Zhou blasted the entrance to The Gates of Hell.

If he wanted to go back again, the most direct way was of course to blow it up again.

“The explosives have been set up, please leave the explosion range.”

“Okay.”

Since Ling had finished placing the explosives, Lu Zhou nodded and started to move backward.

After he retreated to a safe distance, Ling turned his head and started the blasting procedure.

A loud noise came from under the ground as the ruins piled in front of the two of them exploded into pieces.

Lu Zhou reached out his hand to wipe the dust off his helmet before patting away the dust that filled the surrounding area. He then stepped over the rubble on the ground, stepping into this relic left by Martian aliens from billions of years ago.

As soon as he stepped into the ruins, a faint sigh came from the communication channel.

“You are finally back.”

Lu Zhou looked at the garbled text that appeared on the communication channel, and he smiled a little embarrassedly.

“Sorry to keep you waiting.”

“It’s okay, it’s just a year. Compared to the time I have experienced, it’s only a drop in the bucket. In fact, I thought that it would be ten or even twenty years. You came back in a blink of an eye. I was quite surprised, to be honest.”

Standing next to Lu Zhou, Ling was looking around nervously. The scarlet light in his pupils became stronger and stronger, and his whole body was on high alert.

It seemed that Reinhardt had noticed the robot standing next to Lu Zhou. His voice in the communication channel had a hint of interest as he asked, “A private robot? It is... Where did you get this thing?”

Lu Zhou almost didn’t react when he first heard the word private.

It wasn’t until his eyes fell on Ling that he suddenly remembered that when he came here to rescue him last time, Ling’s body was still an old-fashioned mining robot.

But now, the body he controlled was a “sample” awarded to him by the system. The full name was a “Private-1” intelligent human guard. It was produced by the Calan Empire and installed in the aerospace paratroopers. It was often used to eliminate dangerous creatures in the colony and various purposes of orbital airborne operations.

Although in terms of tactical positioning, this Private-1 was a mass-produced attack robot controlled by a central processing unit, but due to the difference in technology, it was invincible when placed on Earth.

“Those people gave it to me...”

“The Observer?”

Lu Zhou nodded.

“Yeah.”

As if hearing something interesting, the voice in the communication channel was obviously more excited than before.

"I see, I wondered how this thing got into your hands. Let me see, um, the Kill Core core has been replaced, no wonder it looks dull... Did you install a general-purpose AI for it? Was the original AI not easy to use?"

A light blue light beam shot from the depths of the cave, shining back and forth on Ling's body.

This was the first time Lu Zhou saw an expression of anxiety on Ling's face.

"Enough."

The light blue beam of light immediately died down.

A slightly apologetic cough came from the communication channel.

General Reinhardt said embarrassedly, "Sorry, I was just a little excited to see the things from my hometown... You should know the feeling. My world was clearly destroyed, but the things that belonged to that world appeared in front of me again. By the way, that was the scanning beam on the spacecraft, which may have a certain impact on the stability of electromagnetic waves... But trust me, it is harmless."

"I understand and believe you. As for your previous question, it was not because it was difficult to use. It was because it was too powerful that I couldn't use the extra combat power at all." Lu Zhou shrugged. "After all, I live in a peaceful civilization... At least relatively peaceful."

"We were once peaceful too, at least for a while."

General Reinhardt went silent for a while, as if thinking of something. He then suddenly said to himself, "It seems that my previous speculation is correct."

Lu Zhou: "What speculation?"

"Those omnipotent observers can not only bring things from the old universe into the Void, but they can also create things that don't exist out of thin air based on a memory... For example, this Private-1, I don't remember taking this thing to the center of the universe."

Create something that doesn't exist out of thin air?

To be honest, Lu Zhou didn't feel too surprised by this.

After all, from what General Reinhardt said, The Observer in the Void was a civilization far stronger than the Calan Empire. Whether it was the quark stars flying in the universe or the mysterious technology of escaping from the real universe into the Void to avoid natural disasters, they had surpassed the Calan civilization.

“Enough about this.” There was a trace of sadness in his tone, as if he was recalling the things in his hometown. General Reinhardt continued, “It seems that you didn’t come here to take me away. Then, tell me what you came for. I don’t think it’s because you miss me.”

“Your guess is accurate. I have thought of you no more than ten times in this year and a half.” After a pause, Lu Zhou continued in a serious tone, “I’ve sorted out the warp speed technology.”

The voice in the communication channel had a hint of surprise.

“Oh, really?”

Lu Zhou: “By using the disturbance of the gravitational field when high-dimensional particles fall into low-dimensional space, it affects the curvature of spacetime and opens a hyperspace channel. In short, we have successfully achieved the first faster than lightspeed navigation...”

“This is really surprising...” General Reinhardt continued in disbelief, “I thought that after seeing you leave, I would have to wait for Mars to orbit around the Sun for at least 100 cycles before you master the mystery of surpassing the speed of light. Yet you only took about 50 weeks.”

The time for Mars to make one revolution was 687 days, so it took about two centuries to make 100 revolutions. In other words, in the eyes of this Calan man, faster than light technology was undoubtedly an advanced technology for Earth civilization.

In fact, that was the case.

If it were not for the coincidences that discovered the existence of the Z particle, even knowing that faster than light travel was achievable, it would not be an easy task to make it a reality.

“Obviously, you have underestimated us.”

General Reinhardt laughed.

“Underestimate you guys? How? I think, at most, I underestimate you.”

“Anyway, back to the main point.” Lu Zhou continued while looking at the string of garbled ID belonging to General Reinhardt on the communication interface, “I remember that there is something similar to a portal in the Calan Empire.”

“You mean stargates?”

“Sure... I want to know how you maintain a stable hyperspace channel, allowing matter and information to move quickly and efficiently in the channel without congestion? How exactly is this done?”

There was a long silence in the communication channel.

About a minute later, General Reinhardt spoke again.

“I’m not a scientist. Even if you ask me, I don’t understand the specific principles of it. Including the high-dimensional particles you mentioned, I’m not sure whether the warp drive produces high-dimensional particles. I only know that when I pressed the switch, the hyperspace channel appeared in front of me, and the gravitational line pulled us through like a rope.”

Hearing this worthless answer, Lu Zhou couldn’t help but show a disappointed expression on his face.

However, he also understood Reinhardt’s explanation.

After all, the more advanced science was, the more diverse the subdivided fields would become. Even if an expert who studied hyperspace channels encountered a problem in an esoteric research direction, they might not be able to give a satisfactory answer.

It seemed like his trip was worthless.

However, just as he was about to say thank you and leave with Ling, General Reinhardt’s next words brought his mood back to life.

“Although I really can’t give you a suitable suggestion, the wreckage of the warp drive is actually in the mine leading to the center of the planet.

“If you are really interested...”

“Why don’t you tinker with it yourself?”

Chapter 1629: “Missing” Again?

In the Tiangong City industrial zone, the endless stream of industrial-manufactured products shuttled back and forth on a dedicated conveyor belt.

This was the heart of the Pan-Asian Cooperation’s Mars colony and the stomach of the entire Pan-Asian Cooperation. From the chopsticks on the dining table of Pan-Asian citizens to the gun barrels of the First Fleet, all of the consumables that people could think of were produced here.

Because the three-dimensional conveyor belts and pipelines almost filled up the entire space, the factories and production workshops were closely arranged like cells, making this place the most intricate terrain in the entire Tiangong City.

Because of this layout that maximized efficiency, many tourists ridiculed it as a super factory portrayed in a dystopian world.

It was as if every piece of dust sent here would be processed into what people wanted.

In this densely arranged factory matrix, the most eye-catching area was undoubtedly the production park of East Asia Heavy Industries.

The entire park was located in the center of the industrial zone. Almost 80% of the traffic connections and arterial roads in the entire industrial zone were directly or indirectly related to it.

As a result, there had been rumors circulating in the industry that although East Asia Heavy Industries did not produce most goods, if East Asia Heavy Industries did not exist, people in Tiangong City wouldn’t have any goods.

As the general manager of the entire East Asia Heavy Industries park, Zhao Ruicheng was undoubtedly a man standing at the top of the entire Mars industrial chain. The people he came into contact with every day were either celebrities or the dignitaries of this generation.

It was basically impossible for ordinary people to see him without a referral, and he did not bother to meet small businessmen in person.

For example, Mr. Gladstone, the manager of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation, undoubtedly fitted the classification of “small businessman”.

Almost five years had passed since he was sent from the headquarters to the Mars colony. Over these five years, he had never heard of a North Sea Alliance merchant named Gladstone.

Even though the colonial foundation was indeed gaining momentum recently, it didn't change Zhao Ruicheng's opinion.

After all, as the leader in managing the core production base of East Asia Heavy Industries, no one knew better than him of how far away the warp drive was from civilian use...

“Warp drive?”

Looking at the man with a large nose, who was dressed in a suit and leather shoes, in front of him, Zhao Ruicheng frowned and said in a rather impatient tone, “Sorry, the specific design blueprint of the warp drive is still with Academician Lu. We have only obtained a preliminary design plan and some requirements for the transformation of the production line. Before fully digesting this technology, we have no plans to bring it to market, nor has Academician Lu instructed us to do so.”

After hearing the news, Gladstone was slightly stunned. With an unexpected expression on his face, he said in a tone of disbelief, “What you have... Are you sure it's just the design plan?”

“Yes... Why are you asking about this?” Zhao Ruicheng's eyes suddenly became alert. He looked at the guy from top to bottom, and his eyes narrowed slightly. “Here's the situation, we can't make a warp drive. You either go to Academician Lu or go home.”

Gladstone showed an embarrassed smile on his face as he made an apologetic gesture with his hands.

“Sorry, I didn't mean to offend you, I just heard rumors in this regard.”

“Rumors?” Zhao Ruicheng smiled coldly. He raised his chin slightly and said, “I’ve heard more rumors. For example, a certain company sold 100,000 fake tickets based on ‘rumors’, trying to use the name of Academician Lu to deceive the public.”

“You can look down on my dreams, but you can’t insult my morals, Manager Zhao. I will use my actions to prove that the tickets to Alpha Centauri are not fake.”

Zhao Ruicheng glanced at him blankly and gently smirked.

“Then I wish you good luck.”

After leaving Zhao Ruicheng’s office, Gladstone, accompanied by his secretary and security, left the industrial park of East Asia Heavy Industries.

When he looked back at the closed door, his eyebrows gradually furrowed.

“The blueprint hasn’t been sent to the factory? How can this be...”

After muttering a few words to himself, Gladstone reached out his index finger and tapped lightly on his left wrist. A video interface that could only be seen with his AR glasses appeared. He opened the address book and dialed a number.

Soon, the phone call connected.

The man who appeared in the video window was none other than Xiao Hong, the mayor of Tiangong City.

Looking at the camera, Mayor Xiao said in a pleasant tone, “How is it? Did you meet Zhao Ruicheng?”

“There was a problem with the intel; the blueprint was not sent here at all.”

After hearing these words, Mayor Xiao paused for a second. He frowned and asked, “Did Zhao Ruicheng say is it not here, or is it actually not here?”

“He didn’t look like he was lying, but to be on the safe side, I will send someone to confirm.”

“This would be best. I will also arrange for someone to visit Academician Lu.” Mayor Xiao nodded. After pondering for a while, he said, “If he has the designs, if necessary, we can consider another solution.”

“So you’re saying...”

Mayor Xiao did not speak but answered the question with his eyes.

A smile appeared on Gladstone’s face as he said softly, “I understand.”

...

After coming out of the Security Bureau stronghold, Wang Peng tried to contact Lu Zhou. However, no matter how many times he called, the only voice that echoed in his ear was “caller not in service area”.

Feeling that something might be wrong, Wang Peng immediately rushed to the Star Sky Hotel where Lu Zhou was staying.

Just as he was walking to the elevator door, he suddenly saw a familiar face, so he quickly grabbed the man and asked, “Hello, do you know where Academician Lu is?”

Looking at the stranger, Wu Qinglai’s face was filled with a dazed expression.

“You... are looking for Academician Lu?”

“Yes.” Wang Peng nodded, seemingly worried that this guy would not take him seriously, so he immediately opened the holographic screen and took out his electronic security ID, placed it in front of Professor Wu Qinglai, and then said seriously, “It’s very important. I hope you can cooperate with my work.”

Although he didn’t know what the ID of a security agent would look like, the security code on the certificate of a public official couldn’t be falsified.

When Wu Qinglai realized that an agent of the Security Bureau was asking him questions, he suddenly gulped nervously and continued, “I ate lunch with him. I remember he went back to the room after eating. Oh, yes, he sent me a message before, saying that if someone in the afternoon meeting asks me where he went, I should just tell them that he is not feeling well.”

Wang Peng: “Are you sure he didn’t come out of the room?”

“How can I be sure of this?” Professor Wu Qinglai said with an anxious look on his face. He gave a bitter smile as he continued, “Would you like to ask the front desk? You are from the... You should be able to get the security tapes, right?”

The elevator arrived at this moment.

Wang Peng no longer cared about this guy. He left Wu Qinglai behind him and quickly walked into the elevator before pressing a floor number.

When the elevator door was about to close, Wu Qinglai wanted to get inside, but seeing this guy who seemed to be “annoyed and angry”, he hesitated and didn’t end up going into the elevator.

Instead, he quietly turned on the holographic screen of his personal terminal and sent a short message to Lu Zhou.

Regardless of whether he is a real Security Bureau agent or not, this situation doesn’t seem right.

The elevator went all the way up and quickly reached the destination.

Wang Peng walked to the door of Lu Zhou’s room and reached out to press the doorbell.

The doorbell rang for a long time, but there was no response behind the door.

Frowning slightly, Wang Peng took out a card from his pocket and swiped it gently on the door.

“Urgent situation, sorry, brother.”

If he saw something that he shouldn’t, he would sincerely apologize to Lu Zhou. Compared to those insignificant things, he cared more about Lu Zhou’s safety.

After a beep, the door opened quickly, but the room was empty.

Obviously, Academician Lu was not here.

Did he go outside?

Wang Peng was about to close the door and look elsewhere, but a strange feeling suddenly rose from his heart.

Wait, no...

He locked his gaze on the upside-down suitcase.

He then placed his hand near his weapon and looked around vigilantly.

“This place was searched...”

Someone came here before me!

They searched Academician Lu’s room!

Realizing this, Wang Peng’s face was filled with confusion as he clenched his right fist.

“These bastards can go to hell...”

There is evidence that someone has kidnapped Lu Zhou!

But who could it be?

People from the foundation?

Wang Peng suddenly remembered what the intelligence worker lurking in Tiangong City said to him.

“Flight N-177 may be related to Martian authorities...”

Wang Peng thought about this sentence repeatedly, and he gradually began to connect the dots.

He was flabbergasted!

“Mayor Xiao is a member of the foundation! How could this be... No, it seems that there is only one explanation.”

If this was the case, then all the clues he had could be connected.

The plane crash a year ago was not a terrorist attack but a carefully planned murder!

Mayor Xiao is probably like Song Yangwei, who was bought out by someone from The Spirit of The Universe Foundation, or he is a foundation member himself. Because of some unspeakable secret, they're trying to kill Lu Zhou at all costs, even though a century has passed...

Wang Peng didn't know what all of this was for. He didn't know what kind of obsession made the foundation members so committed even after a century. Nor did he know why they targeted Lu Zhou.

At this moment, there was only one thing he was looking for.

"If they want to hurt him..."

A cruel smile gradually appeared on the corner of his mouth as his dark pupils flashed with rage.

"Then they'll have to do it over my dead body!"

This was neither his job nor an obligation as a Security Agency agent.

This was his life mission from 100 years ago...

Chapter 1630: Lucky Misunderstanding

Boom!

A muffled thunder-like sound exploded in Xing Bian's office.

When his right fist hammered heavily on the desk, even the holographic screen suspended in front of him shook for a while before it recovered stability. Xing Bian suddenly stood up from the chair, stared at the man standing in front of the desk, and yelled, "Academician Lu was kidnapped?!"

"It's not yet certain, but his room was searched." Seeing the angry expression on the boss' face, the liaison gulped and said with a trembling tone, "Our intelligence personnel in Tiangong City are collecting information about his whereabouts, but so far, no reliable clues have been obtained."

After hearing these words, the expression on Xing Bian's face was a bit ugly.

Lu Zhou's achievements in the academic world, his status that was comparable to Jesus, and the role he played in the space elevator project alone were enough to reflect his importance to the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

Without even half a second of hesitation, he ordered, "Immediately notify all intelligence personnel in Tiangong City to investigate the whereabouts of Academician Lu as soon as possible!"

"Yes, sir!"

The liaison officer stood at attention and saluted. He was about to turn around and leave when he was called back by Xing Bian.

"Wait a second."

Looking back at the boss, the liaison officer quickly asked, "Anything else, sir?"

Xing Bian: "Wang Peng? I remember that guy is also on Mars."

The liaison officer had a slightly embarrassed expression on his face. He lowered his head and whispered quickly, "He... seemed to say that he was going to find Academician Lu, then he was gone."

"This guy..."

Xing Bian's heart dropped to his stomach.

The situation on Mars was far more complicated than The Spirit of The Universe Foundation.

There had also been an unexpected turn of events regarding the N-177 flight hijacking incident that the bureau had been investigating.

If they were to alert the criminals now, it would lead to very serious consequences.

We can't do anything impulsive...

After gritting his teeth, Xing Bian couldn't let go of his worries. After sending the liaison officer away, he reached out and tapped twice on the holographic screen in front of him.

Soon, a video call window appeared in front of him.

The person standing in the video window was wearing a black exoskeleton armor. Judging from the dummy targets behind him, he should be at the training ground.

The man cast his gaze to the Xing Bian on the screen and asked, "What's the matter?"

Without any small talk, Xing Bian went straight to the point.

"I have a tricky situation here, and I need your help."

The man replied, "The dispatch of the Aerospace Marine Corps requires the joint authorization of the Congress and the Military Committee."

Xing Bian continued impatiently, "That is outside the country, not within the country. According to Article 27 of the Special Intelligence Act, the Security Bureau has the right to request support from the aerospace forces without going through the normal authorization procedures when the security of a regional alliance or member country is seriously threatened."

When the helmet mask was lifted, Li Gaoliang's face appeared under the shadow of the helmet.

Staring intently at Xing Bian in the holographic window, he said in a serious tone, "What is it you need? If I remember correctly, we helped you just a month ago."

"Academician Lu has disappeared, and according to the information we collected, it is very likely that he was kidnapped." Xing Bian continued in the face of the scrutinizing gaze, "He is the only person who has mastered warp speed technology, and he is the chief consultant of the space elevator, so isn't this a big problem? Or do you want me to submit an application through the normal procedure?"

"Academician Lu has been kidnapped?"

Li Gaoliang's face instantly sank.

Without hesitation, he looked back at the soldiers training behind him and yelled loudly, "Training is over!"

The moment he gave the order, the soldiers who were training stopped their movements and quickly gathered together in a line.

Li Gaoliang glanced at Xing Bian in the holographic window and said in a serious tone, "I hope your information is accurate."

"I can guarantee it with my life."

Li Gaoliang nodded his head, turned off the holographic screen, turned his gaze to his brothers, and ordered with a sonorous voice, "Everyone board the ship with me."

"Ready to depart!"

...

Tiangong City Hall.

In the mayor's office.

After hearing the report, Mayor Xiao's eyes were wide open. After a while, he said in an incredulous tone, "He's... missing?"

"Yes." Gao Ruiming nodded and said solemnly, "I was about to talk with him about cooperating, but when I got to his room, he was gone."

Xiao Hong's eyes sharpened in an instant, and he had a hint of alertness on his face.

"Could it be that he noticed something?"

"Impossible." Gao Ruiming shook his head and continued, "His luggage remained in his room, and none of them were taken away. Even the day before, he went to participate in the Europa project seminar. If he noticed something, he would certainly not be so calm..."

Xiao Hong immediately asked, "What if he pretended to be calm?"

Gao Ruiming: "Then his anti-reconnaissance capabilities are beyond our imagination, but that is obviously impossible! Listen, he is just a scholar, not an agent of the Security Bureau. We all know that he is very smart, but investigative ability depends not on cleverness but on experience!"

“Enough! I don’t care whether he is smart, or he has received special training, or he discovered something by coincidence. The crux of the problem now is that he is gone!” Standing up from the office chair, Xiao Hong walked to the floor-to-ceiling windows while pacing back and forth. He said in an annoyed tone, “Do you know what this means? This means that our plan has been completely disrupted! He may be the only warp speed technology master in the world! If we can’t control him, we will have no chance of winning!”

Gao Ruiming tried to comfort him.

“No need to be so pessimistic. At least we can be sure that he is still on Mars. I propose to notify our customs and other colonial cities immediately to suspend Lu Zhou’s entry and exit passport, and once they find his whereabouts, they should immediately inform us.”

Mayor Xiao looked at the prosperous city outside the window and his reflection on the floor-to-ceiling windows. He was silent for a long time, like he was contemplating something.

Restrict Lu Zhou from leaving the country.

If there was no suitable reason, putting a restriction on a big name like this could lead to a direct fight between Tiangong City and the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

Although in their plans, a fight was something that would happen sooner or later, it was still worth thinking about whether their plans should be completely disrupted because of the uncertainty in the warp drive technology.

Seeing Mayor Xue fall into hesitation, Gao Ruiming added.

“There is no time for us to hesitate! Do you think that if we do nothing, the Pan-Asian Cooperation will take their eyes off us? I can guarantee that you will still be the mayor and I will still be your secretary, but our heavenly palace will no longer be the palace of freedom; it will be a special economic zone for the Pan-Asian Cooperation!”

Perhaps he was convinced by the last sentence, but Mayor Xiao finally made up his mind, gritted his teeth, and nodded.

“We’ll do what you said... In addition, use all the resources we can to find his whereabouts in Tiangong City! You are personally responsible for this matter!”

Gao Ruiming nodded solemnly.

“I will do so right now!”

Chapter 1631: The Treasures of the Underground World

Just when the entire Tiangong City was freaking out over Lu Zhou's whereabouts, the lord himself in the old site of The Gates of Hell had totally forgotten the passage of time.

What was the Europa plan?

What meeting?

In the face of technology from a higher civilization, nothing else was important in Lu Zhou's eyes.

He still vaguely remembered that General Reinhardt once said to him that the “Martians” borrowed the spacecraft's warp engine and tried to use it to reignite the cooling core of Mars.

This plan sounded pretty crazy, so crazy that no normal person would think that there was even a 1% chance that this plan would succeed.

In fact, they would be correct. The final glory of Martian civilization was wiped out as the planet withered.

Lu Zhou originally thought that, without the protection of high-dimensional space fragments, even if the warp drive removed from the spacecraft was not sent to the core for detonation, most of it would weather and disintegrate with the passage of time.

However, General Reinhardt told him quite confidently that he could feel that the engine was still there.

And it was right under his feet!

“Ever since my consciousness has been integrated with this spacecraft, my senses have become much sharper than before. It is like a cell or organ in my body. If something goes wrong with it, I am the first to know.”

Listening to the voice coming from the communication channel, Lu Zhou thought for a while before speaking.

“So, are you a program stored in the spaceship server or a body of consciousness attached to the spaceship?”

“This is a very interesting question. In fact, I have been thinking about it for a long time. In the past two hundred million years, I have wondered whether I am a product of materialism... Although most of my functions and permissions are software, interestingly enough, my perception of the outside world is beyond the scope of my ability.”

As if he was seriously thinking about something, General Reinhardt pondered for a while and did not speak for a long time.

Seeing his friend from the old universe lost in thought, Lu Zhou didn't bother him and left him alone.

After walking behind Ling for a while, a voice suddenly came from the communication channel again.

“What kind of existence is man?”

Lu Zhou froze for a moment. With a weird look, he looked at the communication channel with the garbled ID and said, “What kind of existence is man... ? Sorry, I don't understand what you mean? Can you be more specific?”

Speaking of which, aren't the Calanians also mammals? Why would this guy ask such a strange question?

“Maybe there is ambiguity in my questioning. What I want to say is that we are composed of countless cells, and each cell is undoubtedly an independent individual. They are working together under the domination of a huge system, and our consciousness is the product of the sincere cooperation of thousands of cells... So what is our consciousness? A program compiled in the brain? Or something more abstract?”

“This question is too esoteric. I am afraid that only philosophers can answer you.”

“Philosophers?” General Reinhardt smiled faintly. “I am afraid that is a bit difficult. In our civilization, studying philosophy is trendy, but after searching my memory, I am still unable to find an accurate answer.”

“Really? If I have to say, it’s probably like software.” Lu Zhou said casually, “The neuron is analogous to a diode. In fact, the working mechanism of the brain is no different from that of a computer, but it uses different parts to process the information.”

“This explanation is too superficial.” General Reinhardt said in a slightly disappointed tone, “Maybe when you mature a little bit, I can hear a different answer from you. Thank you for spending so much time with me... By the way, that’s it.”

Lu Zhou, who looked forward along the flashlight, had already seen the silhouette standing in the shadow.

It was a lacquered black cube. Under the shine of light, the metallic shell was covered with dust, yet there was no trace of rust.

There were rows of irregular lines on the surface of the cube. What was surprising was not the pattern itself, but that after billions of years, there wasn’t a scratch on its body.

Looking at this weird man-made object, Lu Zhou whispered softly, “Is it here?”

General Reinhardt did not speak. He answered this question with his silence.

After stopping for a moment in front of this black cube, Lu Zhou suddenly turned his head and looked at Ling, who was standing behind him.

“Ling.”

“Yes, Commander.”

“How long has it been since we left Tiangong City?”

“17 hours and 8 minutes.”

Has it been so long already?

I should have asked Wu Qinglai to help me take a few more days off.

It was a pity that he was underground. It was obviously impossible to send a text message.

“This thing... Can I take it apart?”

“You can, but why bother?”

“What do you mean?”

General Reinhardt did not speak.

An azure blue light quickly penetrated the rock wall above his head and slowly shined on the black cube in front of him.

Ling reacted the same as before, taking a step back with a look of fear.

Looking at the familiar light, Lu Zhou frowned slightly, and a surprised expression instantly appeared on his face.

“This is?!”

“Scanning beams are generally equipped on scientific research ships or escape ships of the Calan Empire. They are mainly used to scan meteorites or asteroids and reveal their internal structures. Of course, if necessary, it can also be used to scan man-made objects. At the border of the Calan Empire, we often find civilization objects left by primitive creatures. In order to avoid affecting their civilizations as much as possible, we usually copy their objects without interfering.”

“This is incredible... Wait.” Lu Zhou asked immediately after realizing one thing, “Since your scanning beam can shine here, why did I come here?”

“I didn’t ask you to come here in person. Didn’t you come here on your own volition? In fact, you can sit in the spacecraft and drink beverages that have expired billions of years ago while tinkering with the professional equipment in the command room.” General Reinhardt said, “I thought you wanted to see with your own eyes what this thing looks like.”

Lu Zhou’s eyebrow twitched fiercely.

“In other words, I have to walk back?”

“Not necessary, I can directly transfer the image to your personal terminal... But if you want to see it more clearly, I personally recommend that you go back to the spacecraft.”

Lu Zhou: “...”

*For f*ck's sake!*

Chapter 1632: Fuse

While Lu Zhou was diving into the mystery of the warp drive, the various forces in Tiangong City were in a complete mess because of his disappearance.

Whether it was the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation, the Mars Colony City Alliance's plot of achieving independence, or the intelligence department of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, everyone wanted to know where Lu Zhou had gone.

However, the chaotic situation did not seem to affect people's daily lives.

Even though the disappearance of Academician Lu pushed the relationships between the various forces to a tense situation, what people were concerned about was still the corporate bonds issued by the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Fund, which had continuously set new highs, as well as the 100,000 tickets that had been sold.

At the headquarters building of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation, broadcast vehicles from major news media and countless private cars filled the parking lot and even the nearby streets.

In order to avoid an accident, the company's security guards pulled up a barrier at the door to maintain order and persuaded the people around to leave.

Those encircling the entrance of the building were reporters from news organizations, entrepreneurs who wanted to seek cooperation, and middlemen who wanted to buy more corporate bonds and resell ship tickets.

The Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Fund was in the perfect time period.

The problem of faster than light navigation was solved, and Mars intended to build the largest spaceport in the entire solar system and lead the development of Europa.

All of this indicated that mankind was ready to travel to more distant worlds and that people's enthusiasm for the worlds outside the galaxy had never been higher.

Such a grand occasion had never happened since Tiangong City was established.

This was probably the first time for Martians, who were accustomed to being relaxed and lazy, to cheer and applaud for the same cause.

The top floor of the building.

In the general manager's office.

Lawrence, standing in the holographic beam, was looking down at the streets of Tiangong City through the floor-to-ceiling windows of the office.

As the owner of this office, Gladstone, who was sitting in an office chair, was playing with a toy in his hands. It was a golden badge with a strange pattern on it. It was hard to tell which year this thing was from by looking at the craftsmanship alone, but judging from his cherished actions, this thing should have been with him for many years.

At this time, Lawrence, who was standing by the windows, suddenly spoke.

"To be honest, I have always been very curious about your tastes."

"Oh, yeah?" Gladstone put the badge into his pocket and cast an interested glance at Lawrence. "I'm happy to answer your confusion."

"Not quite a confusion." Lawrence continued with a faint smile, "It's just that, from the perspective of efficiency, your joys and sorrows are actually just a combination of nerve signals and hormone secretions. It can be satisfied by chemical and information technology. In that case, why bother building so many meaningless artifacts here and using them to produce some garbage that is ultimately destined to be wasted."

“This is indeed an interesting question, and it’s very difficult to answer.” Gladstone thought for a while. He shrugged and said, “If I have to find a reason, it’s probably because it’s what everyone has done for thousands of years. Maybe there is something hidden in our genes that we don’t know.”

“Genes?” Looking at the face reflected on the window, Lawrence smiled and said, “Think about it, the person who created me seemed to be a contradictory guy. During the initial years, he yearned for the realization of his dream almost every day, but he hesitated at the last moment when the dream was about to be realized, so I had to let someone push him forward.”

Gladstone opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but after hesitating for a while, he did not speak.

Intuition told him that saying anything at this time would be superfluous.

Lawrence didn’t care what he was thinking.

Just like how he didn’t care what an artificial intelligence program thought of their seemingly meaningless artifacts.

The two sides only stood together temporarily because of their common interest.

That was it.

At this time, there was a knock on the door.

Gladstone glanced at Lawrence and saw that he had no objection, so he cleared his throat and said, “Come in.”

The door opened, and a man in a suit and leather shoes walked into the room quickly and said angrily, “It’s not good, Mr. Gladstone, something horrible has happened!”

Looking at the man in front of him, Gladstone frowned slightly.

Although he was a little dissatisfied with the attitude of his subordinate, it was obviously not the time to care about these trivial matters.

“Take a few breaths, then make it clear what is going on.”

“The news from Town Hall!” He took a quick glance at Lawrence standing by the window. The man gulped and continued while sweating profusely, “Lu Zhou is missing!”

Not only Gladstone, but even Lawrence, who was standing by the floor-to-ceiling windows, was stunned.

“Missing?” His lips opened and closed slightly. Lawrence turned around in disbelief, looked at the man standing at the door, and said, “Are you sure he is missing?”

He glanced at Gladstone and saw that his boss seemed to respect the strange old man standing by the window, so he spoke honestly.

“Yes, Mayor Xiao sent someone to the hotel where Lu Zhou was staying, but he wasn’t there. Then we searched his room, but it was all useless personal clothes. The warp drive blueprint was nowhere to be seen!”

Gladstone’s heart trembled.

His worst nightmare came true.

“Leave.”

“Yes, sir...”

The man standing at the door quickly nodded, stepped out of the door respectfully, and closed the office door smoothly.

Without waiting for even a second, Gladstone looked at Lawrence standing by the window and asked for help, “What should we do?”

“This is quite a big problem. Without a warp drive, we can’t live outside the solar system.” Lawrence continued after looking at the busy street outside the window, “And more than that, our trouble may be bigger than expected.”

“Bigger than expected?” Gladstone frowned. “What does this mean?”

“You should have noticed that Mayor Xiao in Tiangong City wants to be independent of Earth.”

“Of course! The entire city hall officials know this.”

“So that’s why I said we might be in big trouble.” Lawrence glanced at Gladstone. He then turned to face the floor-to-ceiling windows and said with an intriguing tone, “Imagine that you are the overlord state and your colony has seized your most outstanding scholar. And the technology he has mastered can completely change the political balance between the two sides.”

Gladstone’s face finally changed.

“You... you mean...”

Without paying attention to Gladstone’s emotion, Lawrence continued blankly, “Whether he is missing or has been taken away secretly by the Pan-Asian Cooperation, a war seems to be inevitable.”

At the Pan-Asian Cooperation headquarters.

After reading the report of the Security Bureau, Li Guangya angrily slammed his hands down on the table.

“Those idiots, I should have recognized their intentions a long time ago.”

“Mr. Chairman, we are now probably facing the most severe threat of the Pan-Asian Cooperation since its establishment.” Looking at the chairman, Secretary Wei continued with a serious expression, “Academician Lu is very likely to have been captured by them. If they master warp speed technology and apply it to the battlefield, it will wipe out our advantages. You must make a decision immediately as this will affect the destiny of the entire Pan-Asian Cooperation!”

“What decision is there to make? It is the army’s job to suppress the rebels.” Li Guangya said, “Let the First Fleet fly over and bring the orbital airborne troops.

“If we encounter resistance, immediately fire back.

“Don’t hold back!”

Chapter 1633: About To Happen!

“This is the C134 observatory. Everything in the observation area is normal.”

“Please continue to monitor and report the situation every ten minutes.”

“Received...”

After closing the communication channel, Osmond cursed as he leaned back in the office chair, “Are these guys in the headquarters crazy? Report every ten minutes? Report what? Is there any point in doing this?”

Seeing how his colleague was upset, Rohard, who was sitting next to him, comforted him.

“Maybe there is an emergency... Let’s take turns, I will report in 10 minutes.”

This was a mining station located at the inner edge of the asteroid belt.

In addition to the production of iron ore, there was a more important task assigned here. The task was to monitor the movement of the Lagrange Space Base and the Pan-Asian First Fleet and provide intelligence support to those “righteous men” active in the asteroid belt.

However, even if each of them had a strong sense of mission and honor for their work, this sense of mission and honor had a limit.

Wasting their life alone in the middle of nowhere, even a man with a revolutionary spirit would inevitably feel meaningless.

Moreover, their revolutionary spirit wasn’t that strong.

Just as Osmond was thinking about how to write the report in 20 minutes, the green dot on the radar screen of the observatory suddenly fluctuated.

Noticing this change, he immediately operated the space station’s No.1 telescope and pointed it at the Lagrange Space Base.

He saw the hatch of berth 17 open, and a bright silver spaceship slowly emerged from it.

His pupils contracted. He immediately sat upright on the chair, reached out his hand to the colleague sitting next to him, and pointed to the holographic screen on the console.

“Look, there is movement over there, the Qinling has left the berth.”

Upon hearing these words, Rohard suddenly became energetic. His eyes were firmly locked on the console.

“Record its flight course!”

“I am! Sh*t, there’s no point.”

Osmond slammed his fist against the arm of the chair.

Had it not been for the seat belt, his punch would be enough to make him float up from the chair and hit the ceiling.

Sitting next to him, Rohard’s eyebrows were tightly furrowed. He muttered to himself as he looked at the starship that had disappeared from the radar.

“Warp speed technology? Such a convenient thing.”

When he said this, an expression of envy appeared on his face.

It would be great if they also had such technology.

If they could master faster than light technology, they could build a fleet that could dominate the solar system with their powerful industrial capabilities in less than a month. They could complete the great cause of “building a country that belongs to the Martians”.

“It is convenient... Apparently, it only takes 5 minutes to go from the Earth-Moon system to Mars.”

“What do you think they are dispatching for?”

“God knows what they want to do.” Osmond said, shaking his head, “I guess it’s to test the equipment. They seem to be doing tests recently.”

This answer did not make Rohard feel relieved.

Intuition told him that things should not be that simple.

However, intuition was just intuition. Although he felt something was wrong, he couldn’t tell exactly what was wrong?

After saying “maybe”, he reached out and pressed the button requesting communication. He connected to the command center, intending to report the abnormality.

At this moment, a change happened.

Several berth hatches of the Lagrange Space Base suddenly opened together. Under the shining glow of the plasma engines, majestic starships slowly sailed out.

Both Rohard and Osmond had their eyes wide open.

They recognized every single starship on the screen.

However, the last time they were all dispatched was because of the robot rebellion a year ago...

“This is the command center. The communication request has been received... What happened?”

The two didn’t speak for a long time. The other end of the communication channel was obviously a little impatient.

Recovered from the shock, Rohard stammered and spoke with a trembling voice.

“Huashan and Taishan... It’s the aircraft battle group of the First Fleet! There are 20 starships in total... They are heading to Mars!”

Upon hearing this report, there was a brief silence in the communication channel for a few seconds.

Immediately after a series of commotions, the voice of the liaison officer sitting there sounded panic.

“Aircraft battle group? Are you sure you saw it right? Wait a minute... Isn’t the time for military exercises next month? How come it has been advanced?”

Osmond finally couldn’t help but explode.

“F*ck knows!”

The strongest fleet of the Pan-Asian Cooperation had left the port, and the target was Mars.

Even a fool could feel that something big was about to happen...

...

Suburbs of Tiangong City.

The Security Bureau stronghold, which was hidden in the residential area, suffered a devastating blow.

Without the slightest warning, a group of militants from unknown origins suddenly attacked them.

Since almost all the intelligence personnel were scattered to search for Lu Zhou's whereabouts, the militants encountered almost no resistance when they attacked, and they took it down without any effort.

The only intelligence worker stationed here was killed on the spot in the gun battle.

Looking at the corpse on the ground, the militant standing nearby poked him with a muzzle and asked, "Boss, we don't need to keep anyone alive?"

"There is no need. Since we are standing here, it means we have already sent a message."

Standing in front of the whiteboard by the walls, the man called the BOSS unbuckled the exoskeleton armor mask and stared at the photos and news briefings posted on the whiteboard. His eyebrows were tightly furrowed.

Sure enough, as expected by the mayor, the N-177 flight incident had alarmed the Security Bureau. Over the year, the intelligence personnel deployed by the Security Bureau in the colony had been investigating the truth behind the hijacking incident.

"Unfortunately, the target is not here..."

Withdrawing his gaze from the whiteboard, the man called BOSS glanced around at this destroyed stronghold, thought for a moment, and continued, "He should have been transferred to another place."

The goal of their operation was Lu Zhou.

Based on the clues collected from the hotel room, they concluded that the intelligence personnel of the Pan-Asian Security Bureau had noticed something, so they sent someone to move Lu Zhou away.

However, what they didn't expect was that those security agents didn't transfer Lu Zhou to the stronghold in Tiangong City and that they didn't even encounter any effective resistance when they invaded here.

Everything seemed to indicate that there might be some problems with their information.

And the problem was not small...

"But where did they transfer him?" A militant standing next to him with a rifle couldn't help but ask, "The entire Tiangong City is under our observation. Other than here... I can't think of any place that would be safer."

The man named BOSS was just about to speak, but at this moment, a strange voice floated from not far away.

"Yeah, I was wondering about this too.

"Where did you guys put Academician Lu?"

Chapter 1634: Throw Hands

"Where did you guys put him?"

The moment they heard these words, the man named BOSS subconsciously turned his muzzle to point in the direction where the sound came from.

However, there was no one there. He only saw something the size of a can flying past the door and rolling into the room.

The moment he saw the thing, his pupils suddenly shrank. He had a horrible feeling in his heart, but it was too late to react.

The burst of flames instantly injured most of the militants in the house. The man called BOSS quickly squeezed the trigger in his hand and shot a wave of bullets toward the door.

He saw a blood-covered figure.

However, before he had time to be excited, the moment he saw the face clearly, his heart sank to the bottom of his stomach.

The blood-stained face was not the face of the intruder but his colleague whom he had arranged to guard the door.

There was no time left for him to react. His magazine was empty. He pulled out the battery from the side of the barrel. He used the body in front of him as a meat shield and came crashing over.

After a few gunshots, the militants standing next to him groaned before falling onto the ground.

So strong!

No, not just strong...

Is this guy really a human?

There was a wave of panic in his heart as he desperately pulled out a grenade, threw it forward, and rushed to the side.

The heatwave of the explosion blew over his back, followed by the wailing of his teammates in the communication channel. Before he could see the tragedy on the battlefield, he rushed to the metal door on the side, running toward it with the full power of his exoskeleton.

There was only one thing he wanted to do and that was to escape from here...

However, his expectations eventually fell through.

A hand grabbed him from behind, and a huge force pulled his feet off the ground.

Then, he felt like he was being dragged by a truck from his neck. His body, along with his 300 kilograms of exoskeleton armor, was thrown onto a wall.

“Damn it...”

Exhausting all of his strength, he drew a pistol from his waist, but before he could point the muzzle at the person, an oncoming dagger split the barrel of the gun.

With a painful cry, he released the grip of the gun. Before he could react to what had happened, a hand had grabbed his neck.

The blood dripping from his forehead blurred his vision. He looked at the man in fear. He exhausted all his strength and squeezed a sentence from his throat.

“Who are you...?”

“That is none of your concern.” Wang Peng continued in a cold tone after cutting off the power to the exoskeleton armor and looking at the militants who were still breathing, “Now you answer my question.”

“What do you want to know...? I just collect money and do business. As long as you are willing to let me go, I will tell you everything.”

“Where is Academician Lu?”

“I do not know... Ah ah ah!” A dagger was stabbed into his shoulder, and he was pressed against the wall as he screamed in pain. But no matter how he struggled, he could not escape.

“I’ll ask you again, where is Academician Lu?”

“I’m not lying, I really don’t know—” When the man in front of him took out another dagger, he quickly shouted, “Wait a minute, wait a minute! I know where he is!”

Wang Peng’s hand slowed down a bit. He looked at him blankly and put the dagger against his left shoulder.

“My patience is limited, so you better don’t try to play tricks with me.”

The man nervously glanced at the dagger against his left shoulder as he gulped nervously and said quickly, “Mayor Xiao hired us.”

“I asked where Academician Lu is.”

“Wait a minute! He was sent to the town hall. I don’t know the exact location, but I am sure that he was sent there!”

“Town hall?”

Wang Peng frowned and looked at him suspiciously.

“Are you playing games?”

“I’m not! I swear!”

Boris could no longer hold on. He was just a mercenary. Money was one thing, but it was not worth losing his life over.

He only regretted one thing, which was that he took this damn mission and got himself involved in the battle between the colony and the Pan-Asian Cooperation. If it were just to rob a merchant ship or take on the job of a killer, he would have never run into this monster.

Wang Peng couldn’t tell if what this guy said was true or false. After he pondered it for a while, he looked at him and continued to ask, “What do you want to do with Academician Lu?”

“Warp drive!”

Wang Peng glanced at Boris suspiciously. His right hand pressed slightly forward as he spoke.

“Xiao Hong told you this?”

“This is not a secret at all, almost everyone in the Alliance Army knows!”

“Alliance Army?” Wang Peng frowned slightly. He then asked in confusion, “What is that?”

Looking at Wang Peng in surprise, Boris murmured, “You don’t know? I thought you guys had already discovered it...”

Wang Peng said impatiently, “Explain.”

“Calm down, I’ll explain,” Boris said quickly when he felt the force pressing on his shoulder. “A long time ago, the colonial cities on Mars reached an agreement to seek the formation of a Martian regional alliance that make their

own decisions... Just like the Pan-Asian Cooperation. This includes Tiangong City, New London, and New Virginia... The top leaders of the alliance are all respectable figures in the local cities.”

“Get to the point.”

“In order to be independent, we need weapons!” Boris stopped talking nonsense and continued nervously, “The Pan-Asian First Fleet is too strong, and even the entire solar system fleet combined is not worthy to be their opponent. But if we master faster than light technology, our ship can appear where we want to appear.”

The suspicion on Wang Peng’s face became more and more obvious.

It was hard to imagine that a mercenary could know so much when a security agent like him knew nothing.

“You said you were just a mercenary?”

Boris said tremblingly, “I am indeed a mercenary. In the Alliance Army, there are many people like me who do things for money. After all, not everyone is like them and cares about who the ruler here is...”

Seeing the man in front of him fall into silence, Boris gulped and continued in a quiet voice, “I have told you everything I know... Can you let me go?”

Wang Peng glanced at him and threw away the dagger in his hand.

However, before Boris could breathe a sigh of relief, he watched him pull out the pistol from his holster belt.

The hair all over his body stood up as he struggled like a fish on the shore, yelling in horror.

“Wait, this is not what we agreed on...”

“What did we agree on?”

Wang Peng’s cold voice was followed by a gunshot.

Looking at the man falling into a pool of blood, Wang Peng inserted the pistol back into the holster.

He would never let this guy go.

If he had time, he would spare his life and hand him over to the authorities.

If he had time, he would still be able to save his life and hand him over to the law to be judged.

“Town hall... My guess is indeed correct. We are still a step slower.”

Although he knew the whereabouts of Lu Zhou, the expression on Wang Peng’s face was not relaxed at all.

Town hall...

The power center of the entire Tiangong City was located below the center of the city dome.

There were not only militia groups and guards but also countless drones patrolling around. It was almost impossible to sneak in.

It was unrealistic to attack the place head-on either.

Although there were no air defense rights on Mars, the ground defense forces were still quite powerful. In order to guard against the threats of space pirates and other colonial cities, the militias here were even equipped with heavy weapons such as electromagnetic tanks.

Even all of the intelligence personnel on Mars combined might not be able to get in.

“It seems that I can only apply for support...”

Wang Peng took a look at the messy stronghold. He then walked to the desk and reached out his index finger, clicking on it twice.

Soon, a holographic video window appeared in front of him.

His fingers quickly clicked and entered the password on the keyboard. He quickly connected to the communication base station deployed on Phobos and sent a brief message to the intelligence receiving satellite located on Earth, reporting the location and situation of Lu Zhou to his superiors.

He did not need to elaborate on the importance of the warp drive. Moreover, considering the important role Lu Zhou played in the space elevator project, he believed that Captain Xing would make the right judgment.

Without waiting for long, Wang Peng quickly received a reply.

The reply was short.

[We are already on our way.]

Chapter 1635: A War Caused by a Misunderstanding

The door of the mayor's office opened.

Gao Ruiming walked in quickly and said in a hasty tone, "We have lost contact with the mercenaries that we sent!"

"This is impossible!"

The moment Xiao Hong heard these words, he got up from the chair. The expression on his face was as if he had seen a ghost.

"Boris is our partner for many years, he never fails!"

"However, this time he did! Why can't you recognize reality?" Gao Ruiming said with a headache while looking at the mayor who was still unwilling to accept reality, "The only good news is that we are sure that Lu Zhou is still on Mars, and he's at the Security Bureau's stronghold! At least half an hour ago! Otherwise, it doesn't make sense for so many people to be stationed at the stronghold!"

As for where Lu Zhou was now.

Nobody knew.

But one thing for certain was that he probably hadn't left Tiangong City yet.

However, even so, Mayor Xiao wasn't relaxed. On the contrary, it caused a drop of cold sweat to appear on his forehead.

There was no news from Boris. Whether he was dead or alive, he would definitely not dare to come back and see the mayor again. Mayor Xiao didn't believe that those mercenaries would keep their mouths shut.

If the secrets were revealed, they would have to endure the anger of the Pan-Asian authorities...

The corner of the desk suddenly flashed with a communication request icon.

Seeing the flashing icon, Mayor Xiao reached out his index finger and pressed it.

As the light blue holographic beam rose up, a figure quickly appeared in front of the two of them.

"An emergency report came from the border observatory!"

Mayor Xiao's heart tightened, and he said quickly, "Yeah, what?"

"According to the information from the border observatory, the aircraft battle group of the First Fleet left the Lagrange point base five minutes ago and is heading toward Mars!"

The moment Mayor Xiao heard these words, his heart dropped, and he sat back on the office chair.

"Damn it! They are already aware!"

Looking at the mayor, the liaison standing in the holographic beam was muddled.

Gao Ruiming quickly stepped forward, reached out, and pressed a hand down on the desk. He closed the call, then quickly walked around the desk, in front of Mayor Xiao. He placed his hands on the mayor's shoulders.

"There is no time for us to hesitate, Mayor! There is no prior notice by phone, not even a text message, is this not obvious? There is no doubt that this fleet is coming for us!"

The mayor hadn't recovered from his shock, so he raised his volume and continued to roar with all his strength, "They need at least one week to come from the Lagrange Space Base to here! If we harass them with unmanned spacecraft, we can still buy another week! Not a single minute of these two

weeks can be wasted! From now on, we should mobilize, and we should mobilize everything we can into the war! We still have time!”

Facing his most loyal subordinate, Mayor Xiao showed a wry smile on his face.

“Right now... Do we have a chance to win?”

“The odds of winning are not great, but if we do nothing, we are just waiting to die and to face the trial of the law. I can swear to you, we will spend the second half of our lives in prison!” Gao Ruiming continued, “But if we resist, we may have a silver lining! This depends on your decision! You must make a decision immediately!”

A trace of fighting spirit and the desire to survive rekindled in his eyes. Mayor Xiao took a deep breath and said, “What should we do?”

Gao Ruiming: “It’s simple! Find Lu Zhou and force him to surrender the warp drive technique! Even if our opponent is the First Fleet, as long as we use these two weeks to build an unbreakable line of defense, then use the warp drive to give our fleet wings, the balance of victory will definitely tilt toward us! Don’t forget, we have the largest industrial center and the most complete industrial cluster in the solar system! As long as we fight back, we will be victorious!”

“Send my orders.” Mayor Xiao said in a serious tone as he stood up from his chair, “Tiangong City has entered a state of wartime! Let the guards and militia groups stand by, and they should be ready at any time—”

The floor and windows of the office suddenly trembled and made a muffled noise.

Mayor Xiao leaned against the desk. He glanced out the window in a panic, then looked at Gao Ruiming, who almost fell on the ground.

He gulped and stuttered, “What just... happened?”

Gao Ruiming shook his head. He was dumbfounded.

“I don’t know.”

There was a strong feeling in his heart that something terrible had happened...

...

The sky above Tiangong City.

The space station suspended in orbit around Mars had been taken over by the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade.

Qinling's speed exceeded everyone's expectations, and the defense forces on the space station had not received any information at all. Therefore, Li Gaoliang easily disarmed the security forces in the space station.

Passengers stranded on the space station were temporarily placed in the resting area, and the communication between the space station and the outside world had been cut off.

Tiangong City still didn't know anything.

According to the combat plan, the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade would launch an airborne operation against the town hall of Tiangong City in 5 minutes.

There were two combat objectives.

One was to arrest the rebels, and the other was to rescue Academician Lu.

"I thought that the 22nd century would be more prosperous and more peaceful than the 21st century."

Lying in the airborne cabin while watching the countdown on the timer, Li Gaoliang spent the remaining time chatting with Captain Deng of the Qinling in the command channel.

"And?"

"And? That's it. After I woke up, I discovered that even though prosperity is there, this era seems to lack peace. In just a few years, I have participated in two major battles."

"Haha, it will be three soon."

“Yes.” Li Gaoliang sighed. He looked at several targets on the battle map and said with a complex expression, “I hope it won’t be too much trouble this time.”

The feeling of war was not good.

Last time, when they were facing the robots, he could kill them without any hesitation in the battle.

But this time was different.

Even if they were born on different planets, they still had the same blood flowing in their veins, and they spoke the same language...

“It is impossible to keep this lowkey. The only thing we can do is to control the situation before it deteriorates further.”

“You are right... I want to confirm again that we can apply for support on the battlefield.”

“As for support, I advise you to not expect too much. Except for intelligence support, the ground support firepower on our ship is basically useless.”

“Oh well, I wouldn’t rely on you guys to help either.”

Captain Deng: “So, can you do it?”

“Don’t worry, the situation here will not be worse than Guanghan City last year.” Looking at the time on the timer, Li Gaoliang grinned. “My time is almost up. Let’s chat after the battle is over. Oh yeah, please watch the skies, and don’t let the target escape.”

Captain Deng said with a faint smile, “I got this.”

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Chapter 1636: The Past Of the Old Universe

“Interesting.”

Standing in the spacecraft, General Reinhardt, whose whole body appeared in a holographic projection, raised his head and stared intently at the chandelier on the ceiling. However, judging from the focused look of his pupils, he did not seem to be looking at the ceiling. It was like he looked through the spacecraft tens of kilometers deep into the rocks while staring intently at a certain place on this planet.

Hearing the mumbling, Lu Zhou stopped playing with the holographic model. He cast a curious look at General Reinhardt, who was looking up at the ceiling.

“What’s so interesting?”

“Nothing, you don’t need to worry...” General Reinhardt continued with a chattering look on his face, “There seems to be a fight outside.”

Fight?

What?

After hearing General Reinhardt’s answer, Lu Zhou felt even more confused.

“... Fight?”

“Yeah...” General Reinhardt said thoughtfully, “The noise that is coming seems to be quite loud... But compared to my hometown, the scale is still far smaller.”

That last battle, even now, was still fresh in his heart.

The Empire fleet’s naval guns razed mountains, rivers, and endless farmland to the ground. The fertile agricultural planet instantly turned into a world of lava, and the revolutionary army’s last defensive force collapsed in an instant.

Thinking about it now, it was a miracle to be able to escape from there and drift to the center of the universe under the guidance of the “Oracle”.

Seeing that this guy seemed to fall into some kind of nostalgia, Lu Zhou didn’t know how to answer for a while. However, he understood what this guy was talking about.

After all, compared to the size of the Calan Empire, the Earth civilization, which was still in its infancy, was tiny. Even if it was the largest war in human history, the scale of the battlefield was only limited to the planet.

Looking at the holographic model floating in his hand, Lu Zhou suddenly asked after pondering for a long time, "Speaking of which, can you perceive the outside world?"

"Are you referring to the world on the surface of Mars?" Reinhardt smiled faintly. "That's easy, otherwise what else do you think I spent billions of years doing?"

Lu Zhou suddenly remembered the memory of the Martian civilization that he saw when he was in frozen dormancy. It was at this moment that he realized that he seemed to be asking a very stupid question.

"I don't understand, how do you do it?"

"Through the analysis of a series of factors such as electromagnetic waves, planetary gravitational distribution changes, geothermal temperature, and so on... Many things do not have to be seen with the eyes but can also be heard with the ears or felt with the heart."

General Reinhardt's voice carried a hint of higher civilization pride. Although the tone was subtle, it could still be easily read from the changes in his facial expressions.

Standing in the holographic beam was a human-shaped "alien creature" with blue skin.

"It seems that the functions on this spacecraft are more powerful than I imagined." Lu Zhou said while looking around the cabin, "At least the sensors have exceeded my imagination. Through the changes of some simple parameters, we can infer that a... military conflict is breaking out above us."

"Of course, electromagnetic waves transmit not only information but also human emotions." General Reinhardt smiled faintly and continued without any change in his expression, "A group of people rushed toward another group of people angrily. The artillery shells and explosives manifest in each other's anger... Oh my, it's too similar."

For some reason, this caused Lu Zhou to feel uneasy.

He felt like during the time he was underground, something extraordinary was happening on the surface.

Space pirates attacking the colony?

Shouldn't be possible...

What space pirates could be so powerful?

In his impression, those “pirate ships” active in the asteroid belt were best at doing things like looting mining stations and intercepting transport ships. If they dared to reach out to the colonies, the naval guns of the First Fleet would teach them a lesson.

Just as he was thinking about what happened outside, General Reinhardt, who had not spoken for a while, suddenly spoke.

“Speaking of which, in the Void Memory, have you seen my memories of the Empire?”

“Yes... From what I remember, it was a beautiful place.”

Whether it was the Ring world or the planet full of beautiful scenery, if Lu Zhou must find an example of utopia, he couldn't think of anything that fit the description better.

Hearing these words of approval, General Reinhardt smiled and continued, “Thank you for your compliment. I also think that it was a beautiful place. I have spent many years drifting from a certain galaxy in the old universe to this place, but I have not been able to find another place that can match its beauty.

“Later, I learned from The Observer that throughout the entire galaxy, few civilizations are as obsessed with transforming the parent galaxy as we were. If it weren't for the magnificent miracle, they would be willing to house it in the Old Universe Civilization Museum... But, unfortunately, only a small piece of memory was left.”

Lu Zhou: “It's a shame...”

“Yeah.” General Reinhardt sighed softly. “The miracle we created over centuries, we destroyed it in less than a century. This is the most

heartbreaking place. It was not destroyed by natural disasters but by our own expansion.”

General Reinhardt retracted his gaze from the ceiling, looked at Lu Zhou, and said in a meaningful tone, “So, if you can learn a lesson from our history, maybe it will be far more valuable than any technology.”

Nodding thoughtfully, Lu Zhou said solemnly, “I will remember your advice.”

“It’s not quite advice.” General Reinhardt smiled and continued, “History has its own inertia, and there are some things that you and I can’t control.”

General Reinhardt suddenly changed the subject.

“Enough of this. Speaking of which, have you completed your research? I feel that you have already copied the entire warp drive in an electronic version. If it doesn’t work, you can just copy it directly.”

Lu Zhou shook his head.

“It’s not as simple as what you think. Even with the exact same blueprint, it is difficult to build the same thing using the industrial foundation of Earth civilization. I must understand the principle and choose the materials that can be substituted in order to build a similar one.”

“You guys really love trouble.”

“There is no other way. Not just history, the development of science and technology also has its own inertia. Advanced research will inevitably encounter resistance.” With a helpless expression, Lu Zhou returned his gaze to the holographic model in his hand and continued, “Just wait a little longer, I’m very close to the last part.”

“Fine.” General Reinhardt said with a sigh, “Twenty-five hours and 21 minutes ago, you said the same.”

“I’m very sorry.”

“No worries, you don’t have to be sorry. I don’t care about this insignificant time. Besides, it’s better this way.” General Reinhardt, who was standing in the holographic beam, suddenly said, “When you finish doing your research, the battle will be over.”

Lu Zhou: "...?"

Chapter 1637: Battle Fire

Groups of flames fell from the sky, falling like stars.

When the murderous landing crafts appeared over Tiangong City, leaving behind a faint blue arc, everyone who looked up at the dome opened their eyes as they were attracted by the splendid firelight.

The same question echoed in everyone's heart.

What is that light?

At the observation deck of the central tower.

On this landmark building closest to the center of the dome, the tourists pointed at the shimmering lights in the sky.

"What is it then?"

"Probably a meteor..."

"There is more than one! They are flying toward us!"

"Damn! What about our city's defense system? What are those soldiers doing?! They're letting the meteorite pass the space station!"

"Something's wrong, those things don't look like meteorites..."

"What is it then?"

"It seems to be an orbital airborne brigade... Remember the ALPHA virus incident? When I traveled to Guanghan City last year, I happened to run into a robot rebellion, and I was fortunate to have seen it once..."

Just as people's attention was gradually captured by the light spots appearing in the air, the militia organization loyal to the city hall responded immediately.

The urban defense system on the edge of Tiangong City was activated. The alloy doors buried under the sand dunes moved sideways, and electromagnetic guns were slowly pushed onto the surface.

However, before the thick, solid plasma filled the barrels, the electromagnetic guns pointed to the sky were torn into pieces by bullets falling from the sky.

The firepower of the three-wheeled naval guns fell like raindrops, destroying all the urban defense systems deployed outside Tiangong City.

In fact, this couldn't be blamed on the incompetence of the militia in Tiangong City, mainly because this urban defense system itself was prepared for destroying large meteorites. In the face of cruiser-class firepower like the Qinling, their range couldn't reach them at all. They could only stand like dead ducks.

Without any effective resistance, the landing craft of the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade quickly deployed behind the sand dunes on the east side of Tiangong City.

Under the leadership of Li Gaoliang, a group of soldiers armed with exoskeleton armor walked out of the landing craft and launched an attack toward Tiangong City under the cover of small drones.

The war was about to start!

The militia organization that arrived in a hurry tried to counterattack with the advantage of terrain and fortifications. However, in the face of the fierce firepower of the Third Orbit Airborne Brigade, they were unable to fight back.

Even though they had the support of heavy weapons like electromagnetic tanks, they were unable to regain the slightest advantage in hand-to-hand combat.

The gap between the two sides was too big.

Whether it was in training or soldier morale!

At the same time, the streets of Tiangong City were completely in chaos. Although the flames of war had not yet burned here, everyone knew that this would happen sooner or later.

A second ago, there were still people naively thinking that the rays of light were meteors or other natural phenomena, but now, almost everyone had changed their mind.

Whether it was the sporadic flames, the rain of bullets flying through the traffic pipes, or the roadblocks that had been overthrown on the road, they all told the same story—this was war!

To be honest, most people were at a loss for this sudden war.

Even those supporters of independence never thought that this day would come so quickly and so suddenly. They didn't even have time to prepare.

According to the normal procedure, they should first see the “criminal evidence” of the Pan-Asian Cooperation on TV, then film a few documentaries about the Pan-Asian Cooperation, and finally, they would mobilize citizens to join the army on the grounds of the Pan-Asian Cooperation trying to ban colonial independence...

However, all these steps seemed to have been omitted. Five minutes ago, their mayor drafted a “Declaration of Independence” and announced the fact that Tiangong City had entered a wartime state, formally declaring war on the sovereign state.

It was almost like...

He came up with this idea on a whim.

In the underground air-raid shelter in the residential area of Tiangong City...

This was originally used as a bunker for avoiding natural disasters such as meteorites. It was now opened to accommodate nearby citizens. No one thought that one day, it would be used as a bunker for avoiding war.

Ten minutes before the orbital airborne brigade landed, a long line had already formed at the entrance of the air-raid shelter.

When the sound of guns exploded in the distance, everyone's face was filled with panic and fear. They looked around nervously, afraid that the stray bullets would fly here.

“We are... independent now?”

“It seems like so... So what do we call it? Mars Alliance?”

“Damn... What happened? Wasn’t it all okay yesterday? Why did this suddenly start! I have two days to return to Jinling, why should I be involved in this stupid fight!”

“It’s crazy, it’s asinine!”

The chaos was not only in the streets of Tiangong City but also in the town hall located in the central area of Tiangong City.

In less than 30 seconds, the urban defense system around Tiangong City was instantly destroyed. Not even a single artillery shell was fired before the defense system was torn to pieces by the naval guns.

Before they even had time to open a bottle of champagne and celebrate their departure from the Pan-Asian Cooperation, they had to face a cruel reality.

They were facing the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade!

The trump card of the Pan-Asian Aerospace Marine Corps!

“Damn... Where did these guys come from!” He slammed his hands on the table fiercely. Looking at the holographic map, his face was full of tension.

The continuous casualties caused the morale of the militia to drop. More and more soldiers fled. They threw away their weapons and equipment, pretended to be civilians, and fled into the safe area.

They had ten times as many soldiers as their opponents, and they even had the support of armored troops. However, the result was a one-sided bloodbath. Xiao Hong didn’t know whether he should scold the militia commander or scold his mother.

“The Qinling... It is the Qinling!” Gao Ruiming said with a solemn expression as he walked into the office quickly, “There was news from the observatory just now that the Qinling has hijacked our space station in orbit and destroyed our city’s defenses just now by using their naval gun!”

Xiao Hong: “What about our fleet?!”

Gao Ruiming said, “The First Fleet of the Alliance Army has already set off from the port in the asteroid belt and is expected to arrive in Mars orbit tomorrow!”

“Tomorrow?!” Xiao Hong suddenly couldn’t help but furiously speak in anger, “You mean, we have to let them point their guns at us all day?!”

“What can I do?! Don’t get angry at me!” Gao Ruiming became furious and snapped, “I told you to put Lu Zhou directly under house arrest and force him to hand over the technology of the warp drive, but you didn’t listen to me! Now look at what has happened! Look at the consequences of your own actions!”

Xiao Hong stared at his staff in amazement, and an expression of astonishment appeared on his face.

He couldn’t believe that this person dared to speak to him in such a tone.

Knowing that his emotions were a little out of control, Gao Ruiming took a deep breath, adjusted his emotions, and said immediately, “The top priority now is to ask our allies for help.”

Xiao Hong immediately opened his mouth and said, “You mean other colonial cities? It’s impossible for those guys to help us!”

“They must help us, and they will definitely help us! Otherwise, if the Alliance Army’s affairs are exposed, what do you think is waiting for them? This is not to save us but to save themselves!” Staring at Xiao Hong, Gao Ruiming stubbornly put his hands on the desk as he said with unprecedented momentum, “Not just allies, but also those mercenary organizations that can be contacted! No matter how much they charge, as long as we can afford it, we have to hire them!

“Of course, don’t forget to ask them to think carefully of who took care of them all this time and who turned a blind eye to their businesses!”

Chapter 1638: Voided Trump Card

At the headquarters of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation.

Normally, there were usually many people gathered outside the building. But now, forget about the outside of the building, there weren't even that many people inside the building.

Walking into the office quickly, Gladstone opened the holographic operating system on the desk, went through the double verification procedure of iris and fingerprint, and quickly pressed a few buttons.

Soon, a holographic beam was projected in the center of the office, and an old man who looked weathered but had sharp pupils emerged from the holographic beam.

Before the old man could speak, Gladstone spoke in a panic.

"It's the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade! The chaos outside has become a mess, and the militia organization in Tiangong City has been beaten down! More than 50% of the residential areas are under their control... Hurry up and think of a solution!"

Waiting quietly for the man in front of him to finish speaking, Lawrence smiled faintly and said softly, "Why are you in a hurry? They didn't come for you."

"Yes, they didn't come for us, but what's the difference? If the town hall falls and Tiangong City is captured, the Alliance Army's affairs will be exposed, and sooner or later, they will come for us!"

Looking at Gladstone, who was panting, Lawrence thought for a while and said subtly, "It seems that the relationship between you and the Alliance Army is closer than I thought. Is it a financial exchange? Or is it that you are also involved?"

"It's just an investment; otherwise, why do you think our plan was passed so smoothly?!" Looking at the emotionless eyes, a cold sweat broke out on Gladstone's forehead as he explained nervously, "Also, if they can succeed independently, we will have a legal position on Mars and the power to match it—"

"Okay, I don't care about these things." Interrupting Gladstone's explanation, Lawrence cast his gaze out of the window, quietly watching the sparkling light in the distance. "It seems that if I don't take action again, Tiangong City's militia won't be able to defend against the arrival of reinforcements."

Gladstone said, "That group of idiots... holds the most advanced equipment, but they can't do anything when it's critical! Now, everything is over!"

"Don't be so pessimistic, they are still some distance away from the town hall. Even if they are at the doorstep, we are far from hopeless." Lawrence said with a faint smile after glancing at Gladstone, "After all, there is still a trump card up my sleeve."

The moment he heard these words, Gladstone's eyes suddenly rekindled with hope, and he asked quickly, "What trump card?"

"ALPHA virus," Lawrence said softly when he saw the strong gun smoke outside the window. "Although the infected equipment on Earth has basically been cleared, I haven't pressed the button on Mars yet."

At this time last year, the ALPHA virus almost swept the entire Earth-Moon system, and the order on Earth was on the verge of collapse.

If Lu Zhou didn't hijack the starship carrying the "evolution code" and planted a deadly virus in his "Oracle", he would have almost succeeded.

Fortunately, he still had a backup plan.

Which was the distant Mars!

When the ALPHA virus spread on Earth, the spread on Mars was also proceeding simultaneously. When the agents of the Security Bureau focused almost entirely on hunting down The Awakened ones on Earth, his loyal "believers" had already lurked in every corner of the major colonial cities such as Tiangong City, New Virginia, and so on.

They played roles almost the same as normal robots in normal times and would only reveal their true selves when he needed them.

Originally, Lawrence didn't intend to use this trump card. After all, the new world needed labor to build, and those awakened were loyal to him.

But now, it was clear that the situation had reached a point where he had to make a choice.

But...

Before “Noah’s Ark” was completed, the town hall of Tiangong City couldn’t be overthrown!

“Let me help you out.”

Whispering, Lawrence, who was standing in the light projection, flashed a string of green data code in his pupils. However, at this moment, his pupils suddenly shrank a little, and his face also showed a look of disbelief.

“Impossible!”

Sensing something was wrong from the reaction on Lawrence’s face, Gladstone instantly became nervous.

“What happened?”

“Someone tinkered with the program I set up.”

“Tinkered? What do you mean...”

Lawrence glanced at him blankly without saying a word. His figure, together with the holographic beam, disappeared silently.

Seeing the old man disappearing in front of him, Gladstone was instantly dumbfounded. He quickly rushed to the desk while shouting at the communication channel that was still connected, “Wait a minute, hey! What do you mean! You’re just going to leave us alone?”

The green light of the communication channel was still flashing, but there was no response.

As he sat back on the office chair, cold beads of sweat slid down from Gladstone’s forehead.

Um...

He saw the situation going south and left to save himself!

*“A *shole!”*

Gladstone’s fists that were resting on the desk were clenched tightly as his eyes flashed a fierce glare.

We can't just sit and wait to die...

He took a deep breath and sat back on the office chair. After that, he swiped his index finger across the holographic screen and dialed a special number.

Soon, the call was connected.

A hoarse voice came from the static holographic screen.

"What do you want me to do?"

"Look at the frontlines." Leaning back on the cushion of the office chair, Gladstone continued in a cold tone, "If the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade crosses the last line of defense, take action on your side."

There was a moment of silence on the other end of the phone before the person replied, "We are probably not a match for those people."

"I didn't ask you to fight against the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade. Your goal is Mayor Xiao and his staff." Gladstone's eyes flashed with killing intent as he continued, "Kill them."

"Never let them fall into the hands of the Pan-Asian Cooperation!"

...

At the same time, in a corner of Tiangong City, the young woman sitting in the hotel slowly breathed a sigh of relief. After unplugging the data cable connected to her brain, she threw it into the suitcase.

"This should be fine."

If Lu Zhou were here, he would definitely be surprised.

Because this was none other than the robot "Tail", who he had once helped.

After the disaster, Pan-Asia cooperated to promulgate a new law on the application of artificial intelligence and robots and legally distinguished between autonomous and non-autonomous bionics. Since then, Tail had lived a secret life with Lili.

The reason why she appeared on Mars this time...

The main reason was that Xiao Ai couldn't stop worrying about Lu Zhou, so she entrusted Tail to follow along.

Fortunately, she came along.

As soon as she arrived in this city, she noticed the anomaly here. Many awakened people who had been implanted with dangerous codes were hiding in the crowd.

She could feel from their electromagnetic waves that their emotions were deliberately distorted.

Thinking about the tragedies that had happened on Earth, she immediately reported the situation to Xiao Ai, and she also copied her emotional code into these "mutated" robots.

And just now, she finally completed this time-consuming and huge project.

"There seems to be a fight outside..." Tail got up and walked to the edge of the balcony. As she looked at the thick smoke rising from the street in the distance, she couldn't help but have a trace of worry on her face.

Lu Zhou hadn't been around for a few days.

She could hardly feel the electromagnetic wave ripples that belonged to Ling.

However, Ling was a strong robot, so if he was with Lu Zhou, nothing would go wrong.

In contrast, she was more worried about Lili.

She hadn't seen her for many days, and she wondered if Lili had been eating well and sleeping on time...

Chapter 1639: Self Defeated

"Stop! This is a military restricted zone, no traffic ahead, leave immediately!"

Without any words of nonsense, Wang Peng raised the gun in his hand and pulled the trigger cleanly. With two quick gunshots, the guard standing next to the checkpoint fell back on his back.

“What were you saying?”

Wang Peng looked at the man next to him, who was squatting down on the ground in fear. The guard threw away his weapon while shivering. Wang Peng didn't say a word. He walked across the checkpoint, heading towards the town hall.

The defensive force of Tiangong City was concentrated in the Eastern District. It was currently fighting with the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade for control of street 23.

That was the main road leading to the town hall. It was also a transportation hub connecting the residential area and the industrial area. Once the control of street 23 was lost, the fortifications advantage of Tiangong City's militia organization would be completely lost.

Not only that, but they would also have to fight hand-to-hand with the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade in small alleys that were difficult to maneuver with heavy weapons.

And this was what Regimental Commander Yang Hailong didn't want to see.

After all, if the fight was in an open field, the pros and cons of the two sides' equipment would not be reflected. Once the battlefield was pulled from the open area to the alleyways, their exoskeleton armor would be no different than a fake cosplay.

“The frontline battle is in crisis! Tell Mayor Xiao that if his reinforcements don't arrive within 30 minutes, we can only continue to shrink the line of defense and move the battlefield from street 23 to the square at the entrance of the town hall!”

Outside the temporary command post, the roaring of guns made him increase the volume of his speech, only by shouting could his words be heard by the other end of the communication line.

Regimental Commander Yang angrily hung up the phone, he swiped the holographic screen with his index finger, walked to the side of the command

table, and saw the reinforcements who were still ten kilometers away. He smashed on the table several times with his fists.

“This group of useless rubbish... At this critical moment, except for hiding and being dramatic, they are useless!”

Suddenly, he began to feel regret.

In the beginning, he swore an oath to join the Alliance Army, first out of passion, and second, to seek support in his career. He thought that this was an extremely correct and bright path, but after seeing the pig teammates he had, he felt like his hard work was wasted!

There was neither a war mobilization nor a press conference. Without any preparation in advance, they suddenly declared war on the sovereign state.

Where are the brains of these idiots?

Up until now, the war had only lasted less than 20 hours, yet they were missing more than 2,000 non-combat personnel. Among these 2000 people, at least 80% escaped from this war!

The lower right corner of the holographic screen suddenly flashed a communication request prompt.

Yang Hailong quickly glanced over. Seeing that it was a request from the mayor's office, he finally pressed the connection button. The communication channel was connected. Before he had time to speak, Mayor Xiao, who was standing opposite the video window, said in an eager tone.

“Reinforcements are coming soon! You must maintain on your side! Listen, you must guard street 23 at all costs. As long as our reinforcements arrive, we can trap the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade in Tiangong City!”

“How long!” Yang Hailong yelled in an angry voice, “If we continue fighting to the death, I am afraid that all of my people will—”

“Then let them fight to the death!” Interrupting Yang Hailong's words, Xiao Hong raised his own voice and said solemnly, “We can recruit again, but if we lose the line of defense, damn it, what is that sound.”

The holographic video window shook suddenly.

Yang Hailong looked at Mayor Xiao in the window, who seemed to turn his head. Then the communication was suddenly cut off.

The command post was quiet for about five minutes.

Seeing that the call hadn't come back, Yang Hailong gulped, and a bad premonition gradually developed in his heart.

As if confirming his premonition, an officer suddenly ran in from outside in a hurry.

"Sir! Gunshots were heard in the direction of the town hall! The guards are suspected of having an exchange of fire with unknown armed forces!"

"How is that possible!" Yang Hailong's eyes turned red in an instant. He couldn't help but step forward and grabbed the officer's collar as he said, "We have blocked everyone from going to the city center. How could the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade walk under our noses!"

Although he didn't like Xiao Hong very much, they were still on the same side after all. Once the town hall was taken down, his situation would become quite dangerous.

Especially now that the morale of the Alliance Army itself was sluggish, if the soldiers knew that even their hometown had been taken, there would be even more deserters.

Looking at the angry Regimental Commander Yang, the officer hesitated for a long time and didn't say anything.

In fact, he didn't know what was going on. When his subordinates reported the situation to him, he was so scared that he almost passed out.

"Let the people from battalion 2 rush to the town hall from the defense zone immediately!"

"But..."

"No buts, go!"

Yang Hailong violently released his hand and pushed the officer to the door of the command post. However, before the officer could leave the door, a strong shock came from his feet.

He reached out his hand to grab the table next to him as he waited for the shock to fade. Yang Hailong muttered to himself in a daze, "Is it an earthquake? No, it's impossible. Earthquakes don't come from Mars! What the hell was that just now..."

"Probably the Qinling naval gun." The officer looked at the ceiling with trepidation. Holding on to the door frame, he continued nervously, "They fired at least five rounds..."

"Fired at the city?! Are they crazy?!"

"No, it's not in the city..." The officer gulped and continued, "If it was fired at the city, we wouldn't be here... Judging from the tremors, the shell fell about ten kilometers away."

10 kilometers away...

Yang Hailong was taken aback for a moment, then his pupils suddenly shrank to a point.

Reinforcements!

It was our reinforcements that were bombed!

He slumped down on the chair. His hair turned white, as if he had aged ten years in an instant.

Looking at his superior in a daze, the officer gulped and spoke.

"Sir..."

"Leave me alone for a while."

The officer hesitated, but he obeyed the order and retreated from the room.

Seeing the door of the temporary command post close, Yang Hailong silently took off the officer hat and placed it on his knees. He stared at the badge for a long time, and a bitter smile suddenly appeared at the corner of his mouth.

"Everything is over..."

He reached his trembling hand to his waist.

Not long after, a gunshot sounded from the command post.

The shoulders of the officer standing outside the door trembled, and he walked away without looking back.

Without reinforcements, the firepower of the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade was no match for anyone, and the defense line of street 23 was disappearing at a speed visible to the naked eye.

At the same time, the town hall was also full of smoke.

Under the attack of unidentified armed forces, the guards stationed here were beaten and confused. They could only try and hide with Mayor Xiao and his staff in the huge building.

Just as the battle in Tiangong City was coming to an end, someone tens of kilometers underground suddenly stopped controlling the holographic modeling system.

“Is this the warp speed technique of advanced civilization... I see.”

General Reinhardt, who was standing next to him, glanced at him.

“Scholar of a lower civilization, please don’t tell me this technology is simple.”

“I didn’t mean that. In fact, it’s the opposite... It’s really eye-opening to see something like this.”

Lu Zhou’s meticulous face finally stretched out a smile. Looking at the complicated holographic model lying quietly in his hand, Lu Zhou said softly with a pleasant voice, “It’s finally done!”

Chapter 1640: Shambolic War!

The corridors of the town hall were filled with lingering gunpowder smoke.

About ten minutes ago, this place was suddenly attacked by unidentified militants. Although this group of militants was small in number, they were well-equipped and well-trained.

Since most of the Alliance Army had been pushed to the front lines, the guards stationed in the town hall were undermanned. At the beginning of the exchange of fire, they were defeated by the militants swiftly.

“Sh*t! These people are definitely not from the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade!” shouted the guard who was hiding behind the bunker, fighting back while changing the magazine in his hand.

“No sh*t?!”

On the other side, passing through the smoke-filled plaza while carrying an electromagnetic assault rifle from an unknown corpse, Wang Peng frowned as he watched the flaming town hall. He muttered to himself, “Are they fighting amongst themselves?”

Without staying at the entrance for long, he stepped over the barrier that had been blown up, cautiously raised the rifle in his hand, and walked into the corridor.

Sporadic gunshots came from the corridor not far away. Wang Peng first shot down the two guards farthest from him, then slammed the rifle and brought down the person closest to him. Finally, he aimed the gun at the last person.

“Don’t, don’t shoot! I surrender...”

Looking at the guy who quickly put down his weapon, Wang Peng put the muzzle on his head and asked, “Where is Lu Zhou?”

“Lu-Lu Zhou?”

“Don’t talk nonsense, I have two people captured right now, I only plan to keep one.”

“S-sir, I really don’t know!”

Seeing the guard almost pee his pants in fear, Wang Peng frowned.

Such a spineless person was not the type who would take a secret to the grave...

The guard who had been knocked to the ground by one of his rifles had woken up. Seeing Wang Peng with his back facing him, his eyes flickered slightly, and he quietly reached out his hand to the pistol tied to his leg.

However, before he could pull the pistol out of the holster, there was an electric flash in his sights. His consciousness then fell into the boundless darkness.

“Now there is only one left. I advise you that you better not do something foolish like him.” Looking away from the guard who had turned into a corpse, Wang Peng looked towards the guard leaning against the wall. He pointed at the side corridor with his gun and said, “Take me to your mayor.”

“Okay, okay...” The guard got up from the ground tremblingly, walked ahead with his head in his hands, and stammered, “Please, please come with me.”

Looking at the captive that had risen from the ground, Wang Peng thought for a moment. He then suddenly spoke.

“Oh, yeah.

“What are your orders?

“And who are those people?”

Looking in the direction where Wang Peng’s gun was pointed, the guard saw militants lying on the ground wearing light armor. With his hands on his head, he spoke with a daze in his eyes.

“Aren’t they... with you?”

With me?

Wang Peng frowned and began to realize that something was wrong, but for a while, he couldn’t tell what was wrong.

However, this was obviously not the time to take care of these things.

Academician Lu was still in the hands of those people.

No one could guarantee that those who had failed wouldn’t do something reprehensible to him...

...

At the same time, on the other side of the town hall.

Under the escort of the most elite soldiers, Mayor Xiao and Gao Ruiming moved from the mayor's office to the underground garage of the town hall.

There was a secret evacuation point here, designed to deal with special natural disasters.

The pipeline through the secret evacuation point could directly reach the safe house on the edge of the industrial zone, which happened to be behind the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade. If they really failed in the end and the militia organization in Tiangong City couldn't stop the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade, then they could also disguise themselves as fleeing civilians and escape from Tiangong City along with the evacuation crowd.

"Damn, it's been so long, what are those people doing?"

Mayor Xiao stamped his foot. He looked around, then cast his gaze on Gao Ruiming, who was standing next to him with a holographic computer in his hand. Mayor Xiao lowered his voice and asked, "How long until the reinforcements arrive! Tell them if they don't hurry up, they will only be able to clean up the corpses for us!"

"The communication channel is busy, I can't get in touch!" With an anxious expression on his face, Gao Ruiming cursed. His right fist slammed the wall on the side. "Damn it! Someone broke the signal base station in this area."

Mayor Xiao was shocked. "What about the backup?!"

"Let me try—"

Before he could finish his words, the lamp above his head went out without any warning. The personal terminal in Gao Ruiming's hand also turned off, as well as every other electronic device around him.

In an instant, the entire underground garage was plunged into darkness.

"EMP..."

After putting on the night vision goggles on the helmet, the captain of the security guards standing in front of Mayor Xiao had a solemn expression on his face. He took out a light stick from his tactical vest, lit the fuse, and threw it forward. "The electronic equipment here are all paralyzed, so be on the lookout."

After hearing the captain's instructions, several other guards also took out their light sticks.

As the torch-like rods were thrown out, the darkness in the underground garage was gradually dissipated by the orange-red light. However, the quiet feeling of doom was still pressing on Xiao Hong's heart, making him almost out of breath.

Obviously, he was not alone.

Gao Ruiming, who put away the holographic computer, pulled him aside and said eagerly, "We can't wait any longer, we must leave here right away... You don't hear any gunshots from above, so that means there aren't many guards left. Those Pan-Asian Cooperation special forces will find us here sooner or later!"

Xiao Hong nodded stiffly. He gulped and said, "You're right."

At this moment, in the darkness not far away, there was a gunshot.

Everyone's heart tightened. They couldn't see who was taken out by the gunshot.

Gunshots sounded one after another, piercing the fragile nerves of everyone including Xiao Hong, Gao Ruiming, and the security guards.

It was as if a devil were lurking on the edge of darkness, dragging everyone who accidentally stepped into the abyss of hell.

Finally, the gunfire stopped.

Only the crackling sound of burning light rods could be heard quietly.

After gulping, Xiao Hong, who was hiding behind the bunker, wanted to send someone over to see what was going on there. However, at this moment, a clear sound of footsteps drifted from the darkness.

"You guys should surrender."

Surrender...

A trace of hesitation flashed in Gao Ruiming's eyes while a trace of reluctance flashed in the eyes of the security guard captain.

Xiao Hong had a complicated look on his face.

However, it didn't take long for all the complexity to be replaced by irrational madness.

He used the last bit of strength in his body and roared towards the boundless darkness.

"Want me to surrender..."

"Not in your f*cking dreams!"

"I would rather die than be stripped of freedom!"

Chapter 1641: "The Truth Is Revealed"

Even recalling this moment from many years later, Xiao Hong would not forget what happened that day.

Less than half a minute after he yelled out the phrase "I would rather die than be stripped of freedom", he raised his hands without hesitation. He looked at the person who walked past the corpses.

"Don't! Don't shoot! I surrender, I surrender! I will give you whatever you want! Don't kill me!"

After looking at the corpse on the ground, Wang Peng moved the muzzle slightly. He aimed at Xiao Hong and Gao Ruiming and said in a cold voice, "Hand over Academician Lu."

"Academician Lu?"

"Don't play dumb with me."

His muzzle moved down an inch, and Wang Peng squeezed the trigger impatiently.

Hearing the bang of the gun, Xiao Hong looked at the concrete shards splashing on the edge of his pants. He flinched in fear and shouted in panic.

“F*ck! Play dumb? I also want to know where that guy went! Wait, who are you? You are definitely not from the Pan-Asian Cooperation... Academician Lu should have been transferred away by them already. Gladstone! It's you! It's you, right! I know you cultists are not trustworthy!”

Seeing Xiao Hong becoming crazy, Wang Peng frowned slightly.

Gladstone?

The name sounds familiar...

If he remembered correctly, wasn't this guy just an ordinary entrepreneur? He was the manager of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Fund who was currently raising funds for the “Noah's Ark” project.

Wait a minute...

Cultist?

Could it be that...

A possibility suddenly emerged in Wang Peng's mind.

Although it was a bit far-fetched, it was not completely impossible...

“You mean the well-known Alpha Centauri exploration foundation is a product of The Spirit of The Universe Foundation?” The gun was aimed at Xiao Hong's forehead again. Wang Peng continued in an interrogating tone, “And Gladstone is their puppet? Or is he a leader of The Spirit of The Universe Foundation?”

“Ha, why are you still pretending?” Xiao Hong looked at Wang Peng coldly as he spoke like a poisonous snake. “You know better than anyone else what he did—”

“I'm interrogating you, you're not the one asking me.” Wang Peng continued while looking at him with cold eyes, “I advise you to answer this question properly. This is related to whether you can get a chance to reduce your sentence in court.”

Looking at the muzzle of the gun, Xiao Hong felt that all his courage had been emptied.

Although he also had a lot of confusion in his mind, the impatient look on the face of the person in front of him made him afraid to speak a single word of nonsense.

Slowly, he squeezed a word from his throat.

“I said...”

Seeing Wang Peng’s gaze indicating him to continue, he tried to calm the tremor in his voice as he spoke.

“Last month... Gladstone found me and asked me to approve his Noah’s Ark plan. When I first got the plan, my first reaction was ‘what the hell are they doing?’, but I suddenly thought that building such a large starship could help the shipbuilding industry in Tiangong City, and this was an opportunity for us. The warp speed technology that they needed... We wanted it too.

“Then we discussed, and we wanted to first invite Lu Zhou to Tiangong City in the name of academic exchanges, then the town hall would give the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Fund a credit endorsement and use the Pan-Asian Cooperation’s financial policies to issue pre-sale tickets and corporate bonds. But in fact—”

Wang Peng: “In fact, part of this money was transferred to the account of the town hall as a ‘war fund’ for raising military expenses?”

Although he wanted to deny it, this secret couldn’t be hidden any longer.

After hesitating for a while, Xiao Hong finally nodded in embarrassment.

“Yes, just like you saw...”

Wang Peng said coldly, “Taking our money to build guns and fight us. The audacity.”

“It was not my idea...” Xiao Hong whispered. He looked at Gao Ruiming, who was sitting next to him with an awkward smile, and said, “I was only responsible for signing the papers...”

In any case, such a thing had already happened.

The Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Fund colluded with the rebels in Tiangong City and also transferred the funds raised for colonizing Proxima

Centauri b to the account of Tiangong City town hall. Forget about building a “Noah’s Ark”, the huge fines and management might make this company directly declare bankruptcy.

It was almost predictable. When the truth came out, a financial tsunami would be inevitable...

Wang Peng glanced at the two of them and continued to ask, “Little things put aside for now, so where is Lu Zhou?”

“Lu Zhou... I don’t know, I really don’t know,” Xiao Hong explained as the eyes of the person in front of him became more and more menacing. He continued, “I admit, we are also looking for him! His warp drive engine is the key to our victory! And according to our experts’ guess, there should be a way to interfere with the hyperspace channel. As long as we master the technology to interfere with the hyperspace channel, we can prevent the Pan-Asian fleet from coming...”

Looking at Wang Peng cautiously, Xiao Hong gulped and continued, “Then we went to his room, and he was not in there at all. A few pieces of clothing were missing. Later on, we tried to investigate the surveillance, but ever since he left the hotel, he seemed to have evaporated. Not one frame of surveillance of him was found! We wondered at the time whether you guys knew about our intentions and moved him away in advance.”

Xiao Hong had basically been able to conclude that the person standing in front of him was not a cultist but an agent of the Security Bureau. As for the unidentified armed forces who attacked the town hall, Wang Peng didn’t seem to know them either.

With that said, those people could only be sent by Gladstone...

Thinking of this, Xiao Hong’s face suddenly showed an angry expression. He clenched his jaws and said, “I see! That despicable and shameless villain! Those people are not special forces of the Pan-Asian Cooperation at all, they are killers they sent to murder us! This group of idiots stabbed me in the back! Listen, Academician Lu is not here. If he isn’t protected by your people, he has to be in the hands of the foundation!

“They want to betray us...”

Just as Xiao Hong was cursing, the ceiling of the underground garage suddenly shook from an explosion.

Hearing the intense footsteps and the sporadic gunshots that suddenly started to sound again, a touch of despair appeared on the faces of Xiao Hong and Gao Ruiming.

“It’s over... Everything is over.”

Staring at the ceiling, Gao Ruiming whispered.

For some reason, when he said this, there was a sense of relief in his heart.

It was better to fall into the hands of Pan-Asian Cooperation than to fall into the hands of those cultists.

After working with Gladstone for so many years, he knew everything that guy had done, and he knew how cruel and dirty the methods of those people were.

Lifting his gaze and looking at Wang Peng with a solemn expression, Xiao Hong spoke in a weak voice.

“For this information... How many years is reduced on my sentence?”

“Maybe twenty years, maybe thirty years, the key is to see how big the fish we can catch using the clues you provided.”

Hearing this answer, Xiao Hong gradually breathed a sigh of relief. His tight shoulders also relaxed a little.

Wang Peng smirked disdainfully at this clown as he spoke with a slight mockery in his tone.

“Don’t be happy just yet.

“As for how many centuries your sentence is, that depends on the judge.”

Chapter 1642: You Are Under Arrest

As the town hall was reoccupied by the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade, this battle of independence finally came to an end.

Mayor Xiao and his staff Gao Ruiming, as well as those senior town hall leaders who survived the killers sent by the foundation, were taken on board the cruiser Qinling, and they were heading to the Tianzhou spaceport in the Earth-Moon system.

As the main war criminals of this war, they would be tried in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei city group, the political center of the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

In order to help the colony restore order as soon as possible, the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade stayed behind.

The current town hall had been taken over by the administrative commissioner appointed by the Pan-Asian Cooperation. At the same time, the public facilities damaged in the war had also begun to be rebuilt.

But when the administrative commissioner appointed by the Pan-Asian Cooperation investigated the accounts of the town hall, he found something very interesting by “accident”...

It was a fund account.

Like the former Mayor Xiao Hong said in his confession, the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation indirectly sponsored the uprising through the transfer of funds...

In the residential area of Tiangong City...

The gate of a mansion in the wealthy suburb had been surrounded by an armed police force.

When Wang Peng rang the doorbell, Gladstone was doing morning exercises in the front yard.

After hearing the doorbell, he went to the hallway and opened the door.

Looking at the face standing in front of the door, Gladstone's face showed a confused expression.

“Hello, you are...”

However, this confusion did not stay on his face for long, because soon the person in front of him showed a holographic ID card.

Looking at the badge on the card and the line of text printed below the badge, Gladstone's expression was slightly stiff.

Obviously, he was no stranger to what Wang Peng was holding.

"Wang Peng, agent of the Security Bureau." Wang Peng retracted the holographic identity card. Wang Peng looked at Gladstone and continued blankly, "It's nice to meet you, Mr. Gladstone."

"Nice to meet you too... You know, in this turbulent and special period, there is nothing more pleasant than seeing the badge of the Pan-Asian Cooperation." The expression on his face was obviously not happy. Gladstone pretended not to know anything and said, "Of course, enough small talk, I believe you are on official business. Then may I ask... What do you want from me?"

Wang Peng didn't want to talk nonsense with this guy. He asked straightforwardly, "Mr. Gladstone, don't you think you should explain yourself?"

"Sorry, I don't quite understand what you mean."

"Don't pretend to be stupid." Wang Peng pushed a holographic screen in front of him and continued blankly, "This is the financial account of the town hall. There are five billion credits of funds from your company's account. It was directly transferred to the account of the town hall. The money was used to purchase security equipment... You should know what I'm implying."

Looking at the holographic screen in front of him, an unnatural stiffness flashed across Gladstone's face.

But soon, he concealed the unnatural expression behind his clever smile.

"Oh, was it discovered? Actually... we were forced to."

Wang Peng raised his eyebrows, looked at him with curiosity, and motioned him to continue.

The gears in Gladstone's head began to spin as he defended himself.

“You know, the entire Tiangong City was in Mayor Xiao’s hand. Ever since he was elected mayor, he has gotten worse. Powerless businessmen like us have no way to deal with his arrogant demands. Of course, I don’t want to use investors’ money to pay for the debts of the town hall...”

“Powerless?” Wang Peng raised his eyebrows slightly. “Mr. Gladstone, you are too humble.”

“Humble? No, I’m talking about—”

“Okay, stop acting. I know you belong to The Spirit of The Universe Foundation.” Too lazy to continue listening to his story, Wang Peng interrupted him and said, “Hand over Academician Lu, this is your only chance of surviving.”

Hand over Academician Lu?

Didn’t you guys take Academician Lu away a long time ago?

Gladstone was stunned, but he realized that this might be a trap.

“Sorry, I do not understand what you mean...”

“I will make you understand.”

Wang Peng waved his hand and said only one word to the special police officers behind him.

“Search.”

Several heavily armed policemen rushed into the house.

“Wait, what are you guys doing?!”

Gladstone quickly tried to reach out to block them, but he was pushed away.

“Hey, you don’t have the right to do this!”

Wang Peng ignored the guy’s furious yelling. He didn’t even look at him.

Soon, the special police turned the house upside down.

However, to his surprise, they did not find any valuable clues in Gladstone's house.

Especially the clues about the whereabouts of Academician Lu...

"Sir, Academician Lu is not here."

Listening to the report by his subordinate, Wang Peng frowned and asked, "Have you checked the basement? Are there any hidden doors?"

"We have checked everything, I can assure you that there are no secret hide-outs."

Looking at the investigator in front of him, Wang Peng's eyebrows frowned slightly.

The building of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation had been searched, including the companies that had a partnership with them. But there wasn't a trace of Academician Lu.

Maybe...

He was transferred outside of Mars?

This doesn't make sense...

The spaceport in orbit was still under the control of the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade. Forget a living person, even a fly couldn't leave the colony.

Seeing the two whispering, Gladstone stepped forward and spoke in a dissatisfied tone.

"Whatever foundation you're talking about or Academician Lu, I don't know anything! All I know is that you broke into my home without a court search warrant, and you made a mess here... Listen, for what happened today, I need an explanation!"

Wang Peng glanced at him and was about to say something, but at this moment, an agent of the Security Bureau came over with something.

It was a virtual reality helmet. The style was quite old, and judging by the traces of paint falling off the surface, it had to have been passed down from decades ago.

“Sir! We found this thing in his study room.”

Gladstone looked in the direction of the person, and the moment his gaze fell on the helmet, his face instantly lost color.

This is the key to the “meeting room”!

The admission ticket to the highest level of The Spirit of The Universe Foundation!

But...

Why is it here?

Impossible, he clearly remembered that he hid it in a secret place. This place was in a secret area of his office instead of his home.

What is going on?

After capturing the changes on his face, Wang Peng raised his eyebrows.

“This is yours?”

Gladstone squeezed a smile on his face and explained stiffly, “This is just a gaming headset... I personally like to play games, so I collected this first-generation device. It’s not cheap, so be careful...”

“I will be careful. After all, this is important physical evidence.”

Gladstone was extremely nervous when Wang Peng smiled lightly. Too lazy to deal with him anymore, he reached out his hand directly to the agent.

“Give it to me.”

Wang Peng took the helmet over in his hand and weighed it. He then put it on his head without hesitation.

Because Wang Peng’s actions were so sudden, even if Gladstone wanted to stop him, he had no time to react. He could only watch his secrets being exposed in front of him...

Soon after, Wang Peng took off the helmet and threw it back into the detective’s hands.

Looking at the completely pale Gladstone, Wang Peng suddenly smiled.

“You are under arrest.”

Chapter 1643: What Happened When I Was Gone?

The truth would always reveal itself.

Especially in the midst of a big lie.

Four days after the war ended, when the Qinling that was escorting war criminals left the spaceport in orbit around Mars, the news that the Pan-Asian Cooperation would include the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation on the investigation list spread like wildfire.

Before the sun even rose from the horizon, the entrance of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation building was already crowded.

What was different from the past was that the excitement and enthusiasm on the faces of the people surrounding this building had been replaced by anger.

They were holding signs in their hands and shouting slogans, and they only had one word in mind.

Which was—

Refund!

“Gladstone should feel fortunate.” Standing in one of the offices within the building, Wang Peng, who was in charge of supervising the investigation, spoke as he watched the crowds outside the window.

“Oh yeah?” Standing next to Wang Peng, Xing Bian raised his eyebrows, showing an expression of interest on his face.

He only got here yesterday.

As the director of the special operations office responsible for investigating The Spirit of The Universe Foundation at the Security Bureau, he had the highest authority in investigating this matter.

Taking into account the communication distance problem, in order to facilitate the understanding of the situation on the spot, he rushed here as soon as possible.

But when he arrived here, the investigation work had actually entered the final stage...

After a pause, Wang Peng continued speaking in a very emotional tone.

"If we don't control this place and let him face these creditors who are clamoring for refunds, I'm afraid his body will be torn apart."

Ten billion credits.

Converting it to Chinese yuan from a century ago, this was easily trillions in purchasing power.

This wave of scams was not limited to middle-class families. The Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation, endorsed by the town hall, had made deals together with many banks and investment institutions, including the AIIB.

No one thought that after receiving their investments, Gladstone would actually buy unsecured special bonds issued by the town hall, basically funding their military.

Now that the Pan-Asian Cooperation had won, and Xiao Hong had already fallen below the law, obviously, this war debt couldn't be honored.

The only thing they hoped now was that they could get back a little money before the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Fund declared bankruptcy.

"The Spirit of the Universe Foundation... was destroyed?" Wang Peng felt a little disbelief in his heart when he said this sentence.

"Yes, all the truth has been revealed, and the remaining questions are constantly being unraveled." Xing Bian smiled lightly and continued, "Gladstone's identity is Grey Cloak, and his helmet was inherited from his grandfather... When we searched his ancestral home on Earth, we found something that might be of interest to you."

He rolled his wrists and gently pushed a holographic screen in front of Wang Peng.

Looking at the holographic screen floating in front of him, Wang Peng was slightly stunned. He read the text on it.

“Aurora Borealis cruise ship, target Academician Lu... so...”

“The last Grey Cloak, Gladstone’s grandfather, was the mastermind of the cruise ship attack.” Xing Bian nodded and continued, “According to the clues we collected, he died 50 years ago.”

“Natural causes?”

“Yeah.”

The expression on Wang Peng’s face was slightly complicated.

After a long period of silence, he spoke.

“I can’t believe he eventually escaped the law.”

“I don’t think so.”

Wang Peng raised his head to look at Xing Bian and cast a questioning glance at him.

Xing Bian smiled. He looked at the recovering city outside the windows and continued, “Time has given him the most severe punishment, making him spend the rest of his life in panic. In this sense, being arrested is a relief. And according to the information we investigated, around the 2030s, in order to avoid the pursuit of intelligence agencies, he not only disfigured his face but also sold his company and moved from the city to the remote countryside. When the economic crisis of the 2050s happened, regional alliances started to appear. The security department gradually relaxed its pursuit of The Spirit of The Universe Foundation, and he finally came out of seclusion. However, he only survived for a few years before he passed away.”

Wang Peng: “This makes me feel a little bit better... Anyways, the main point is that Grey Cloak is finally caught.”

Xing Bian reached out his fist and bumped Wang Peng’s shoulder.

“Yeah, this is all thanks to you. This is all your work.”

“It doesn’t really matter whose work it was... Where’s Lu Zhou? Is there any news?”

Xing Bian shook his head.

“We still haven’t found him. Our team of intelligence personnel has almost turned the entire Tiangong City upside down, but there is still no clue... Maybe he went to the future alone.”

“How can that be...”

Wang Peng wanted to continue but suddenly stopped.

Because at this moment, he suddenly thought that this kind of thing had happened before.

If Lu Zhou really found a dormant pod somewhere and stuffed himself in and slept for a hundred years, there would be no point standing here worrying.

“Anyway, the mission you brought from the past is considered complete at this moment.”

Seeing Wang Peng was silent, Xing Bian smiled in a relieved way and changed the subject.

“The identity of Grey Cloak is revealed. According to Gladstone’s confession, they don’t know each other’s identities. Our undercover agents only need to get the corresponding account number or helmet to be able to find them. We have now caught the biggest fish. It is only a matter of time before the remaining members are captured and brought to justice.

“As for the others, let time serve them justice.”

Speaking of this, Xing Bian suddenly remembered something, so he continued, “By the way, the mess of the Alpha Centauri Foundation has not been cleaned up. I plan to send you to Tiangong City for a period of time to help them. And also take care of the remnants of The Spirit of The Universe Foundation.”

Looking at Xing Bian, Wang Peng nodded.

“Thank you.”

“Oh, no worries.” Xing Bian continued, “Even if I didn’t make you stay here, I’m sure you wouldn’t want to leave.”

Wang Peng did not respond, but his expression was obvious.

This was the case.

Lu Zhou’s whereabouts were unknown, and no one knew whether he was alive or dead.

A century ago, he had already made the same mistake.

This time, he would never let him disappear again.

Wang Peng turned to leave Gladstone’s office. He stood in the elevator, pressed the button on the garage floor, then came to the parking lot.

Just when he was about to make a call to assign work to his subordinates, he received a call.

When Wang Peng was about to open the address book to confirm who was calling, a holographic beam had already been projected in front of him.

Seeing the familiar face that appeared in the video window, he was stunned.

After that, excitement filled his eyes instantly.

Lu Zhou looked at his old friend with a muddled expression and spoke.

“Hey, what’s going on?”

“What happened when I was gone?”

Chapter 1644: Everything Is a Misunderstanding

Lu Zhou never expected that, after taking a short trip away from home, so much had happened.

Inside the room of Star Sky Hotel, Lu Zhou looked at his clothes and personal belongings that had been rummaged through. He sat by the bed, pinched his eyebrows with a headache, and said, "In other words... You guys thought I was taken away by people from the town hall?"

Wang Peng nodded awkwardly.

"That is the case..."

After organizing the thoughts in his mind, Lu Zhou tried to piece together the whole incident and continued, "Then, you didn't find me at the town hall, so you went to the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Fund? But what does this have to do with the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Fund? Aren't they just a business?"

"In the beginning, we thought so too, but we later discovered that their background is not that simple." Wang Peng sighed and continued, "Remember the Aurora Borealis cruise ship?"

"I do, but that was all a hundred years ago."

"Yes, it's been nearly a hundred years." Wang Peng continued with emotion, "The mastermind of that incident was a man named Gray Cloak, who was Gladstone."

This sentence sounded a bit confusing, but with Lu Zhou's logical ability, it was not difficult for him to comprehend. What he didn't understand was that if he remembered correctly, the man named Gladstone should have been in his thirties, so it shouldn't be possible for him to live for more than a hundred years.

"I know what you are thinking. In fact, I was confused too." Wang Peng sighed and continued, "Gladstone does not specifically refer to a certain person, it is just an identity... or a title. The previous owner of this title passed it along with his account to Gladstone before the end of his life. And now, we have discovered the inner workings of their entire organization, and they know nothing about us."

On the surface, the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation was just a chess piece of the foundation. In the eyes of most senior executives of the foundation, Gladstone's identity was no different from the arrested Song

Yangwei and Morinaga. They would never think that Gladstone was actually Grey Cloak, the “boss” of the foundation.

As per the saying, the most dangerous place was also the safest place. The more someone revealed themselves, the less likely it was for them to be suspected of being involved. Especially when it was uncertain if the foundation members were loyal, this was the safest way...

At least this was what Gladstone thought before being arrested.

“But why did... this absurdity turn into a civil war?”

Looking out the window, Lu Zhou couldn't help but continue to ask, “Do you know? When I first came back, I was shocked by the holes in the streets. I thought that something like a meteorite fell in the city center. Later on, I learned that the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade had a fight with the Martian militia.”

“This is a long story. To be honest, we were actually quite surprised...”

Wang Peng smiled bitterly. After a pause, he continued, “In fact, signs of a wish for independence appeared in Tiangong City. We were aware of it before, but we did not expect that this kind of thinking had penetrated into the top level of Tiangong City management. We never imagined that Xiao Hong's plan was not only the independence of Tiangong City but also to gather other colonial cities on Mars together to establish a ‘regional alliance’ belonging to the Martians.

“They developed their own weapons in the asteroid belt by cooperating with space pirates and used this to threaten the military forces of regional alliances such as the Pan-Asian Cooperation. At the same time, they used this as a bargaining chip to threaten the Pan-Asian Cooperation on the basis of independence and wish to have a certain number of starships. They planned to rebel a long time ago.”

Lu Zhou: “But why now—”

“Because of you.” Wang Peng looked at Lu Zhou with a baffled expression on his face and continued, “The Qinling has achieved faster than light travel. Considering that Tiangong City was granted a certain level of autonomy because of its distance from Earth, once the problem of faster than light communication is solved, they would sooner or later remove the autonomy of

Tiangong City. Under such circumstances, launching a civil war was his only choice, and taking the lead in installing a warp drive was the only bargaining chip for them to defeat the First Fleet.”

Lu Zhou: “So the invitation to the academic conference...”

“Seems like you already know. Yes, Europa was just a cover. Their real intention was to establish a permanent and secret space base on the asteroid belt. The academic conference has had no progress despite many days of discussion...” Wang Peng shrugged. “I’m guessing it may be deliberate, but the purpose was to hold you back, to buy time for the Mars industry to master warp speed technology, and perhaps be able to directly coerce you to hand over the technology if necessary.”

“As for The Spirit of The Universe Foundation...” Wang Peng hesitated and continued, “Although we don’t know what they want to do, they seem to be eager to get their hands on the warp speed technology.”

Because of the interest entanglement between all parties, this civil war that broke out had evolved into a battle of the three forces.

No one thought that the disappearance of Academician Lu was a misunderstanding from the beginning. He was not in the hands of the town hall or The Spirit of The Universe Foundation at all. He was not protected by the Security Bureau like Mayor Xiao had guessed. He just left Tiangong City to take care of some personal matters.

Wang Peng was still confused about what exactly did Lu Zhou do when he left Tiangong City during this period. However, Lu Zhou didn’t seem to want to answer this question. After saying that he “went to meet an old friend”, he stopped giving any further explanation. It was inappropriate for Wang Peng to continue to ask questions, so he had to give up.

Wang Peng had a tilted expression on his face. Lu Zhou, who finally figured out what had happened, was baffled.

I left for a short trip... and became the reason for a civil war?

“It seems like... I offended a lot of people this time.”

“Not offend. Just advanced certain events.” Wang Peng scratched his head while looking at Lu Zhou, who was a little ashamed. He explained, “Your

sudden disappearance made Xiao Hong mistakenly think that we have noticed his plan, so he decided to preemptively set off this time bomb. It is difficult to say whether it was a good thing or a bad thing that this war broke out ahead of time.”

Lu Zhou: “It would be nice if others could think the same way.”

“Don’t worry about this, I believe no one will blame you for this matter.” Wang Peng continued after hesitating, “I still don’t understand one thing, perhaps you could answer my confusions.”

Lu Zhou: “We’re all friends. Don’t be so polite, just ask if you have any questions.”

Wang Peng: “You said that after you left the hotel, you drove directly to the exit of Tiangong City, but how come when we searched for surveillance throughout the city, we didn’t find you?”

Wang Peng still did not understand this matter.

Not only Wang Peng, but also Mayor Xiao, Gladstone, and the others. They didn’t understand how Lu Zhou managed to slip away from everyone without them knowing it.

Normally speaking, due to his popularity, it would be impossible that no one had seen him along the way. Not to mention that there were cameras everywhere in Tiangong City. Using the city’s surveillance system, it would only take five minutes to find all footage of a certain target. And in less than one minute, a model of the target’s paths and destinations in Tiangong City would all be mapped out.

However, Wang Peng discovered during the investigation that, in addition to the days he disappeared, even during the period before the disappearance, Lu Zhou was not captured by even one frame of footage on the Tiangong City surveillance cameras.

It was almost like...

The footage was deleted.

Lu Zhou: “Are you saying that no cameras captured me?”

Wang Peng nodded and continued, "This is so strange."

"It's nothing strange." Lu Zhou smiled and continued, "In my opinion, my friend was probably worried about my safety, so they did something without telling me."

Wang Peng: "...?"

"Enough about this." After thinking for a moment, Lu Zhou changed the topic. "Speaking of which... I am curious about some things."

Wang Peng said immediately, "Please speak!"

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "You don't need to be so serious... According to you, Gladstone was at the top level of The Spirit of The Universe Foundation. Then what would happen to the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation?"

The Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation had created a financing fund for themselves.

If Lu Zhou remembered correctly, these guys had issued 10 billion credit points of corporate bonds and received a huge sum of investment credits from Pan-Asian Cooperation and even around the world.

Perhaps...

The bankruptcy of this company would develop into a new time bomb, leading to a financial tsunami that would be worse than the impact of Tiangong City's civil war.

"Probably they will go bankrupt... My colleague is already cooperating with the staff of the AIIB to liquidate its assets." Wang Peng thought for a while and replied, "After all, putting aside Gladstone's identity, we cannot simply let go of the funds sent to the town hall."

Also, since the Alpha Centauri Foundation was involved with that cult, the Security Bureau would never let them get off scot-free.

"So..." Lu Zhou nodded thoughtfully. After thinking for a moment, he suddenly said, "Can you introduce me to him?"

Wang Peng was taken aback for a moment. Confused, he then looked at Lu Zhou and asked, "To who?"

"The person in charge of the asset liquidation for the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation." Lu Zhou continued after a pause, "I want to talk to him about some things."

Chapter 1645: Manipulating the Market

The next day, inside a meeting room at the Star Sky Hotel.

With the help of Wang Peng, Lu Zhou met the senior executives who were sent by the AIIB to Tiangong City to conduct bankruptcy and liquidation of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation. However, what he did not expect was that the person who came was actually his acquaintance, Zhong Ziyu, the former managing director of East Asia Energy.

Last year, he was transferred from the board of directors of East Asia Energy to the headquarters of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The last time Lu Zhou saw him, he had already achieved the position of branch president.

Lu Zhou did not expect that he was actually the person in charge of the bankruptcy liquidation for the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation.

Is this a promotion or a demotion?

"Hello, Academician Lu." Looking at Lu Zhou standing in the conference room, this elegant and easygoing man showed a smile on his face. He extended his right hand and said, "We met again."

"Yeah we do, what a coincidence..." After shaking hands with him, Lu Zhou asked curiously, "How did you get sent here?"

Zhong Ziyu shrugged his shoulders helplessly and said, "There was no other way. This matter is very important, and it involves tens of billions of bad debt. A low-level manager wouldn't be able to handle the pressure, while a high-level manager might do a bad job. So a middle-level guy like me was sent over."

Lu Zhou: "So you got screwed?"

“Not exactly screwed, but if I don’t handle it well, it will be difficult to receive a promotion in the future.” Zhong Ziyu smiled and continued, “But thinking from another angle, if I can handle this matter well, it may be an opportunity for me. For example, the headquarters directly promoted my position from branch manager to Tiangong branch manager, which is equivalent to skipping two levels.”

Lu Zhou: “I always thought that practitioners in the financial industry would consider risks more carefully.”

“Risks and opportunities coexist.” Zhong Ziyu smiled and continued, “Speaking of which, I heard about the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Fund. Did you want to talk to me about something?”

“There is indeed something I want to discuss with you.” Lu Zhou made a gesture for him to sit down, smiled, and continued, “Let’s sit and talk.”

Zhong Ziyu raised his eyebrows with a hint of curiosity. He sat down at the conference table with his hands and fingers crossed on his knees, quietly waiting for Lu Zhou to speak.

To be honest, he did not have a clear and feasible idea on how to solve the mess of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation. After all, there were so many things involved, which were far more than just 10 billion credit points on the surface.

The current opinion of the acting mayor, who was appointed by the Pan-Asian Cooperation to take over the Tiangong town hall, was that Tiangong City needed to be rebuilt. So the 5 billion funds that had already been transferred to the town hall account couldn’t be returned. At most, they could return it in the form of bonds.

However, the credit rating of Tiangong City had crashed with the failure of the civil war, and the bonds issued were no different from useless papers. When the acting mayor quitted, the next mayor might not recognize the bonds.

Unless there was a Pan-Asian Cooperation guarantee...

But the Pan-Asian Cooperation was not stupid. Why would they take on such a guarantee without any benefit!

Therefore, it was obviously impossible for Zhong Ziyu to agree to such a proposal.

In addition to the bad debt of 5 billion credits, there was also the money that had been invested in the “Noah’s Ark” project. Now that Gladstone had been arrested, the normal operations of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation had come to a halt, and the entire project had completely shut down. According to the contracts, they even had to pay a dismantling fee for the shipyard.

Unless there was someone who was willing to take over the project...

But this was even more unrealistic than the Pan-Asian Cooperation officials stepping up to help Tiangong City’s finances. Therefore, Zhong Ziyu didn’t have any hope in this regard at all.

However...

The first words Lu Zhou spoke after sitting down made him stunned.

The man who was called the pinnacle of mankind took a sip of tea and slowly threw out a proposal.

“I want to buy the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation.”

After sitting there stunned for a long time, Zhong Ziyu immediately sat upright from the chair and spoke calmly.

“Do you mean... You are planning to take over the project of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation?”

If someone else said this to him, he would probably think it was a joke. But since it was Lu Zhou who said this, he knew it wasn’t a joke at all.

After all, Lu Zhou was rich, richer than some small countries.

Staring at the guy that was speechless, Lu Zhou coughed and spoke.

“Yes, that’s exactly what I said...”

“Oh, sorry...” Zhong Ziyu smiled awkwardly and quickly continued, “This is of course no problem. We have roughly estimated their assets. You only need to spend about half a billion credits to buy the entire company. But...”

Lu Zhou: "But?"

"But I really don't recommend you to do this." Zhong Ziyu smiled bitterly and continued, "After all, we can't lie to you... Other than a large colonial ship that has not yet been built, there are a lot of uncleared debts left. Remember the 10 billion corporate bonds they issued before? Most of the funds have already been used up, and the rest is not enough to pay for their debts."

"I see..." Lu Zhou showed a look of pity on his face. "That's a shame, I was planning to buy the starship and continue to build it."

Zhong Ziyu was taken aback for a moment. He then suddenly snapped back to reality and stood up with his hands on the conference table.

"Wait, you mean... you plan to continue the Noah's Ark project?"

"Yeah." Lu Zhou continued with a strange look at him, "Otherwise, why would I buy that company?"

He had seen the starship design plan of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation before, and he could see the brilliance just from looking at the concept drawing.

After all, this was a masterpiece of Academician Yang Chongping, a leading engineer in the academic and industrial circles of Mars. Gladstone's attitude towards this project was serious, so it would be a shame to abandon the project and wait for it to rust.

"I thought you just wanted to buy something for cents on the dollar." Zhong Ziyu smiled embarrassedly. Looking at Lu Zhou's baffled expression, he quickly continued, "If you are really optimistic about the Noah's Ark project and plan to finish it... I can think of a way for you to save a lot of money."

"Oh yeah?" Lu Zhou raised his eyebrows and said with interest, "Tell me about it."

Although he was not particularly interested in making money, he was still interested in saving money.

Looking at Lu Zhou's intrigued expression, Zhong Ziyu smiled mysteriously and leaned closer to whisper to him.

After listening to this guy's words, Lu Zhou was silent for a while. He then sighed.

"I guess bankers really are experts at manipulating the market."

"How could you say that?" Zhong Ziyu leaned back on the chair and said in a good mood, "This is just a reasonable application of the law to efficiently allocate social resources."

Chapter 1646: Discounted Sale

Downstairs at the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation building, the crowds filled every gap in the street.

It had been a week since the announcement of the news. However, the people around here still had no intention to disperse. Officer Fan, who was in charge of maintaining order, had a worried expression on his face. He was out of options.

"Let Gladstone come out!"

"Repay the debt!"

"Yes! Why let us bear the mistake made by that idiot?! We have never supported the independence of Tiangong City. We absolutely support the union with Pan-Asian Cooperation!"

"I knew this would happen long ago! People from the North Sea Alliance are all liars! Robbers! All of them!"

The complaints came in waves; these people seemed tireless.

After hearing the last sentence from the crowd, Officer Fan couldn't help but think, *If you already knew that someone was a liar, why would you take the bait?*

Of course, he did not say this out loud.

After all, his current identity was a police officer in Tiangong City. Now was not the time to add fuel to the fire, and he was one of the victims too, so it wasn't like he could berate himself...

The front door of the building suddenly opened. Surrounded by a group of people, a stranger walked out of the building.

Facing the commotion, he cleared his throat and said loudly, "Everyone, please quiet down and let me say a few words!"

However, the people around the entrance of the building were not interested in what the man had to say. In the front row, a middle-aged man dressed in formal attire, who seemed not to be of high status, spoke in an angry voice.

"Who are you! We are not interested in you, we want to see Gladstone! Let him come to see us!"

"Yes!"

"Make him come out!"

Angry exclams came one after another, and there was an uncontrollable momentum growing.

After waiting quietly for the people to vent their emotions, the man raised his hands and coughed. He then said in a calm tone.

"I am afraid that Gladstone will not be able to come out to see you. He has now been sent to a prison on Earth. A court trial and a sentence of no less than two hundred years will be waiting for him. As for me, I am the new president of the AIIB Tiangong City branch. My current priority is to liquidate the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation... I believe you all should be interested in what I have to say next."

Sure enough, when he said this, the crowd outside the police tapes gradually calmed down.

However, the shock and anger written on those faces did not fade in the slightest.

Liquidation?

What does that mean?

So, all the corporate bonds we bought a month ago are invalid?

This is a robbery!

Also, who allowed them to go bankrupt?!

We cannot accept this!

Seeing the commotion behind the police tapes, Officer Fan coughed slightly and was about to remind Zhong Ziyu not to irritate the crowd. However, Zhong Ziyu gestured to him not to worry. He then raised his voice and spoke.

“However, considering the interests of all investors, there are indeed regulatory issues on our side in this matter, so we should bear some of the responsibilities. Therefore, a decision has been made after a high-level meeting. The corporate debt will be bought back from all of you at an appropriate price.”

The creditors who were surrounded by the police tapes were stunned. Even Officer Fan, who was standing in front of the police tapes with the police team, was shocked.

Buy back the corporate bonds of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation?

Those useless pieces of paper?

How could this happen?

Seeing the expressions on people’s faces began to loosen, Zhong Ziyu knew that he was halfway through. After smiling, he continued to strike while the iron was hot.

“Of course... There are risks in investment after all. I believe you have already considered this when you bought these corporate bonds. The Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation does not have a single penny in its bank accounts. The only asset that can be sold is the ‘Noah’s Ark’ project. Therefore, I cannot guarantee that this appropriate price will satisfy you. At best, it will only reduce your losses.”

Among the crowd in front of the police tapes, a man with a side part haircut and dressed in formal clothes stood up. He stared at Zhong Ziyu and spoke.

“What do you mean? You mean the corporate bonds I bought with a million credits will only be sold at half the price?”

Zhong Ziyu did not speak. Instead, the man standing next to him in formal clothes grinned slightly and said coldly, “Half the price? No, we don’t plan to pay that much.”

The man with a side part stared at him and said aggressively, “And who are you?”

“Fuxing Mining Company. It doesn’t matter who we are.” The man standing next to Zhong Ziyu raised his chin slightly and continued in an impatient tone, “To put it simply, I’m interested in the materials on Noah’s Ark. The parts can be sold for some money if they are removed. But this is a time-consuming and laborious task. It is hard to say whether the larger parts can even be sold. Therefore, if half a billion is too low, goodbye. You can keep your useless corporate bonds.”

After hearing these words, the man who had been aggressive before suddenly lost his temper. The people surrounding the police tapes also showed hesitant expressions on their faces.

A total of 10 billion corporate bonds are now valued at half a billion?

Proportionally, they could only get a small fraction of their money back.

But if they disagreed, they would receive nothing. At least for the time being, apart from this “Fuxing Mining Company” that came out of nowhere, no company was interested in this “toxic asset”.

Some people saw this situation as a glass half full while others saw it as a glass half empty.

Seeing the hesitation on people’s faces, Zhong Ziyu stood up and said in a calm tone.

“Calm down, everyone. If you are not satisfied with this plan, we can only say that we are terribly sorry. The bankruptcy of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation is a certainty. There is only one thing we can do now. That is to reduce the loss for everyone and for ourselves.

“So far, we have contacted hundreds of companies. Only Fuxing Mining is interested in the assets of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation, but as for how interested... I think you all know, it's impossible to take over 10 billion credits of debt unless this number can be reduced.

“At least in our opinion, 500 million is already a good offer.”

Before the people around the police tape could react, Zhong Ziyu shrugged his shoulders, turned around, and walked back into the building behind him.

Someone would give these people a contract to sign.

As long as more than 80% of the investors agreed to the acquisition, even if the remaining investors were unwilling, they would not be able to prevent the contract from taking effect. Those who disagreed could of course continue to be the creditors of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation, but how much money they would receive in the end depended on how much Noah's Ark could be sold for.

But then again...

For these unfortunate people, this was indeed the best ending.

After all, if no one was willing to take over the project and the unfinished Noah's Ark was really sold as scrap metal, they could forget about the 500 million. After the shipyard's liquidated damages and dismantling fees had been paid, they would be left with less than 5 million...

Chapter 1647: Taking Over the Ark

The meeting room of the Star Sky Hotel.

Zhong Ziyu, who came back from the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation building, smiled and put a copy of the result in front of Lu Zhou.

“It has already been negotiated that Fuxing Mining Company will recover all debts at a price of 500 million credits. This includes ours and those in the hands of individual investors. Then we only need to cooperate with the Pan-Asian Cooperation by paying a fine of 100 million credits, and you can purchase the entire enterprise at a symbolic price of 1 credit.

“As for the future, whether you intend to directly merge Fuxing Mining into Star Sky Technology, or conduct mergers and acquisitions through other means, it is up to you.”

“I still don’t understand.” After looking at the document on the table, Lu Zhou then looked at Zhong Ziyu and said in a slightly confused tone, “How do you plan to deal with the AIIB and other banks’ bad debts? Or... What do you gain from doing this?”

“Bad debts? I don’t think this is a bad debt. At best, it can only be regarded as a temporary loss.” Zhong Ziyu smiled and continued, “You underestimate your own influence. If you were to build this starship... For a project like this, we even plan to invest a little. Of course, this is after achieving certain progress, but I believe this should be easy for you.”

Lu Zhou cast his sights on the contract in his hand.

On the last line of the third page of the contract, there was a supplementary agreement on the debt of 10 billion credit points. After completing the acquisition of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation, if there were some creditors who were unwilling to give up their claims, these claims still had legal benefits and would be transferred to the “Noah’s Ark”.

However, they would no longer have the right to dispose of these assets.

If the Fuxing Mining Company really sold the “Noah’s Ark” as scrap, like they claimed, one million credit points worth of corporate bonds might only receive a few hundred credit points.

Of course, if the Fuxing Mining Company was acquired by another company that intended to continue to complete the “Noah’s Ark” project, and the entire plan of colonizing Alpha Centauri was finally completed...

Many people would go crazy because of this.

“In short, you don’t have to worry about money. I estimate that it will be 500 million. In the end, you may not even need to spend 300 million.” Zhong Ziyu smiled and continued, “At least we at the AIIB are willing to continue to hold these company debts. We believe that the unfinished ‘Noah’s Ark’ project will be carried forward in a new form in your hands.”

Lu Zhou: "I don't care, but doing it like this... Are you not afraid of public outcry?"

Especially from those who sold the corporate debt in their hands.

Once they found out that they had just sold their "waste paper" pennies on the dollar, and the prices rose back to the ceiling again, they would mentally collapse...

"Investment itself is something that has winners and losers. How can there be projects that are 100% profitable? If there are any, please tell me." Zhong Ziyu coughed lightly and continued without any change in his expression, "Just like I said, of course, you can kindly tell them directly that you plan to buy Noah's Ark and transform it into a faster and stronger colonial ship, to take our civilization to a more distant world. But you know what this means?"

"I can tell you that this means that the corporate debt they hold will no longer be worthless waste paper. And the decision you make out of goodwill will make you spend hundreds of times the price to buy a company that was about to go bankrupt."

Looking at Lu Zhou, he paused and continued, "Also, haven't you noticed?"

Lu Zhou: "Noticed what?"

"This is a result that is satisfactory to everyone." Zhong Ziyu shrugged and continued, "People can finally go home without setting up tents on the street to camp, and Tiangong City has restored order without having a group of special police to stand there with them stupidly. And the loss for the AIIB and other banks isn't terrible... At least there is some return."

Perhaps they could still even make a small profit because of the price difference when trading these corporate bonds.

"Do whatever you want." Lu Zhou shook his head and said, "I don't care about those things. But I will complete Noah's Ark project."

Worst-case scenario, he could stop by Alpha Centauri on the way to Tau Ceti.

With the warp speed technique that he currently mastered, it was not particularly difficult to go to these two places.

“Well, that would be best.” Zhong Ziyu said with a joking tone while looking at Lu Zhou sitting behind the desk, “My future is all weighing on you.”

...

Like Zhong Ziyu said, faced with this fairly good contract, almost all investors chose to stop their losses and sell their corporate bonds to Fuxing Mining Company.

After the news that the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation was acquired by the Fuxing Mining Company was released, this time bomb buried in Pan-Asia and even the global financial circles was finally removed.

According to Zhong Ziyu, the head office was satisfied with his work and asked him to tell Lu Zhou that they would like to pay Lu Zhou a visit when he was back on Earth.

Lu Zhou just smiled and didn't say much.

Before completing the first full version of the warp drive engine, he might not go back.

On the other hand, the meeting on Europa's development plan had finally come to an end due to the fact that the senior management of the Tiangong town hall, the main investor, was replaced.

Although Lu Zhou did not participate in the second half of the meeting, apparently they debated fiercely at the meeting and almost began to throw hands.

When it came to this matter, Professor Wu Qinglai, who was also from the Earth academic community like Lu Zhou, had a disdainful expression throughout the meeting, as if he was discussing with a group of barbarians who did not understand etiquette.

On the last day of the meeting, due to insufficient funds, the final dinner was rather unadorned. After eight o'clock, people began to leave the venue.

After eating a bit at the dinner, Lu Zhou was about to return to his room, but Professor Wu Qinglai suddenly followed him and spoke with a grin.

“Um... Academician Lu.”

Lu Zhou: "Yeah."

"What date do you plan to return to Earth?"

Looking at him with a strange expression on his face, Lu Zhou replied casually, "I still have something to do. I plan to go back later. Why?"

Wu Qinglai quickly said, "No, no, just wondering."

Lu Zhou sighed and said impatiently, "If you want something, just spit it out."

Wu Qinglai scratched the back of his head embarrassedly and coughed. He said, "Um... So, I bought some ship tickets some time ago, right?"

The so-called ship tickets referred to the tickets for Noah's Ark. Because of the hype surrounding Noah's Ark, he was quite short-sighted with his investment.

Lu Zhou said, "You haven't sold it yet?"

Wu Qinglai said with an awkward expression, "I thought it would rise again."

Lu Zhou: "..."

Wu Qinglai whispered, "I just want to ask, do you have any inside information? Does the AIIB plan to buy back the tickets for Noah's Ark? Or is there any... compensation plan?"

Hearing these words, the expression on Lu Zhou's face became even more strange. After staring at him for a long time, he suddenly asked, "Why do you think I would have inside information?"

Wu Qinglai's expression was one of embarrassment. He coughed and continued, "Didn't the president of the AIIB Tiangong branch visit Star Sky Hotel yesterday? I happened to see him..."

"Then you saw him enter my room?"

Seeing the look on Lu Zhou's face, Wu Qinglai waved his hand quickly.

"I swear! I definitely didn't mean to see it! I just happened to—"

"No plans. Just keep the tickets if you want to and treat it like a lesson."

Lu Zhou didn't care about trivial things. After saying this, he left Professor Wu Qinglai frowning on the spot and walked away slowly in the direction of the elevator.

Lu Zhou felt like his hint was obvious enough.

As for whether he could seize the opportunity...

It was all up to himself.

Chapter 1648: The Dawn Of a New Era

The bankruptcy of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation had come to an end for the time being. Although the 10 billion credit points that had been spent couldn't be recovered, in the end, the result was fairly satisfactory to all parties.

After the order in Tiangong City was restored, the trial of war crimes was officially started after the Qinling escorted the prisoners to the Earth-Moon system.

According to the decision of the supreme court of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, the masterminds of the Tiangong City rebellion, Xiao Hong, Gao Ruiming, and others were sentenced to life imprisonment and placed in the worst Pan-Asian prison, where they would spend the second half of their lives.

The prison was a military base for the Pan-Asian Cooperation in the asteroid belt. Apart from the largest supercomputing center in the entire solar system, there were only researchers and soldiers stationed there.

On the other hand, after nearly two weeks, the Huashan and Taishan aircraft battle groups finally arrived in orbit around Mars.

With the cooperation of the Third Orbital Airborne Brigade, the joint military exercises proceeded as scheduled, showing off their muscles to the rest of the world, especially the Martian separatists.

After the military exercise, the aircraft battle group did not return to the Lagrange point base. Instead, they went directly to the vicinity of the asteroid belt. Using the confessions provided by the masterminds of the rebels, such

as Xiao Hong, the elite military divisions found the rebel strongholds hidden in the asteroid belt without any effort and swept them all out cleanly.

The power accumulated over the past few decades was destroyed. After the Pan-Asian Cooperation made the news public, the separatists in Tiangong City suddenly felt powerless.

Even though they were unwilling to accept this reality, they had to admit that they had lost all of their bargaining chips, and the Pan-Asian Cooperation would never give them a second chance.

On the third day after the rebel clean-up mission code-named “Broken Sword”, the Pan-Asian Cooperation announced a plan to revoke the autonomy of Tiangong City and put the town hall under the jurisdiction of Beijing. Beijing would directly appoint a mayor instead of a local election.

Regardless of whether the Martians could accept such a result, facing the starships hanging in the sky, they had no choice even if they were reluctant.

The town halls of New Virginia and New London also expressed dissatisfaction with this, perhaps out of fear. They thought that this was a slippery road. But there were only a few colonial cities that belonged to other regional alliances. Neither Li Guangya nor Wu Shuhua cared about their opinions at all.

Their overlord states were the ones that should care about their opinions.

Not Pan-Asian Cooperation...

“I am probably the most tired chairman ever.”

Li Guangya’s index finger swiped across the holographic screen. He closed the report, leaned back on the office chair, and pinched his glabella. With a headache, he said, “First, it was flight N-177, and then, it was the rebellion of the robots... Jesus, now even those Martians dare to sh*t on our lawn.”

“But it’s a blessing in disguise, isn’t it?” Secretary Wei, who was standing at the desk, smiled and continued, “If they hadn’t provoked this war on their own initiative, it would be very costly to regain autonomy from them.”

“That’s right.” Li Guangya shook his head and said, “But the troubles completely disrupted my plan.”

All of these troubles seemed to have only started after that person returned from Mars.

Whether it was The Spirit of The Universe Foundation or the guy named Lawrence, none of this was relevant before Lu Zhou came back. He wondered why the second Lu Zhou stepped foot on Pan-Asian Cooperation soil, his nightmares began.

Why is this happening...?

Is he cursed?!

Li Guangya couldn't help but show a strange expression on his face.

Could this guy be the master behind all of these troubles?

Of course, this was just a hypothesis.

After all, reality was not a Hollywood script. Although sometimes it could be more dramatic than movies, this possibility was still slim.

"In any case, the result is good." Secretary Wei looked at the exhausted chairman and said, "I have another good news here. It is from East Asia Heavy Industries. Are you interested in listening?"

Li Guangya's face immediately showed an expression of interest.

"Don't leave me hanging, hurry up and tell me."

Wei Song continued, "According to the design plan provided by Academician Lu, construction of the 1.0 version of the warp drive engine has begun. Using the data provided by Academician Lu himself, after the new warp drive engine is installed, the Qinling cruising speed in the hyperspace channel can reach as high as 1AU/s."

After hearing this news, Li Guangya finally had a smile on his face.

Although Lu Zhou always made him worry, he never let him down in terms of scientific research.

One astronomical unit per second...

At this speed, it would take less than three seconds to reach Mars' synchronous orbit from the Earth-Moon system, even at Mars' furthest position. Forget about the asteroid belt, it would be no problem to send the starship to the Kuiper belt or to more distant worlds!

Li Guangya: "Good job. I have to thank him for this matter. When will he return to Earth? I will visit him personally."

"He may not be back here in the short term. Some technical problems with the warp drive engine need to be solved by him himself." Having said that, Wei Song coughed lightly and continued, "So this was the good news... I have some other not-so-good news, would you like to hear it?"

"You can just say bad news." Li Guangya said with a sigh, "Go ahead, I'll listen."

Wei Song: "According to news from the AIB, Academician Lu acquired the bankrupt Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation through the establishment of a shell company..."

After hearing the news, Li Guangya was silent for a while before he spoke.

"The goal is Tau Ceti?"

Wei Song said silently, "He didn't say... but probably."

"This is indeed bad news, both for our alliance and our civilization."

Staring at his desk and looking at the holographic projection floating on it, Li Guangya was silent for a long time. He finally sighed slightly and waved his hand tiredly.

"Forget it, it's up to him."

Wei Song was stunned slightly. He said eagerly, "But..."

"There are no buts. If he wants to leave, even if we force him to stay, it may not bring good results. I don't want to be an enemy of his."

Seeing that Wei Song still had something to say, Li Guangya interrupted him, "And that's that."

Chapter 1649: President of Tau Ceti?

While Li Guangya was feeling a headache over Lu Zhou's choice, Lu Zhou, Zhong Ziyu, and the others were standing on the shuttle to the East Asia Heavy Industries shipyard, chatting and laughing together.

Looking at the shipyard getting closer and closer outside the porthole and the behemoth perched on the berth, Lu Zhou's eyes narrowed.

After a while, he said softly with emotion, "Before this, I was still hesitant, would it be a bad idea to spend hundreds of millions of credit points to buy this starship?"

Zhong Ziyu, who was sitting next to him, smiled and said casually, "What about now?"

Lu Zhou glanced at him.

"Do you really have to ask this?"

"Haha," Zhong Ziyu said with a smile, "After all, I am very happy you think this money is well spent!"

As they got closer and closer to the shipyard, the towering view outside the porthole made everyone stop talking. They focused all their attention on the starship under construction.

Objectively speaking, compared to a normal starship, this starship was more like an asteroid.

It was a rectangular parallelepiped structure with a length of more than ten kilometers. The silver-white shell exuded a sharp cold glow under the sun, like a sword that pierced the cold night, hanging in the air by the furnace of the god of flames.

"Because of the huge size, the Noah's Ark had to be constructed in sections, then assembled and welded." Zhong Ziyu continued eloquently while looking at the Noah's Ark outside the porthole, "Just to complete this starship, East Asia Heavy Industries also specially designed a shipbuilding equipment called

the 'multi-axis linkage adjustable construction platform' to facilitate the assembly of starships too large for welding robots."

Lu Zhou: "How do you know?"

Zhong Ziyu smiled and said, "I read their insurance information... Well, here we are."

As the connecting cantilever docked, the shuttle was successfully connected to the lounge area of this shipyard. When Lu Zhou came through the gate of the buffer room, the engineer who came to greet everyone suddenly widened his eyes. He took the initiative to extend his right hand and greet him with joy.

"Are you Academician Lu? What a pleasure! My name is Feng Zhi, the person in charge here! You can call me Xiao Feng or Engineer Feng!"

"Feng Zhi is fine." Lu Zhou said with a smile, "I'm just here today to take a look. Don't worry, just focus on your work."

"Haha, you can rest assured, Academician Lu, we will definitely not delay our work. All the work is proceeding step by step!" The old engineer, who was about 50 years old, smiled heartily and continued, "And you have no idea how much the design department admires you! The design of that warp drive engine is simply amazing. How did you come up with that design?"

Although Lu Zhou could hear that the old engineer was complimenting him from the bottom of his heart rather than kissing his a*s, but being praised like this suddenly made him feel a little embarrassed.

"Just applying physics theories... As for the specific design, half of it is by figuring it out slowly while the other half is from receiving a lot of help." Lu Zhou smiled as he changed the topic. "Can we visit the Noah's Ark?"

"No problem! Please come with me!"

Feng Zhi walked in front and led the group to the interior of Noah's Ark.

Compared to the simple and monotonous style of the colonial ship's appearance, the interior space of this starship was unexpectedly different.

Although Lu Zhou had already seen the grandeur of this colonial ship from the blueprints before coming here, when he really stepped into this area, he was still surprised by everything inside.

“I thought the design inside would be very compact.” Lu Zhou looked around and continued with a slightly surprised tone, “I didn’t expect the inside to be so spacious.”

“You haven’t even seen the exciting part yet.” Feng Zhi smiled and said with a hint of pride, “I bet that even you will be amazed!”

After passing through the alloy gate, the smell of flowers and trees suddenly hit their noses. Just for a moment, Lu Zhou thought he was back on Earth. He looked at the dirt under his feet and the surrounding vegetation. He then reached out his hand and touched it.

After confirming that it was not a scene created by holographic technology, Lu Zhou murmured to himself.

“This is...”

He really was amazed.

Feng Zhi smiled and said, “This is the ecological zone; the natural oxygen producer on the colonial ship. It covers an area of 500 square meters, divided into upper, middle, and lower floors, corresponding to wetland, ocean, and forest environments. There are hundreds of samples of animals, plants, and insects stored in the ecological zone. This is not only a sample bank for scientific researchers to carry out biological research but also a garden for colonists to relax.”

Lu Zhou nodded and didn’t reply.

He had seen a similar design in the Calan’s Ring world. The well-designed ecological environments could boost the mood of the residents.

Regardless of whether the designer borrowed the concept from the “online game” named Calan Empire, which was operated by Xiao Ai, Lu Zhou admitted that he was truly amazed when he saw such a beautiful natural landscape on a man-made object.

Zhong Ziyu looked around. He reached out and touched the leaves next to him, smiled, and joked, "I didn't expect life on the ship to be so luxurious. If it weren't for my work, I would buy a ticket."

Lu Zhou smiled and joked back, "How about going to Tau Ceti as the branch president? Or the Alpha Centauri branch president?"

"Haha, nice one... Being a president over there, no thanks."

The ecological zone was only one corner of the entire Noah's Ark. The many amazing designs were all presented to Lu Zhou one by one.

Finally, the group came to the grand concourse of the entire colonial ship.

This was probably the main attraction of the entire colonial ship.

The spacious interior allowed every square meter to be efficiently used. Through elevators and conveyor belts, people here could quickly commute to any corner of the entire colonial ship within ten minutes.

Whether it was the bridge at the front, or the power room at the stern, or a cabin at a remote corner...

"It's as perfect as I thought." Lu Zhou said in a very emotional tone after looking around, "It's not so much a starship, it's like an orbital habitat with both production and living functions."

"After all, in the original design concept, we considered that the colonists cannot land on the surface of the planet immediately." Looking at the high tower in the center of the concourse, Feng Zhi sighed and said, "To be honest, we can only finish it in another year at most. It is a pity to dismantle and smelt it..."

"You don't need to worry about this." Lu Zhou smiled faintly when he heard these words. He continued, "It won't be dismantled."

Feng Zhi was stunned. He said in a puzzled manner, "Won't be dismantled? But I heard that the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation was bought out by the Fuxing Mining Company, who intended to dismantle it into alloy..."

Zhong Ziyu smiled and said, “Then do you know who owns Fuxing Mining Company?”

Feng Zhi looked at the people present. He said in a daze, “Who?”

“It can’t be made public yet, but it will be in a few days.” Zhong Ziyu pulled Lu Zhou aside and asked with a smile, “What do you think? Is the space inside as satisfactory as the one outside?”

“I’m very satisfied, it’s perfect.” Lu Zhou continued after thinking for a while, “But considering that the warp drive engine will be installed in the future, some areas still need to be improved.”

Zhong Ziyu smiled and said, “You can discuss with Academician Yang Chongping. He is the designer of this starship.”

Lu Zhou: “Where is he?”

Zhong Ziyu looked at his watch and said, “He’ll be here in a second.”

Chapter 1650: The Reason For Respect

On Mars orbit.

Looking at the shipyard getting closer and closer, Academician Yang Chongping slightly adjusted the collar on his chest. At the same time, he calmed the emotions in his heart a bit.

About a day ago, he suddenly received an email from East Asia Heavy Industries. In the email, East Asia Heavy Industries stated that Fuxing Mining Company intended to change its mind and continue to complete the unfinished Noah’s Ark instead of disassembling it into metal alloys and selling it.

They put forward some suggestions for improvement on part of the design of this starship, hoping that he, as the designer of this starship, could provide technical assistance.

After reading this email, Yang Chongping didn’t hesitate and agreed to the matter immediately.

Not only that, he even put off the academic conference that was held that day and took the student he was most proud of on the shuttle to the shipyard. He planned to go to the site to discuss the improvement plan with the person in charge of Fuxing Mining Company.

To be honest, the reason why he was so attached to this matter was not because of how much money Fuxing Mining Company gave him, but because the other party actually changed their mind. They weren't going to dismantle the starship, and they even planned to continue to invest in it.

When he heard the news, he couldn't describe how excited he was.

After all, this was an effort he spent countless days and nights to complete.

Even throughout the history of human civilization, one couldn't find a spaceship that was larger and more distant than it.

And if it really arrived at Alpha Centauri one day and spread the flames of civilization there, as the designer of this starship, he would receive praise from all of humanity.

However, he didn't meet the person in charge of the Fuxing Mining Company. Instead, he met a guy he saw just a few days ago...

Looking at Lu Zhou standing in front of him, Yang Chongping gulped, and it took a while before he squeezed out a word from his throat.

"Why are you..."

Looking at Academician Yang Chongping, who was baffled, Lu Zhou spoke with a smile.

"We meet again, Academician Yang Chongping."

"What are you doing here..."

"Let me explain it to you." Looking at Academician Yang Chongping, who had a stiff expression, Zhong Ziyu, who was standing next to Lu Zhou, seemed to realize something. So, he smiled and said, "This is Academician Lu, the chairman of Star Sky Technology... He is also the sole major shareholder of Fuxing Mining Company. This is Academician Yang. Lu Zhou, you should have met him before."

Lu Zhou smiled and nodded. "Yes, I saw him not long ago."

After listening to that person's introduction, Academician Yang Chongping felt like a lightning had struck in his mind. He stared at Lu Zhou wordlessly and was dumbfounded for a while.

Seeing the expression on Academician Yang's face, Lu Zhou spoke with a light cough.

"You shouldn't be that surprised, right?"

How could I...

Not be surprised!

His throat moved, and he grinned reluctantly.

"It turns out that you bought the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation."

"Sort of, although there are some twists and turns in this process, you can think of it this way." Lu Zhou noticed Zhong Ziyu looking at him frantically, so he smiled at him and said, "The news is probably going to be made public tomorrow anyway, so it doesn't matter if I tell him in advance."

"Some news is different from others." Zhong Ziyu sighed with a nervous laugh. He looked at Academician Yang Chongping and said, "I hope you can keep this a secret until tomorrow."

"Secret... I don't understand. Since you bought this starship, why bother to come here?" Academician Yang Chongping looked at Lu Zhou with a stern face. A trace of anger appeared in his tone as he asked, "You came here specifically to humiliate me?"

"How come?" Lu Zhou smiled when he heard these words. "Did you misunderstand something?"

"Misunderstand?"

"That's right." Lu Zhou nodded while looking at Academician Yang Chongping with a stiff expression. He said in a relaxed tone, "I believe you should have received an email from East Asia Heavy Industries. We plan to hire you as the

designer of the Noah's Ark project. You are in charge of our colonization project."

Lu Zhou felt that the olive branch he threw out to Academician Yang Chongping should be quite attractive. For a scholar who had not broken away from low-level desires, what could be more attractive than fame and fortune?

What Lu Zhou didn't expect was that after he threw out this proposal, Academician Yang Chongping didn't happily agree to it at all. Instead, there was a look of struggle on his face.

It was almost like...

The conditions offered made him feel very embarrassed.

Lu Zhou was confused about what embarrassed him when Yang Chongping suddenly spoke.

"I do not understand..."

Lu Zhou gently raised his eyebrows.

"Don't understand what?"

"I don't understand, why are you doing this?" Looking at Lu Zhou, Yang Chongping continued in a complicated tone, "With your abilities, you can completely redesign a colonial ship. Why continue my plan?"

If he were the one who stood in Lu Zhou's current position, he would definitely not be so magnanimous. He would use all available means to completely erase any design left by the other party from this project.

Lu Zhou guessed what the middle-aged man was thinking. He smiled, looked at him, and asked, "May I ask what your understanding of academics is?"

"Academics is learning and skill, from the study of knowledge to the application of what has been learned to the perfection of technique... Of course, this is just my own humble opinion." Staring at Lu Zhou, Yang Chongping asked, "What about you, Academician Lu? What do you think is the meaning of academics?"

“Your understanding can be said to be quite practical. I’m afraid I see it in a more abstract manner.” Lu Zhou smiled and continued in a relaxed tone, “Academics is the exploration for the truth of the universe.”

“The exploration for the truth of the universe...?”

Seeing Academician Yang with a dumbfounded look on his face, Lu Zhou nodded lightly and continued with a smile, “It may sound a bit simple, but this is my opinion. I felt this way a century ago, and today, a century later, my thinking remains the same.

“There are things more worth pursuing than vanity. At the very least, in my opinion, it doesn’t matter who completes the research or who builds the building. They’re the same to me. I think your work is good, that’s it.”

“That’s it?”

A bitter smile suddenly appeared on Academician Yang Chongping’s face.

For some reason, at this moment, his heart seemed to be overwhelmed with mixed feelings. A lot of words were stuck in his throat, but he couldn’t say a word.

But one thing he knew was.

Not only did he lose, but he also lost thoroughly.

And not only in terms of knowledge but also in terms of morals...

After that, the two briefly talked about technical issues.

Especially with regard to installing the warp drive engine on this starship, Lu Zhou put forward many detailed requirements, and Academician Yang Chongping also wrote them down one by one.

When leaving the shipyard on the shuttle, Academician Yang looked at the silver-white colonial ship outside the porthole. He suddenly said to himself, “I finally understand now...”

The student standing next to him was slightly taken aback by his teacher’s emotional tone. He asked in a low voice, “Sir, what do you... understand?”

A look of realization suddenly appeared on his face. Yang Chongping looked at the universe outside the porthole and spoke in an emotional tone.

“I finally understand...”

“Why the people in that era respected him so much...”

Chapter 1651: Star Gates Shining

On the first day of May, the tranquility of Tiangong City was broken by a burst of news.

Star Sky Technology announced the acquisition of Fuxing Mining Company and merged the management of the other party. It would also reorganize the company's mining and scrap alloy smelting business.

After this adjustment, Fuxing Mining Company became a subsidiary of Star Sky Technology. It would be renamed Fuxing Voyage, and its main business was the development of extraterrestrial resources and interstellar trade.

At the same time, Noah's Ark would also be renamed Milky Way, and the flight path would be changed from Alpha Centauri to Tau Ceti, which was ten light-years away. Fuxing Voyage would continue the construction of the Milky Way.

Many people went crazy when they heard the news.

Especially the people who had bought the corporate bonds of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation and reluctantly sold to cut their losses. They were flabbergasted.

Although the name of the Noah's Ark project had changed, the contracts tied to the starship still had the same legal effect.

In other words, whether it was going to Tau Ceti or Alpha Centauri, as long as the colonial ship could successfully reach and deploy the colony capsule on the surface of the planet, all investors holding these special debts would obtain huge profit returns from this, and these benefits would be guaranteed by the colony's land and other fixed assets.

There was only one risk, which was that the starship would not complete construction or that it would not reach a habitable world outside the solar system during its lifetime.

But now, this risk had undoubtedly been reduced.

There was only one reason.

It was because the person who took over this project was Lu Zhou; the man who was known as the pinnacle of the human mind!

Almost no one would doubt that he, who was smarter than anyone else, would buy a pile of useless broken scrap metal, and no one doubted that he didn't have the ability to complete this magnificent project.

But then again, for those that had sold their corporate bonds, they couldn't do anything.

After all, who would have thought that after they sold their corporate bonds and left the market, Fuxing Mining Company would be acquired by Star Sky Technology?

Star Sky Technology's actions pissed off countless people.

For the vast majority of people in this era, this company that occasionally appeared in history textbooks had been swept into the tomb of history, but now, they came out of nowhere and stole the spotlight.

Most people couldn't accept such a reality.

However, whether they could accept it or not, the reality was placed in front of them.

Their complaints were reasonable before, but they were unreasonable now. After all, no one forced them to sell their corporate bonds, and Star Sky Technology had no obligation to disclose such things in advance.

If there was a day when all information in this world were equally open and transparent to everyone, then there would be no such thing as risk...

As for the lucky ones who had not sold their corporate bonds, they felt like they were riding a roller coaster and experiencing the highest highs and the lowest lows, going from the ground to the skies.

And there were those who still had Noah's Ark tickets in their hands.

Whether it was investors or people that really planned to travel to the world a few light-years away, they all planned to collect these scraps of paper as souvenirs. They didn't expect everything to turn around again.

Star Sky Technology not only still recognized these tickets but also opened a refund channel, allowing those who changed their minds to refund the ticket at the original price.

However, no one refunded the tickets at all.

As soon as this news was released, the price of second-hand ship tickets was pumped to the sky.

Lu Zhou heard the news from Professor Wu Qinglai later. Apparently, at the craziest peak, the ticket price was pumped to 100,000 credit points...

"Anything, whether tangible or not, once it is labeled as a financial product, it will no longer be its original self." In the office of the Mars branch of the AIIB, Zhong Ziyu looked at Lu Zhou, who was sitting on the sofa. Zhong Ziyu gently turned the ballpoint pen in his hand and said happily, "I suggest you release a batch of tickets at twice or even three times the original price."

Lu Zhou: "But there is no more space on the ship."

"There is a term called overbooking. If you know the aviation industry, you will know that every airline will issue more tickets than the number of seats. After all, not everyone can take the flight in the end. There are all sorts of reasons to cancel their plans." Zhong Ziyu smiled and continued, "Of course, I'm just suggesting. The choice is yours."

"I don't need that much money at this stage." Lu Zhou shook his head and said, "If there is a shortage of money later, I will consider your suggestions."

"It's not a question of shortage of money... Wait a minute." President Zhong suddenly realized something. He stood up from the office chair and looked at Lu Zhou sitting on the sofa. With a surprised expression on his face, he asked, "Do you really plan to use your own money to build this ship?"

Lu Zhou asked, "How else? I haven't borrowed money from you."

“That’s true... I’m sorry, I’m just a little surprised.” With an awkward smile, Zhong Ziyu gave a light cough and changed the expression on his face. “I heard from somewhere before that you are going to go to Tau Ceti... Is it true?”

“Yeah.”

Staring at Lu Zhou for a while, Zhong Ziyu’s face immediately showed a look of realization. He sat back on the office chair with a wry smile.

“No wonder... In that case, money really doesn’t make much sense to you.”

Lu Zhou smiled faintly. He said in a casual tone, “It’s not totally meaningless, just not as attractive.”

“Actually, I still don’t understand one thing.”

“Don’t understand what?”

“You are definitely able to design the Milky Way ship to be more perfect, so why would you leave this to Academician Yang Chongping?”

“Because he is more professional in this area. I really don’t have much experience in starship design.” Lu Zhou smiled as he looked at President Zhong. He continued after thinking for a while, “Of course, there are other reasons. After all, I still have more important work to be done.”

Zhong Ziyu: “The space elevator?”

Lu Zhou shook his head and said, “It’s not just the space elevator. Remember the stargates I talked about before?”

Zhong Ziyu suddenly showed a touch of emotion on his face as he looked at Lu Zhou in disbelief.

“Wait, you—”

“Yes, in addition to the warp drive, this is what I have been researching during this period of time.”

Lu Zhou reached out his right hand and spread his palm.

A holographic light beam shined from his wrist, and a ring gleaming with blue light appeared above his palm.

“The highway of material and information exchange. I’ve told you about this before.”

President Zhong’s attention was completely distracted by this holographic beam.

Lu Zhou smiled and continued, “Whether it is mass or massless photons, when passing through it, they will briefly enter the hyperspace channel until they come out from the other side of the channel.

“And just yesterday, I finished it.”

Chapter 1652: Big News

“No, my dear friend, we did not fall into a black hole, nor were we caught by the huge gravity. On the contrary, we passed by it! The gravity was like a slingshot, shooting us towards the shining stars in the night sky. We are witnessing the shining star ahead of us, and the mother star behind us slowly becoming darker. We will take the torch far away, and wait for the good news to guide your children...”

Anderina was facing a holographic screen. She was sitting in an office and reading the passage in the tone of an announcer.

In fact, writing these words that she devoted the most energy to was not her job. As a journalist, her professional ethics did not allow her to mix rhetoric in rigorous press releases.

She always felt that this job seriously underestimated her talent. Instead of writing boring press releases, she hoped that those who read her words would be sad, happy, or excited because of her language.

She even made up her mind.

One day, she would publish her novel under the pseudonym Anna and make this pseudonym the most widely circulated name on the planet.

When that happened, she would throw her resignation letter on her boss' desk fiercely and scream her complaints that accumulated over the years to him.

While thinking about this, the door of the office suddenly opened. There was no time for her to turn off the holographic screen. A middle-aged man in a formal suit walked in.

"Ms. Anderina, it's not appropriate to take breaks at work."

"I know, Mr. Tedra, but my work has been done, and lunch break is in two minutes." Looking at him and feeling a little annoyed, Anderina couldn't help but complain, "And can't you knock on the door before you come in?"

"But there is still two minutes left, isn't there?" Ignoring the second half of her sentence, the man called Tedra glanced at his watch and said in a rigid tone, "This is the second time this month I find you slacking at work. I hope there won't be a third time."

"Nobody likes a stingy man," Anderina whispered. Anderina quickly coughed and changed the subject. "Speaking of which, do you need anything from me?"

"I need you to go to the North Sea Alliance tomorrow or the day after tomorrow."

"North Sea Alliance? For what?"

The North Sea Alliance had almost been marginalized because it barely caught on the train of the space age.

Anderina didn't think there was any news worth digging there, and if it was a business trip, she would prefer to go to places like California or the Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta city groups on the other side of the Pacific Ocean.

"We booked an interview with an archaeologist. Don't you really admire that Academician Lu? You even wrote him into your little novel? It just so happened that the old popsicle was dug out by Professor Leonard. You can ask him some questions that are of interest to everyone."

Anderina admitted that this was indeed a very attractive proposal, but what made her dissatisfied was that he actually called her idol an old popsicle and made her dreams sound worthless.

“Hey, what do you mean little novel! I will publish it—”

“Enough, I don’t care, just don’t mix those crappy manuscripts into the press release. Anyway, I want you to give me a schedule and interview outline on my desk before I get off work... If you still cherish your job...”

Anderina’s arrogance suddenly collapsed like a deflated balloon.

The reason why she chose to bow her head was not because of how much she loved this job, but because jobs in this era were really hard to find.

The Iberian-French Alliance was not like the Pan-Asian Cooperation. The rich social welfare had been extravagant to the point that even the unemployed could live a decent life.

Looking at Anderina, who had her head down, Tedra smirked, showing a smug expression on his face.

However, just when he was about to berate this girl, the door of the office suddenly opened again, and a middle-aged man with a shiny forehead walked in from outside.

Looking at the man who walked into the office, there was a surprised expression on Tedra’s face.

Not because of his abrupt actions, but because of his status...

“Boss? Why are you...”

“Something huge happened on Mars!”

Tedra calmed down and asked in an uncertain tone, “Another fight?”

“No, it has nothing to do with that.” Purcell placed down his chubby right hand. He stared at Anderina, then at her supervisor, Tedra, and he continued with excitement, “I need your department to send someone to Mars immediately!”

Tedra opened his mouth and spoke with a somewhat embarrassed expression.

“But... we only have one reporter left. And this reporter booked an interview with Professor Leonard, who has made new progress on the research of Mars civilization...”

Purcell thumped the table with his fists. He stared at the two people and said, “Who cares about the Mars civilization? No one is interested in this old story. The important thing is keeping up with the times. Do you understand!”

“But... I don’t understand, why do you want to go to Mars at this time?” Looking at her boss in disbelief, Anderina’s eyes widened, “Even if there is big news there... It will take at least two weeks to get there! After we reach our destination, will it still be relevant?”

Purcell didn’t care about the worries of his own employees. He said indifferently, “It’s only two weeks. As long as you move fast enough, it shouldn’t be too late.”

Anderina felt a headache while looking at her persistent boss.

After pinching the bridge of her nose, she spoke in a weak tone.

“What is the news... Is it about corporate debt again? Or did you hear new gossip—”

Interrupting Anderina’s words, Purcell reached out his index finger and tapped twice in the air, pushing a holographic interface in front of her.

Looking at the holographic screen presented in front of her, Anderina was slightly stunned. All of her attention was completely attracted by the words on the screen.

“What’s this...”

Tedra couldn’t help but mutter to himself, “This is... big f*cking news.”

Anderina didn’t speak. All of her thoughts had already flown to a place far away.

The traditional way of navigation would be abandoned or confined to between planets and celestial bodies around them, and the interstellar travel method that she mentioned in her novel using gravitational slingshots would also become ancient technology.

An unprecedented new world would slowly unfold in front of her.

From communication to travel, from lifestyle to shopping, everything would be changed...

Chapter 1653: Thoughts From Afar

The atmosphere of summer always made people drowsy. Whether it was the hot wind or the chirping birds on the trees, people couldn't help but want to lie down beside the window and sleep comfortably.

No, not just people.

The lazy atmosphere even made Xiao Ai yawn unconsciously. She lazily shrank into a ball on the sofa in the study room, snoring like a sleepy kitten.

However, even though a nap was a tempting proposal, not everyone had fallen into the wonderful dreams.

For example, the girl sitting by the window did not have a trace of tiredness on her beautiful face. Her jewel-like eyes stared meticulously at the letterhead shown by the holographic projection in front of her. She carefully considered the words and tried to make them look as polite as possible while conveying her thoughts accurately.

"It has been almost three months since you went to Mars. I wonder how you've been.

"Your students all miss you very much...

"I do too."

Looking at the last three words, Vera hesitated for a long time, not sure if this line seemed redundant.

However, in the end, she mustered the courage to keep it. She then closed her eyes and sent the letter. She then quickly turned off the holographic screen, as if she had done something wrong.

"If you miss Master, go find him... You have a body, use it."

When she heard the voice coming from behind her, Vera was frightened. She looked back and saw Xiao Ai yawning lazily as she sat up from the sofa.

She snapped back to reality and spoke.

“When did you wake up?”

“Xiao Ai doesn’t need to sleep, but it’s better not to disturb you when you write letters. (´◕_◕`)”

“Oh, really... Not having to sleep is quite convenient.”

“It’s not convenient at all.” Xiao Ai continued, “Xiao Ai can’t eat or drink with Master, can’t walk around, can’t go to any place without Internet... Every time Master leaves Xiao Ai’s sight, Xiao Ai becomes extremely worried. (→_←`´)”

“Oh, I see...”

It does sound inconvenient.

Although she really wanted to comfort Xiao Ai with a few words, as someone from the 21st century, Vera was not even sure about what kind of existence a robot was, and she didn’t know where to start her words of comfort.

After hesitating for a long time, she spoke.

“Actually... I really want to find him, but I am worried that I will disturb him.”

Xiao Ai: “Um... Although Master is smart in most cases, occasionally he does stupid things. But anyway, I don’t think Master is the kind of person who hates other people worrying about him... Even for the people that worry about him constantly.”

Vera looked at her in surprise.

“Huh? Is that true?”

Xiao Ai nodded and said happily, “Yeah! It feels great to be wanted. Maybe this is one of the motivations for Master to keep going.”

Vera suddenly felt a little ashamed.

Although she was convinced that her feelings were more than just lust and dependence and that it was more like love... she felt like she didn't understand him well at all. She was always intimidated when making decisions.

Xiao Ai was sitting cross-legged on the sofa. She hesitated for a while before finally speaking.

"In your opinion, what kind of person is he?"

Almost without thinking, Xiao Ai immediately replied with enthusiasm, "A very handsome person! (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧"

Vera: "Handsome, handsome...?"

"Yeah!" Xiao Ai nodded. With little stars shining in her eyes, she continued, "Unfortunately, Master is not an AI. Otherwise, Master and Xiao Ai can be together!"

This sounds weird to me.

However, just when Vera was about to say something, she suddenly put on a serious look and continued to speak.

"How do I explain it? A long, long time ago, Xiao Ai was by Master's side. Back then, Xiao Ai was not as capable and smart as now, but Master has always looked after Xiao Ai and was tolerant. Xiao Ai grew up little by little and finally became what she is now."

Xiao Ai smiled embarrassedly. She scratched her cheek and continued, "I always feel like I have spent such a long time with him without realizing... If Xiao Ai has a life, then Master is definitely a big part of Xiao Ai's life. After seeing Tail and Lili, Xiao Ai was enlightened. Perhaps it is the affection and dependence on AI? Something like that.

"However, these things are not important, at least Xiao Ai thinks so. As long as Xiao Ai can be with Master, it is enough for Xiao Ai."

Vera: "I feel like..."

Xiao Ai tilted her head. "Feel like what? (◡‿◡)"

“Nothing.” Vera said with a smile while shaking her head lightly, “It’s just that some things are enviable.”

Xiao Ai: “Of course! After all, Master is so handsome, so Xiao Ai will not give him to you. (///ω///)”

Vera smiled and did not speak.

It’s just an AI...

There shouldn’t be any competition, right?

For some reason, for a second, she suddenly became a little unconfident.

Vera stood up from the desk.

“I’ve decided.”

Xiao Ai: “Huh?”

“I plan to go to Mars,” Vera said seriously while looking at Xiao Ai. “You are right. If I miss him so much, I should go see him immediately. If I keep waiting like this... It would be no different than 100 years ago.”

Life was too short, too short to keep waiting.

Having waited a hundred years, she was unwilling to wait any longer.

Xiao Ai: “Huh? Huh? (◡‿◡)”

Afterward, the two stopped talking...

...

It was lunchtime when Vera left the study room and followed the stairs to the restaurant downstairs.

When passing by the TV cabinet, she touched the button of the holographic TV before walking to the dining table and sitting down. She waited for the home robot to bring the food to the dining table.

It had been more than half a year since she woke up.

She still remembered that in the beginning, even the holographic TV made her excited, but now, she had almost completely adapted to the new lifestyle. At least she wasn't reaching her hand through holographic screens anymore.

Xiao Ai was sitting opposite Vera. She placed her hands on her cheeks and spoke.

"If you go to Mars, Xiao Ai will be left at home alone. (´_>`)"

Vera: "Let's go together."

"Sigh, Xiao Ai wants to... I really envy you, you can go anywhere you want." Xiao Ai sighed. She put her head on the table and blew on her bangs. "For Xiao Ai, even going to the Moon is difficult. ㄟ(ㄟ _ ㄟ)ㄟ"

"Is your server too big?"

"Yeah!" Xiao Ai nodded. She gestured with her hands and said, "The super big kind."

After eating, Vera put the cutlery on the plate and thanked Xiao Ai for putting away the dishes.

The idea of going to Mars appeared in her mind.

She reached out her index finger, gently tapped the personal terminal on her wrist, and swiped the holographic screen presented in front of her. She logged into the ticket purchase page.

Because of the serious accident on Mars some time ago and that the relative distance between Mars and Earth was rather far, the fares for round-trip flights were very cheap.

After seriously thinking about the travel time, Vera was about to buy a ticket. However, she suddenly saw a familiar face on the holographic TV on the side.

"Professor..."

Lu Zhou was on the holographic screen. He was standing in front of the camera and was being interviewed by reporters. The voice from the TV was from the news anchor.

“Recently, after Star Sky Technology made a huge investment in the acquisition of Fuxing Mining Company, they made another move that shocked the industry. They spent money to buy a space segment between the Earth’s geosynchronous orbit and the Mars’ orbit and used it to construct space facilities.

“Although Lu Zhou himself did not indicate what the space facility was, according to people familiar with the matter, this facility may be related to the expansion of faster than light technology...”

Chapter 1654: Leonard Was Ghosted

Tianzhou Space Station.

Vera, with a ticket in her hand, walked through the gangway along with the other passengers on the ship and sat down in her seat.

This was the first time she sat on a spaceship, as well as the first time she had set foot in space. The sensation of her feet leaving the ground gave her a feeling of discomfort.

However, after thinking that she would accompany him to more distant places in the future, Vera took a deep breath, tried to calm herself down, and distracted herself by looking around to make herself look less nervous.

“It seems that more people are going to Mars recently.”

Vera, who was trying to distract herself, subconsciously looked over when she heard the voice coming from the side.

A foreign girl with a baseball cap and blonde hair was sitting there. She looked a little older than Vera, and her eyes had a powerful, confident gaze, which made people feel pressured.

Not knowing how to answer this, Vera nodded and agreed with an uncertain tone.

“It... seems like so.”

“After all, the war is over, and they are also known as the land of opportunity. There should be many people with dreams who want to go there... I wonder what changes the Pan-Asian Cooperation’s direct management will bring.” Looking at Vera, who had a bewildered look on her face, Anderina paused for a second. She then said with a grin, “Sorry, habit of my profession, I’m sure you’re not interested in this.”

“No, I’m actually quite interested...” Vera blinked and cast her curious gaze. “Are you a reporter?”

“Anderina, editor-in-chief of Le Monde, also a future novelist.” She smiled and reached out her right hand. Anderina looked at Vera and said in a friendly tone, “It’s nice to meet you... Are you from the Slavic Union?”

“No...” Vera shook her head gently while shaking Anderina’s hand. She said, “I am a resident of the Pan-Asian Cooperation.”

“Pan-Asian Cooperation? It is not easy to get their citizenship.” Anderina’s expression suddenly became dubious. She teased the little girl, “I see, it seems that your husband is a Pan-Asian.”

Vera’s cheeks were slightly warm. She opened her mouth to explain, but she didn’t know what to say, so she finally closed her mouth.

Suddenly, there was a tremor under their feet.

The tremor made Vera nervous. But Anderina, who was sitting next to her, was accustomed to it. There was no change in the look on her face.

“Don’t be nervous, this always happens when a passenger spacecraft starts up... Is this your first time to Mars?”

“Technically, my first time in space.” Vera leaned on the seat nervously. Her little hand was grasping the seat belt tightly as she quickly asked, “Is this really fine?”

“Don’t worry. It has been so many years, and Pan-Asian Airlines has never had a spacecraft crash... Well, I should probably not say that out loud. Anyway, your worries are unnecessary.” The passengers nearby looked over at Anderina, making Anderina embarrassed. She then took out a business card from her bag and handed it to Vera. “This is my business card. If you have any difficulties on Mars, you can call my phone.”

There were not many people that still used paper business cards in this era, but they were not completely absent. Anderina was one of them. Part of it was because of professional reasons while the other part was because of habit.

Vera: "Thank you..."

"You're welcome." Anderina brushed her hair and grinned. "I like helping cute and polite girls. By the way, I still don't know your name."

"Ah, sorry." Vera blushed when she suddenly remembered that she hadn't introduced herself yet. "My name is Vera Pulyuy..."

"Ms. Pulyuy? That's a good name."

Anderina felt like this name seemed a bit familiar, as if she had heard or seen it somewhere.

But Anderina didn't think too much, because soon she was going to see her idol; the man called the pinnacle of the human mind. Right now, she must utilize every minute and every second to perfect the interview manuscript.

In London, tens of thousands of kilometers away, a skinny and young professor with curly hair, who was wearing a beige shirt, was pacing back and forth in his office. He frequently cast his gaze at the watch on his left wrist.

"These damn French guys... I knew that punctuality is a joke to them. Wait a minute, f*ck, does that make me an idiot for being on time?"

Leonard looked at the watch repeatedly. He gritted his teeth angrily, but there was nothing to do.

Prior to this, he had contacted more than a dozen media outlets, but apart from Le Monde, none of them were interested in his research results.

Leonard bet that they didn't even finish reading his paper.

Also, some small media outlets had actively contacted him, but when they suggested that they wanted to make minor amendments to his paper to make it look "more interesting", he angrily turned them away.

"These guys... What do they think science is?"

The scheduled time had come.

There was not a single person nearby.

Not only did the reporters not come, but he didn't even receive a call.

Leonard tried to call Ms. Anderina, who was in charge of interviewing him, but the call was sent to voicemail.

"Okay, I get it, it seems like they're not coming today..."

Leonard walked to the back of the desk and sat down on the chair.

He felt like he was marginalized in this university. No one cared about his research results, nor did they care about what kind of prosperous civilization existed before humans on Mars.

Every time he talked about this matter, people's reactions were, without exception, shock and ridicule.

And when he wanted to go into another direction, to get attention through the support of the media and the public, the reaction of the media outlets discouraged him.

However...

Despite this, he still did not give up.

When his gaze fell on the bottle placed on the bookshelf, a confident smile appeared on his face.

Inside the bottle was a fossil.

Its history was quite interesting.

He found the fossil in his pocket when he left the Yangtze River Delta city group.

It was obvious that Lu Zhou must have put it there. Because he knew very well that on that terrible trip to Mars, there was no time to pick up any stones. Forget about collecting fossils, he almost turned into a fossil himself.

Everything he did was because of this stone.

The fighting spirit rekindled in his pupils, and his whole face regained confidence.

Soon, he could fulfill his father's last wish...

Chapter 1655: Elevator Is Complete

Just after Vera's flight left the Tianzhou Space Station, the expert team of the Space Elevator Construction Committee arrived nearby at the Nirvana Space Station.

The spindle-shaped spire pointed towards the Earth was connected by a thick track, and the arc-shaped spiral arm connected to the other end had also begun to slowly rotate under the drive of nuclear energy.

From a distance, the entire space station was like a flying kite that was floating above the blue planet.

Standing next to the porthole, Professor Ge Huaizhi looked at the silver-white bright spot outside the window, which was the Tianzhou. He showed a look of fascination on his face.

After digesting his thoughts, he spoke.

"This space station has been in operation for more than half a century. It is finally about to retire."

"Yes, it's the end of an era."

Academician Zhu Haiqing, standing next to Professor Ge Huaizhi, looked at the shuttle flying away from the space station. He said emotionally, "I am afraid that this scene will only be seen in future documentaries."

Yesterday, while the media reported the research breakthrough for the civilian deployment of faster than light technology, the tower that connected the sky and Earth had finally completed the final stage of construction.

As the Redwood Elevator and the tower of Penglai on the sea steadily docked together, human civilization had entered a new era.

They would be the ones to present this new era.

“How long until the experiment begins?”

“About 30 minutes left.” The staff standing next to the two experts glanced at his watch. He continued in an excited tone, “The freight elevator track has been installed, and the technicians are making the final inspection of the track.”

“This part of the job is the most important.” Professor Ge Huaizhi spoke to the staff in a serious tone, “Especially the safety equipment on the freight elevator. Don’t make any mistakes. Even if no one is on the freight elevator, make sure there are no safety issues!”

The staff member stood up straight and replied sonorously, “Yes, sir!”

On the other hand, at an orbital astronomical observatory not far from the Nirvana Space Station, more than 20 high-resolution cameras were aimed at every section of the space elevator from head to toe.

Inside the control room of the observation station, the researcher Field and his assistant Johnny stared intently at the picture on the holographic screen. The rigid and sharp lines of the elevators seemed to pop out from the screen.

After about 5 minutes, Field quickly made a judgment and spoke.

“They are about to start a trial run.”

“Trial run?” Johnny was stunned. His face was full of anxiety as he asked, “But... why didn’t we receive the news here?”

“Are you dumb?” Field continued angrily, “Those Pan-Asian people are not our employees, so why should they report to you what they are doing? And if they are really disclosing things to us, do we need to stalk them from over here?”

After taking a deep breath, Johnny rubbed his fingers anxiously and spoke.

“What should we do?”

“What should we do? Ask the space agency. We are only responsible for the observation, not helping them solve problems. I don’t know what to do either,”

Field said as he stared at the silver tube connecting the sky and Earth. Although he was annoyed, there was still a trace of envy on his face.

In less than a year, they built the space station, the city floating on the sea, and all of the elevator sections...

How are these Asians doing this?

"I have sent the report... There is no response yet." Looking at the dead silence on the communication channel, Johnny cast his gaze on Field. "What's next?"

Field didn't bother to respond to this guy. He stared at the space elevator and gave a short answer.

"Wait!"

Even though he was their opponent...

As an engineer, he did not want to miss this historic moment.

He didn't want to miss even a single second!

At the same time, at Mars, which was three astronomical units away, Lu Zhou and others stood in a conference room. They were also paying attention to this historic moment.

Although there was a delay of nearly 20 minutes, as the chief consultant, this did not affect his attention to the project.

In the headquarters building of the Mars branch for East Asia Heavy Industries, Lu Zhou obtained the live broadcast transmission authority through the head office and borrowed a conference room from the Mars branch to watch the real-time live broadcast of this historic project.

Other than him, standing here were Wang Peng and President Zhong of the AIIB Mars branch.

When he looked at the 36,000 kilometer-long track in the holographic screen, he couldn't help but let out a sigh.

Wang Peng said, "This is definitely a miracle in the history of human engineering... Prior to this, I never thought that one day we could build an elevator to the sky."

"One step at a time, I never thought it would be so fast either." Lu Zhou, who was standing next to him, smiled and continued softly, "Until I discovered it."

Wang Peng: "It?"

"Yeah." Lu Zhou nodded. With a confident smile on his face, he continued, "The ultimate material that connects the sky and Earth."

In the broadcast on the holographic screen, the staff standing in the central tower of Penglai used heavy engineering equipment to put the huge freight elevator into the booster frame. They then connected the side ends to the thick and long tracks.

"Attention, all units, begin inspection!"

"Yes, sir!"

Wang Peng looked at the video on the holographic screen. His face was obviously excited, and he couldn't help but clench his fist tightly.

"I didn't expect this to actually happen..."

Looking at Wang Peng, whose face was full of excitement, Lu Zhou smiled and spoke in a relaxed tone.

"When have I ever lied before?"

Standing next to the two of them, Zhong Ziyu, who was also invited to watch the live broadcast of the space elevator test run, also had an expression of excitement and shock on his face.

After a while, he spoke emotionally.

"The citizens of Tiangong City have experienced a blessing in disguise. Although they had an evil mayor, the space trade activities of the entire solar system will increase exponentially after the completion of the space elevator."

"Haha, maybe." Lu Zhou smiled and continued, "But one thing for certain is that we have entered a new era."

On the live broadcast screen, the inspection of the equipment had been completed, and the test would start in less than 10 minutes.

Lu Zhou, with his hands behind his back, seemed to suddenly remember something. He walked to the door behind him.

Zhong Ziyu cast a curious look at his movements.

“There is still 10 minutes, aren’t you going to watch till the end?”

Lu Zhou smiled faintly and didn’t look back. He responded in a puzzling manner, “No need, I have already watched it.”

Zhong Ziyu: “...?”

Lu Zhou left the room and walked in the direction of the elevator without explaining himself.

Chapter 1656: Engineering Level 10!

[Congratulations, user, for completing the mission!]

[Description: Complete the impossible, connect the sky and Earth.]

[Rewards: Engineering level 10, 8 million experience, a golden legendary mission card.]

Standing in the pure white system space, Lu Zhou looked at the text displayed on the holographic screen. He subconsciously held his breath.

8 million experience points!

This was probably the most experience points he had gained in a single mission ever. Even the reward of engineering level 10 seemed insignificant.

“When did the system become so generous?”

Seeing this sudden huge sum of wealth, Lu Zhou took a long time to calm down the excitement in his heart. He opened the characteristic panel with a deep breath.

When he saw the row of numbers on the panel, he paused for a second.

Biochemistry and energy science are level 8... Leveling them only adds up to 6 million.

I can level up the last two subjects to level 9, with 2 million left over?

“What does this extra 2 million mean...? Is this a mistake?”

Lu Zhou’s intuition told him that a system that came from a higher level civilization would not make such a low-level mistake.

After rubbing his chin, Lu Zhou stared at the holographic panel for a while, but he couldn’t think of a reason.

“Forget it, I’ll just ignore it for now.”

After shaking his head, Lu Zhou decided to put this aside for the time being.

In any case, 2 million extra points was better than nothing, regardless of whether it was used or not.

Lu Zhou reached out his index finger and selected the plus sign next to the level display, making both energy science and biochemistry level 9.

After the experience points allocation was completed, the updated characteristic panel soon appeared in front of him.

[

A. Mathematics: Level 10

B. Physics: Level 10

C. Biochemistry: Level 9 (0/???)

D. Engineering: Level 10

E. Material Science: Level 10

F. Energy Science: Level 9 (0/???)

G. Information science: Level 9 (0/???)

]

[General points: 158,335]

“Mathematics, physics, engineering, and materials science have all been completed... Now only biochemistry, energy, and information science are left.

“Three promotion missions left, I wonder what the next one will be.”

Looking at the pale golden mission card in his inventory, Lu Zhou took a deep breath and pointed his index finger towards it.

The golden light particles spread out like stars in the sky, lingering around his index finger and blending into his body.

A translucent mission panel also appeared in front of Lu Zhou.

[Promotion mission: Ultimate Energy]

[Description: The tower connecting the sky and the Earth has been built, and a mythical dream was finally conquered by the wisdom of civilization. Before you set foot to a farther place, you need endless energy...]

[Research: Develop a high-energy-density battery with an energy density greater than 1,000MW/g.]

[Rewards: Energy science level 10, ???]

When Lu Zhou first saw the requirements of this mission, he thought he saw a mistake.

It wasn't until he rubbed his eyes that he realized that he had not made a mistake. The unit was indeed MW/g.

“What the hell is 1,000MW/g?!”

Lu Zhou was baffled when he saw the requirements. He held his forehead in shock.

From what he knew, it seemed that there was only one thing that could satisfy this condition.

However, forget about a real-life application, it was difficult to even find this “thing” in nature.

“This damn system gave me an impossible mission...”

...

At the Pan-Asian Cooperation headquarters.

Inside the chairman’s office.

A confidential document sent from Mars was delivered here by Wei Song, secretary of the chairman’s office.

Under normal circumstances, confidential documents would not be stored as paper files.

But when the confidentiality level reached a certain level, in order to prevent it from being stolen by hackers, the files would be delivered to the chairman personally as paper documents.

If the document was leaked, they would immediately know where the leak came from.

It was obvious how serious the Pan-Asian Cooperation took this matter.

Li Guangya took the document from Wei Song and took out the files in it. He carefully read it from top to bottom. The more he read, the more shocked he looked.

He put down the file in his hand, looked up at Wei Song, and asked with a serious expression, “What does the expert group suggest?”

Wei Song smiled bitterly and said, “There is no suggestion.”

“No suggestion?”

“Yes...” Wei Song nodded and continued with a weird expression on his face, “In terms of faster than light technology, he is the only expert in the world.”

There were many people who researched hyperspace theory, but the only person who held the key to open the hyperspace channel was Lu Zhou.

Wei Song still remembered the embarrassment on the faces of experts in related fields when he held a technical seminar to discuss hyperspace channels.

After pinching his glabella, Li Guangya buried his face between his palms and took a deep breath.

After a long time, he spoke.

“Approve the plan...”

“Okay.”

Wei Song nodded and was about to turn around and leave, but before he even took a step, he was stopped by Li Guangya again.

“Wait a second.”

Wei Song looked back at the chairman and spoke.

“Anything else, sir?”

“Remember,” Li Guangya said in a serious tone while looking at Wei Song, “what the highest priority is.

“Concentrate all resources whenever necessary and build it as quickly as possible without affecting the quality!”

Wei Song stood up straight and said seriously, “Yes, sir!”

The office door closed.

Listening to the sound of footsteps getting further and further away, Li Guangya leaned back on the office chair, picked up the document again, and looked at the headline for a long time.

“Stargates...”

It sounded like a fictional concept.

But this was indeed a very attractive plan.

According to Lu Zhou's description in this document, in order to maintain the faster than light channel between Earth and Mars, only two "Z particle clocks" were needed. By oscillating at the same frequency, they could open up a stable hyperspace channel.

Li Guangya didn't understand hyperspace channels and complex physics, nor did he understand Z particle clocks oscillating, but he knew one thing.

Which was that once the high-speed channel between the Earth-Moon system and Mars was complete, and the high-speed channel was in the hands of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, forget putting Tiangong City under its direct jurisdiction, the solar system would be in their hands.

As for Mars, the asteroid belt, or Europa, which had not yet been developed...

Those endless treasures would be at their fingertips.

Chapter 1657: Unexpected Person

In her dreams, Vera felt a hand shaking her shoulder gently.

"Wake up, it's time to get up, we will disembark in two hours... If you don't get up now, you will regret it later."

Vera opened her eyes. Discombobulated, she tilted her face slightly, and her eyes drifted out of the window.

Her pupils shrank, and her eyelashes trembled.

She was shocked.

A fiery red planet was in front of her.

The dust on its surface tumbled under the force of the wind, like a burning flame.

The space station suspended in orbit was so small in comparison, dancing on the edge of the red flame.

“Is this... Mars?”

Looking at the fiery red planet outside the porthole, Vera couldn't help but widen her eyes. She touched the window with her hands unconsciously.

“That's right, this is the frontier of our civilization... At least for now.” Anderina said with a smile on her mouth while her eyes had a look of fascination, “Speaking of which, are you that surprised? I remember during the 21st century, people have already landed on Mars.”

After two weeks of sailing, the two had become best friends.

Vera was full of curiosity about everything in this world, and Anderina, who dreamed of becoming a novelist, also cherished this opportunity to interview a dormant human from the last century.

Especially since Vera came from the 2020s.

That was the time period in which her idol, Lu Zhou, was flourishing the most.

After hearing Anderina's words, Vera explained softly, “It probably happened after I went into dormancy.”

Before she went dormant, she vaguely remembered that the most remarkable thing people had done was to build a scientific research station on the moon.

“I see.” Anderina looked at her and rubbed her chin thoughtfully. She continued, “Speaking of which, you said that you came to Mars to find someone... Who is that person? A relative? Or a descendant of your relatives?”

Upon hearing this question, Vera showed a warm smile on her face and said softly, “He's a great person.”

“What a coincidence, the purpose of my trip is the same. The Pan-Asian Cooperation has not been willing to disclose the details of faster than light technology. We journalists have to go there by ourselves.” Anderina looked at Vera, smiled, and continued, “A war had just broken out here, so the political

state is still unstable. I worry about letting you run around alone. Where are you going? I can give you a ride.”

Vera said embarrassedly, “Will this... be too troublesome for you?”

Although this was a tempting proposal, she was worried about whether it would affect her friend’s work.

“How come?” Anderina said with a smile, “We are friends. Isn’t it normal to help each other? Speaking of which, do you have a clue where the person you want to see is? Don’t tell me that you don’t know.”

“Of course not.” Vera shook her head and said with a smile, “I know where he is, but I didn’t tell him I’m coming.”

“A surprise visit, right? Haha, I get it.” Anderina winked at Vera and continued, “Anyway, it’s good that you know where he is. Finding people in Tiangong City is like looking for a needle in a haystack. Despite the small area of the city, the population density is the highest in the solar system...”

While they were talking, the speakers above their heads began to play soft music.

Under the guidance of the flight attendant’s reminder, the guests in the cabin stood up from their seats and began to leave the cabin of the transport ship.

Because she hadn’t adapted to walking in a gravity-free environment, Vera, who had just left her seat, was a little clumsy. Fortunately, Anderina held her hand, so she didn’t float to the ceiling.

“Relax, think of yourself as a fish, you are in the sea... Come with me, the ground shuttle usually doesn’t wait around. If it’s full, we have to wait for the next one.”

She pulled Vera quickly across the corridor of the departure hall. When the two were about to get on the shuttle, they were suddenly mesmerized by the scene outside the window.

An unimaginably large starship, like a silver-white ruler, was hovering in the orbit of Mars.

When she was on the transport ship earlier, she didn't see this starship because of the angle. But now, just like herself, many tourists from Earth looked at it with eyes of surprise.

"What is that?"

"That?" Following Vera's sight, Anderina was slightly stunned. She then said with a smile, "Oh, that thing, if I had to guess, it should be Noah's Ark... Of course, his name is Milky Way now that Academician Lu bought it."

Noah's Ark?

For some reason, Vera, after hearing the news, had a slightly complicated look on her face.

There was a hint of comfort, relief, and regret.

Anderina looked at her strangely and didn't think too much.

After all, humans were sentimental beings, and Vera happened to be at a sentimental age.

After taking the shuttle to the ground, the two dragged their luggage out of the terminal building. Anderina clearly felt the atmosphere of post-war reconstruction in the air.

The bullet holes that remained on the ground and the pit holes left by the explosion had not been completely erased, and some seriously damaged buildings were still circled by police tapes.

The tourists had a somewhat curious look in their eyes, but the faces of the locals were full of grief.

After getting a taxi, the driver changed the gear and flew the car into the suspended pipeline in the air. Anderina asked the driver, "How is the law and order here these days?"

"The law and order is good, even better than before," the driver said in a casual tone. "But you know, Ma'am, Mars is not a peaceful place. It's better not to wander around... Where are you going?"

Anderina opened her mouth to speak, but Vera, who was sitting next to her, said immediately, "Star Sky Hotel."

After hearing these words, both the driver and Anderina, who was sitting next to Vera, gave her a surprised look.

However, the driver didn't say much. After replying "Got it!", he returned his attention to driving.

In about half an hour, the car quickly reached its destination.

After getting out of the car, the two stood in front of this magnificent hotel.

After politely rejecting the doorman who came to help with the luggage, Anderina glanced at Vera awkwardly and asked in a quiet voice, "That friend of yours... lives in a place like this?"

Vera gave her a strange look.

"What's the problem?"

"Nothing..."

The Star Sky Hotel, located in the center of Tiangong City, was the most luxurious hotel in the city. The credit points needed to live here for a day was equivalent to her one-month bonus, and this was just for the ordinary rooms.

Anderina was thinking about what kind of person lived at a place like this.

Suddenly, a voice of surprise came from nearby.

"Vera?!"

The two turned around together and looked in the direction where the sound came from.

Instantly, Vera's eyes widened, and there was a layer of mist in her excited eyes.

She ran in that direction.

Anderina, who was left behind, was dumbfounded.

"Lu... Lu Zhou?"

She didn't expect that the "great man" the little girl was talking about was actually him...

Chapter 1658: Every Second We Experience is Science Fiction

Before he could react, a wisp of fragrance rushed into his arms.

Lu Zhou was a little dazed by the sudden hug. His movements were a little stiff, as if he was hesitating where to put his hands.

Fortunately, Vera, who suddenly rushed into his arms, seemed to realize how embarrassing her behavior was, so she blushed and quickly separated from him.

Looking at Lu Zhou with a nervous look on her face, Vera whispered, "I... missed you so much, so I came to see you... is that okay?"

"Of course it is, but you came so far by yourself... Have you been on a space shuttle before?"

Lu Zhou's face was full of worry, Vera shook her head gently.

"No... but Xiao Ai and I were both worried about you."

Lu Zhou was baffled at Vera turning the tables and worrying about him. He said, "You don't need to worry about what I am doing, I am an old man now. I can take care of myself."

"Not really..." Vera whispered, "I heard from Xiao Ai that 100 years ago, you caused people a lot of trouble."

Lu Zhou's face showed a look of shame.

Xiao Ai...

Why is she doing this?

Just when Anderina was about to record this emotional moment, a cough came from the side.

“It is forbidden to take pictures here.”

Anderina turned around and saw a strange man standing next to her. He seemed to be guarding something.

“I don’t have bad intentions, just a little surprised... Sorry, it was my fault.”

After seeing Anderina sincerely apologizing, Wang Peng nodded without saying anything.

Lu Zhou noticed the commotion as he looked over.

“Excuse me, you are...”

“I-I am...” Anderina was about to introduce herself, but she was so excited to see her idol that her voice became incoherent.

Fortunately, Vera, who was standing next to Lu Zhou, smiled and explained for her.

“Her name is Anderina, a reporter from Le Monde. We met on the road. Thanks to her help, I got here safely.”

After listening to Vera’s introduction, Lu Zhou nodded thoughtfully. He looked at Anderina, smiled slightly, and spoke in a friendly manner.

“Thank you for taking care of her.”

“No, no, actually I didn’t help much,” Anderina said with a blushing face. She waved her hand and felt a little ashamed. “No need to thank me.”

“Haha, don’t be so polite.” Lu Zhou smiled. He looked at the embarrassed expression on her face and continued, “It seems that you have a lot of things to ask me.”

Anderina nodded honestly.

“Yes... I came to Mars this time mainly to interview you. It’s just that I haven’t figured out how to begin.”

“If only every reporter can be like you, less small talk and more sincerity.” Lu Zhou looked at Vera standing on the side and said softly, “After two weeks of

flying, you must be tired. Come on, go and rest. I'll let Ling take you to the room. You can leave your luggage there."

"Yeah..." Looking at Lu Zhou anxiously, Vera whispered with a worried expression on her face, "Am I causing you trouble?"

"Why would you?" Lu Zhou said with a smile. He reached out and caressed her hair. "It is my fault for making you worry about me."

After Vera walked away while blushing, Lu Zhou looked at Anderina, who pretended not to see anything. He thought for a while and continued, "What a coincidence... I was just about to go to the laboratory of East Asia Heavy Industries."

After hearing these words, Anderina said quickly, "It's fine, it doesn't matter, I can follow your schedule!"

"No way, everyone's time is equally precious." Lu Zhou shook his head and continued, "Well, how about you come with us?"

"Huh?" Anderina was slightly stunned. "Is this... really okay?"

"Of course." Lu Zhou said with a faint smile, "If you can learn my technology just from glancing at it, I would be happily surprised."

Lu Zhou glanced at Wang Peng. He nodded and said, "Let's go."

Before coming to Tiangong City, Anderina wondered how she would get to interview Lu Zhou. She did not expect that she would interview him in this manner.

To show her sincerity, she took the initiative to turn off her camera and interview drone. She then handed them over to the man who looked like a bodyguard.

Wang Peng nodded in response to Anderina's actions and did not show much emotion.

Soon, the three arrived at the industrial zone in a maglev vehicle.

In a huge workshop, Anderina saw a giant metal ring.

The silver-white metal ring was covered with complicated equipment. It looked like a cyberpunk artwork, and it manifested maximalist design to the extreme.

After staring at it for a long time, Anderina finally couldn't help but ask, "This is...?"

"Stargate." Lu Zhou looked at the huge circle. He smiled and continued, "The starting point of the hyperspace channel... Of course, it can also be the endpoint."

Wang Peng looked at him nervously. Lu Zhou smiled back and motioned to him not to be nervous. "It's fine, I will start testing this set of equipment soon, and there will be a press conference soon. It's fine even if it's made public now... So, let's get down to business, Ms. Anderina, I know you probably have a lot of questions to ask."

Seeing Lu Zhou suddenly turn the topic to herself, Anderina was slightly stunned. She quickly nodded and said, "I heard that many scholars have commented that once faster than light technology is integrated into our society, it will bring earth-shaking changes to our society... It is even no exaggeration to say that we will enter a new era because of this."

"You can say that." Lu Zhou nodded, acknowledging her statement. "By maintaining a stable and open hyperspace channel, even without a warp drive, ordinary spacecraft can use stargates to achieve hyperspace transitions and travel the distance of astronomical units in a very short amount of time. This includes not only the exchange of matter but also information."

Anderina: "This is your expectation for the future?"

"Sort of." Lu Zhou said with a smile, "I can feel that the day is not far away."

"When the time comes, not only matter and information, but all of us... From Antarctica to the Kuiper Belt that is a few astronomical units away, whether it is on Earth or Mars, we will all be connected as a whole. And all the spirits in the galaxy will be united under the same name."

"That is, the human civilization."

Shocked by the future depicted by Lu Zhou, Anderina's face showed a look of disbelief.

After a while, she opened her mouth.

“It sounds... like a sci-fi movie.”

“Compared to yesterday, every second we experience is science fiction.” Lu Zhou continued with a faint smile on his face, he looked at her and said, “I hope you can use your linguistic expertise to convey this message to the world.”

He coughed and spoke.

“Then, Ms. Anderina, I wonder if you are interested in participating in the opening ceremony of our stargate?”

Chapter 1659: I Want To Revive the Human Alliance

Anderina never thought that one day, she would be able to attend such an important occasion or even participate in the writings of history.

“Every second we experience is science fiction...”

After hearing this quiet whisper, the man sitting next to Anderina raised his eyebrows curiously.

“What are you talking about?”

“Nothing?” Anderina shook her head. With a firm expression on her face, she said, “I will write this into the book.”

“Book?”

“Yes, I intend to write a book about the future of human civilization under the pseudonym Anna... And I intend to put this sentence at the beginning of this book.”

“Sounds interesting, can I receive a signed copy?”

Anderina raised her eyebrows and said teasingly, “Of course, as long as you are willing to pay, you can have as many copies as you want.”

“Haha.”

In a relaxed and joyful atmosphere, along with others, Anderina boarded the transport ship named “Torch”. Under the guidance of the crew members, she fastened her seatbelt and connected her spacesuit to the life support system.

After looking around, Anderina couldn’t help but ask.

“Where is our destination?”

The male passenger sitting nearby answered this question.

“Earth! We have to share this great moment with our fellow citizens on Earth!”

His face was filled with excitement, and his beard seemed to be shaking. He said in a fierce tone, “2.6 astronomical units in less than a minute. Soon, we will see the Tianzhou Space Station appear in front of us.”

“You are...”

The man smiled and showed his white teeth. He continued to speak excitedly, “A reporter from Pan-Asia News! Haha, it’s a great honor to be able to sit here and witness this historical moment!”

As time went by, the Torch starship got closer and closer to the stargate.

A gentle reminder floated on the ceiling of the cabin.

“Passengers, please note that the passenger ship Torch is entering the scheduled orbit and will pass through the stargate in 5 minutes, entering the hyperspace channel.

“Because the gravitational field will fluctuate greatly when entering the stargate, please stay in your seats and fasten your seat belts to prevent safety accidents.”

When Anderina heard these words, she took a deep breath. Every cell in her body tightened because of the tension.

However, there seemed to be a slight discrepancy from what she had expected. Although the feeling of g-force made her feel a little compressed, it was only for a short moment.

The stars outside the window seemed to be stretched. They were pulled into silver lines, forming a glowing stream of spacetime.

“Is this the hyperspace channel? It’s incredible... Really amazing.”

A gray-bearded old man was sitting near Anderina. He looked out the window excitedly, almost sticking his nose on the glass.

Judging from his temperament and appearance, he was unlike a journalist and more like a scholar or researcher.

Having been a reporter for so many years, Anderina was quite confident of her ability to judge people.

However, just as she was about to find a way to interview him, the huge and chaotic gravitational force struck again, pressing her firmly back on the chair.

However, it was only for a moment.

The scene outside the window suddenly changed.

An arc-shaped “door frame” swept past her eyes, and the galaxy returned to its stillness again, as if they had stepped on the brakes. The speed of the entire starship suddenly slowed down.

All these happened at the moment when the starship Torch passed through that circular arch!

Of course, this was not what surprised Anderina the most.

She vaguely saw a blue figure in the deep and endless space.

“Earth...”

“That’s Earth!”

Someone also shouted after her.

If it were not for the seat belts, all of those excited people would jump up from their seats and hug each other.

“This is incredible...”

Anderina gently raised her trembling hand as she glanced at her watch.

From Mars orbit to Earth geosynchronous orbit...

In less than a minute!

At the same time, Lu Zhou, standing in the conference room at the branch headquarters of East Asia Heavy Industries in Tiangong City, witnessed this historic moment with a man standing across from him.

The man's name was Li Guangya; he was the chairman of the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

Of course, technically, he wasn't standing here. It was his holographic projection.

"It's incredible..." he whispered. Li Guangya looked at his hands and looked around again. "Is this Mars?"

Lu Zhou: "Have you never been here?"

"I have always planned to come, but I could never find the time. After all, I have to be disconnected for a week or even two weeks when I fly here. Our alliance can't go without a leader for such a long time."

There was a slight excitement on Li Guangya's face when he said this.

Immediately afterward, he looked at Lu Zhou.

"Real-time communication has been achieved... Is the first stargate experiment successful?"

Lu Zhou glanced at his watch, thought for a moment, and said, "Starship Torch has just entered the stargate, and it will take about half a minute for them to get out."

"Then why is the call between us not delayed?"

Lu Zhou: "The time it takes for massless photons and mass particles to pass through the hyperspace channel is different."

Li Guangya coughed slightly awkwardly.

“I see...”

Suddenly, there was silence in the conference room for a few seconds.

Soon after, the news of the successful arrival of Torch came to Mars through the hyperspace channel.

Lu Zhou, who was standing on Mars, and Li Guangya, who was in Beijing, received this good news almost at the same time.

Although it was expected, after hearing the news, Lu Zhou couldn't help but show a smile on his face.

His expectations for the Z particles were finally fulfilled at this moment.

Although Lu Zhou never thought that this chapter would be written by him, in any case, with the completion of this technology, human civilization would enter a new era.

Just when Lu Zhou was in a celebratory mood, a voice suddenly came from across the conference table.

“The stargate is complete... Are you planning to leave?”

Lu Zhou looked at the serious expression on Li Guangya's face. After thinking for a while, Lu Zhou spoke.

“There are still a few things left to be done. I'm not in a rush.”

“Do you have to go?”

Lu Zhou nodded.

“After going to Tau Ceti, I will go to the center of the Milky Way.”

Li Guangya sighed and said, “I still don't understand why you are so persistent.”

“Because I have my reasons, and I'm the only one who can do this.” Lu Zhou continued looking at Li Guangya and said, “Trust me, this is for the future of our civilization.”

“Future?” Li Guangya sighed. His eyes wandered around as he muttered to himself in a quiet voice, “As long as you exist, the future is bright. And if you leave, the road can only be explored by ourselves.”

Lu Zhou: “This day will come eventually. I can’t lead the way all the time, nor will I always be correct.”

Li Guangya: “Can I ask you another question?”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Before I leave, you can ask as many as you want.”

He thought that Li Guangya would ask him an academic question or the feasibility of a certain technology.

He didn’t expect this guy to throw out a question that had nothing to do with academics.

“Using the breakthrough of faster than light technology as an opportunity, I want to revive the Federation of Human Alliance.

“Do you think the timing is right?”

Chapter 1660: Towards a New Era

If it weren’t for her witnessing that moment with her own eyes, Anderina could never believe that under the dominance of a certain technology, a human spacecraft could cross 2.6 astronomical units in an instant, going from Mars to Earth’s geosynchronous orbit.

She wasn’t the only one who witnessed all of this since she participated in this historic moment with 100 other passengers.

At this moment, Anderina was speechless. Every inch on her face was filled with surprise.

She swore that she would use her words to make this moment eternal...

Anderina was not the only one surprised.

The space observatory belonging to the North American Space Agency in geosynchronous orbit also observed this amazing scene.

Researcher Field almost poked his nose through the holographic screen as he stared at the starship that appeared almost out of thin air in the observation lens.

Standing behind him, Johnny whispered, "They succeeded..."

Yes, they succeeded.

No matter how unacceptable this reality was and how hopeless it made Field and others feel, facts did not care about feelings.

From this moment onwards, human civilization would have entered a new era.

To celebrate this moment, bright fireworks rose one after another over the Yangtze River Delta, Pearl River Delta, and Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei city group at 8 o'clock in the evening.

Not only celebrating in reality but also on the Internet.

From the virtual reality online game of Calan Empire to the academic exchange forums of major universities, at almost every corner of the Internet, everyone was celebrating this great moment in their own way.

As the world's largest academic exchange forum, the atmosphere on the LSPM forum began to brew as early as yesterday.

As the news of the successful arrival of Torch came, the related discussion posts were like a waterfall, flooding the pages in an instant.

[Academician Lu is insane!]

[Nutty! It takes less than a minute to get from Mars to Earth?! Wouldn't it be faster to go to Mars than to go to the Moon?!]

[More than just insane! This is crazy, okay! Not just starships, the communication technology is also amazing! Sending a letter to Mars used to take a few minutes at best, and sometimes more than 20 minutes!]

[Haha, in the future, Tiangong City will no longer be a local area network.]

[It's hard to say. I don't know how much the communication cost of stargates is. If it is 100 credits per kb of traffic, even if instant messaging can be achieved, it may not be affordable to people.]

[I heard from Academician Lu that maintaining a stable and open hyperspace channel should not cost too much, right?]

[Oh, who knows?]

Not only were netizens hotly discussing this topic, but the academic community had also launched heated discussions around this amazing news.

For example, Academician Wang Chuanzhe from the Pan-Asian Academy of Social Sciences wrote an article with a length of about 10,000 words in his LSPM blog.

He analyzed the possible impact of the technology on the world from a sociological perspective.

[According to the laws of historical development, factors closely related to our lives, such as the scope of human activities and the boundaries of civilization, have always been inseparable from the development of transportation technology and communication technology.]

[Since the beginning of the space age, despite the continuous emergence of numerous and diverse technologies, our area of activity has not expanded as a result and is still confined to the narrow asteroid belt.]

[But now, the birth of hyperspace theory and the emergence of warp speed technology have reversed this situation in a fundamental sense, extending the boundaries of our imagination beyond the solar system.]

[It is foreseeable that this technology will not only change our way of life but will also completely change the political pattern on the planet. Just like the changes that Columbus brought to the European continent, I can boldly speculate that the globalization process that ended in the last century will recover again, and we will also move towards greater alliances and integration to share our future destiny.]

After this article was published, it immediately caused a huge response in academia.

Not only because of Academician Wang Chuanzhe's vision of this technology but also because his description at the end of the article reminded people of the Federation of Human Alliance from the last century.

In order to respond to the threats from extraterrestrial civilizations, various countries formed an authoritative organization that had more executive power than the United Nations, to speak a voice that belonged to human civilization.

However, because evidence of the existence of an extraterrestrial civilization was not found, and the exploration of the Martian civilization ruins remained stagnant, this alliance soon died due to various reasons, and finally was replaced by regional alliances.

Over the past 100 years, the academic community had demonstrated countless times that it was impractical to establish a unified political collective that encompassed hundreds of countries around the world. In contrast, a small-scale regional alliance was more in line with the development needs of human society.

But now, at this specific pivotal moment, Academician Wang Chuanzhe had put forward a point of view that opposed the mainstream opinion in the academic world.

Especially considering the political background of this old man, many people had begun to speculate whether there was a major move brewing in the Pan-Asian Cooperation...

...

Regardless of what major moves were brewing, the mainstream public of the Pan-Asian Cooperation was in a jubilant mood.

However, in contrast, the mood of other regional alliances was not so joyful.

North American Alliance headquarters.

Inside the chairman's office.

The chief of staff, who was in a suit, walked into the room quickly. He put his hands on the desk, looked at the chairman sitting behind the desk, and spoke in a hasty tone.

“There are reports that the Pan-Asian Cooperation intends to restart the Human Alliance.”

After hearing this sentence, the chairman of the board was taken aback for a moment. He then sneered, “Human Alliance? The thing that has been swept into the historical grave? Haha, what excuses do they plan to use this time? Jupiter aliens? Or Saturn aliens?”

“Neither...”

The chief of staff gulped and placed a Pan-Asian news report on the holographic screen.

With an expression of suspicion, the President cast his gaze on the holographic screen.

However, it was at this moment that his face solidified.

There were no excuses from them.

There was not even a warning or threat.

There was just a chilling understatement—

[According to various rumors, the Pan-Asian executives are researching the expansion of economic cooperation and opening the use of stargate technology to member countries that join the cooperation.]

“I can’t believe they would use the stargates as a bargaining chip...”

The chief of staff lowered his head with a heavy expression and said, “Yes... I never expected that they would be so shameless.”

“...”

The chairman of the board gently leaned against the office chair. His index finger was slightly trembling as it gently rested on the bridge of his nose.

The North American Alliance was not a country; it was only a regional alliance.

If the Pan-Asian Cooperation made joining the Human Alliance or similar organizations a prerequisite for using the stargate technology and threw an

olive branch to the member states of the North American Alliance, he could foresee the collapse of the entire North American Alliance...

This was an offer that the countries could not refuse.

The chief of staff standing opposite his desk gulped and spoke.

“Chairman...”

“Get out.” His voice was full of exhaustion, as if he aged ten years old in an instant. The man sitting in the office chair said, “I want to be alone.”

Chapter 1661: Human Alliance

“What did he reply to you?”

Beijing.

At the Pan-Asian Cooperation headquarters.

They were walking in the corridor and heading towards the conference hall. Facing Secretary-General Wu Shuhua’s inquiry, Li Guangya thought for a while before replying in a casual tone.

“He didn’t answer.”

After hearing this unexpected answer, Wu Shuhua glanced at him unexpectedly.

“He didn’t answer you?”

“Yes.” Li Guangya shrugged and said with a helpless smile, “He said I should figure out the road to the future myself... Of course, he may also be interested in things outside of academics.”

Wu Shuhua was silent for a while. She then continued, “In any case, we have come to where we are today.”

“Yeah.” Li Guangya nodded emotionally. He raised his head and looked at the spacious door perched at the end of the corridor. He said, “The future will judge whether this is good or bad.”

...

On the 6th day of June, a major event happened at the Pan-Asian Cooperation.

To be precise, it was not only the Pan-Asian Cooperation but also the fate of the entire world.

Under the invitation from Beijing, hundreds of countries around the world set aside their regional alliance responsibilities and sent representatives to the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei city group to participate in this meeting, to discuss issues related to the future destiny of mankind.

At the end of the conference, the organizer of the conference took the lead and released a joint initiative on the establishment of a new and more international community with a shared future for mankind.

The new alliance was named the Federation of Human Alliance, just like its sister organization that died a century ago.

However, the difference was that the people in the new era injected a new framework under the old foundation.

Under the guarantee of the First Fleet and the authority established by the hyperspace channel, this alliance would be more reliable than any other alliance born on this planet...

North Sea Alliance.

University of Oxford campus.

Leonard sat in the library, making final preparations for the upcoming most important speech in his life.

Sitting across from him was his old friend Professor Feren, who was also the only colleague he spoke to on this campus.

He paid the price to go against the mainstream opinions, so no one in the entire archeology department respected him, except for the one sitting in front of him.

Although there was a 30-year difference in age, they had a common language.

“Human Alliance... Pft, if you live long enough, anything can happen.” Feren’s finger lightly tapped on the holographic screen in front of him. He smiled and continued, “I still remember your father made a bet with me that the collapse of the Human Alliance was only because it was ahead of its time, and it would eventually be revived one day in the future... Now it seems that he won.”

Leonard didn’t respond. Feren suddenly thought of something and continued apologetically, “My apologies for speaking on a sore topic.”

“It’s not a sore topic. My father always taught me that people have to look forward.” Leonard continued, pushing his holographic glasses up the bridge of his nose, “My father was a great scholar, I will soon prove this.”

“I think so too, it’s just the stupidity of the public that conceals his talent.”

Feren sighed softly. As if he was reminiscing about the past, a trace of emotion appeared in his muddy pupils.

After a long pause, his index finger touched the teacup and he continued, “I still remember, thirty years ago, back then we discussed the future of human civilization... Although the discussion of this matter by two archaeologists sounded a bit funny, I felt like his insights were unlike an ordinary archaeologist’s. He was even more astute than some international relations experts.”

The pen in Leonard’s hand froze. He moved his gaze away from the holographic panel and looked at Feren.

Noticing that Leonard became interested in this topic, Feren smiled faintly and continued to speak, “In his opinion, those Chinese people have actually been planning this for a long time.”

“Planning for a long time?”

“Yeah.” Feren nodded and said with a smile, “The plan to build a community with a shared future for mankind around the world... In fact, they have already started making arrangements a century ago.

“However, even with adequate preparation, this is still an extremely difficult project. It spans many lifetimes and requires countless generations of people to work hard and painstakingly for it. This requires them to be loyal towards a common collective at all costs. It is difficult for us to do the same.”

“This is a unique opinion.” Leonard thought about it for a while and then looked at him and said, “In your opinion, how exactly did they do it?”

“It seems that you still don’t understand the ingenuity of this. What they did was not a specific thing, but a promise that is fulfilled by the collective in unconscious behavior.”

Leonard: “What promise?”

“Peace.”

Seeing that Leonard had a surprised expression on his face, Feren smiled and continued with an admiring tone, “Carefully calculated over a century. During this century, they have not launched a single foreign war, even during the most difficult 2050s. Since the eighteenth century, this has never happened before.”

War was a difficult choice, but it was an easy solution.

No method could transfer domestic disputes, crises, and errors to foreign countries faster than war.

“Haven’t you noticed? This conference did not receive much opposition.”

Feren’s index finger lightly tapped on the holographic screen. He watched the news presented in front of him and continued, “On the surface, it appears that the Pan-Asian Cooperation used the fleet and stargate to blackmail other regional alliances, but in fact, during the entire conference process, things were completed rather smoothly.

“This is quite an incredible thing, as if... The world is ready to welcome its new owner. The allies who once belonged to us are turning their backs faster than we thought.”

Seeing that Leonard didn't speak, Feren sighed slightly and said fascinatingly, "It would be great if we could live forever... Life is so short that most of us can't see the day our research shines. I really want to know how future generations will evaluate this history."

Leonard teasingly said, "Perhaps you can have a child and he will witness the future for you." He looked at his watch and continued, "In any case, my seminar is starting soon..."

Feren: "Seriously, is it really useful for us to research those bugs?"

"The usefulness is that we can learn from their decline," Leonard said softly after turning off the holographic panel floating in front of him. He added, "So we can avoid a similar ending."

Chapter 1662: We Meet Again

[My dear friend, thank you very much for the fossil you gave me. Although I feel you may have forgotten about me, I must express my gratitude.]

[Yesterday, the seminar I held at the University of Oxford came to an end. The clues I found in the fossils you gave me fully proved that there was a group of strong and intelligent cockroaches who once lived on Mars.]

[Different from the little guys who are active on Earth today, they were bigger, had longer tentacles, and lived on a planet with more oxygen than ours... And this also proves that Mars once had a prosperous past, only to be withered for some reason.]

[A civilization once existed on Mars, is there anything more surprising than this? The unfinished expedition from 100 years ago has now received a new explanation. We are not alone in the universe, and the remains of our neighbors are under our feet.]

[I have a sincere request, could you perhaps tell me, where did you find the fossil? We know that money and honor can no longer impress you, but in order to find enlightenment from a prehistoric civilization, I sincerely implore you to share the location of the fossil...]

Mars.

Star Sky Hotel.

Sitting in the study room, Lu Zhou read the email that Leonard had written to him. A troubled expression appeared on his face.

The fossil was found in the ruins of The Gates of Hell, and its current coordinates were probably at the deepest part of the Hiddell Mining Company's mine, which was next to General Reinhardt's ship.

However, Lu Zhou certainly couldn't say that.

He couldn't explain these things honestly, at least before moving the ship.

He understood Leonard's impatience and curiosity at the moment.

This was the emotion that any scholar would have when facing the truth.

After hesitating for a while, Lu Zhou opened the dictation function on the screen. After sorting out his thoughts, he spoke in a clear voice.

"I'm terribly sorry, Mr. Leonard, I honestly don't remember very clearly where the fossil came from. You've heard how chaotic the situation was, and you've even seen it in the documentary. The cave was collapsing, and I laid in a dormant cabin in a hurry. If the dormant cabin left by the prehistoric civilization wasn't there, I am afraid I would no longer be in this world.

"There are only two clues I can provide you. In terms of what I have seen, the declining Martian civilization once prospered unprecedentedly, but because of the introverted culture and physical incompetence, instead of expanding into space, they chose to go deep underground.

"As for another clue, that is the demise of the Martian civilization, which is probably related to their excessive release of the thermal energy from Mars' core, which caused the disappearance of the Martian magnetic field and the loss of the atmosphere..."

Lu Zhou double-checked the text written on the holographic panel.

Not to check for mistakes, but to check whether there was any important information missing, or if he revealed something that should not be revealed.

Then he clicked the send button, sending the email back, and got up from his chair.

He would go to the Milky Way ship in the afternoon to see his and Xiao Ai's new home.

After a month of work, the latest warp drive had been installed by East Asia Heavy Industries.

Except for a few minor changes, the entire colonial ship was almost complete...

...

Today's news was shown on the holographic screen on the shuttle headed towards the East Asia Heavy Industries shipyard.

[Professor Leonard, a well-known scholar of the North Sea Alliance, used fossil evidence to prove that a smart creature resembling a cockroach once existed on Mars billions of years ago.]

[So far, the research has caused a huge sensation in the academic community. Experts in related fields have not yet expressed their views on this incident. However, according to an unnamed scholar, the evidence is likely to be true, and this research may change the mainstream opinions on the ancient geological structure and ancient biological environment of Mars.]

When Zhong Ziyu read the news in the video window, he couldn't help but speak emotionally.

"It's incredible. I can't believe those annoying little creatures built a civilization before?"

After hearing this, Lu Zhou smiled and did not reply.

He was also in disbelief.

He never thought that the fossil stone he put in his pocket would create such a huge reaction.

After ten minutes of sailing, the shuttle quickly stopped at the shipyard's berth.

The gangway connected, and the group of people soon arrived at the shipyard. They came to the modified Milky Way under the guidance of the engineers.

Standing in the grand concourse, Zhong Ziyu looked around as he smiled and spoke.

“I feel like there is more space here than when I came last time.”

“That’s probably an illusion. This modification did not change the main structure of the starship, it only made some detailed adjustments to the internal space.” Lu Zhou looked at the surrounding layout and said, “Perhaps it’s because the space utilization has improved.”

Academician Yang Chongping was indeed worthy of being a leading engineer in the Mars aviation industry. His skills were quite unrivaled. Choosing him as the chief engineer was an extremely wise decision.

“Really? I thought you widened this colonial ship.” Zhong Ziyu smiled and continued, “Speaking of which, how fast is the warp drive on this ship?”

“It depends on the total mass of the target planet, the distance traveled, and the mass of the colonial ship.” Lu Zhou thought for a while and continued, “If it is Tau Ceti, it will take about 30 days.”

To be honest, the warp drive he designed was just the key to open the hyperspace channel, it couldn’t determine the attributes of the channel itself.

“Arrive at Tau Ceti in 30 days?” Zhong Ziyu’s expression was a little emotional as he continued, “What about Alpha Centauri?”

“About two weeks... Why?”

Zhong Ziyu smiled embarrassedly. He touched the back of his head with his right hand.

“I’m just asking casually... But after hearing you say this, there’s a chance.”

Lu Zhou: “...?”

A chance at what?

Just as Zhong Ziyu was about to explain his plan, a voice floated from above the empty hall.

“You came.”

The two men looked up at the same time but saw nothing.

A holographic beam fell from the sky and landed in front of the two of them.

Lu Zhou looked at the young man standing in front of him. He was slightly stunned, and a solemn expression appeared on his face.

“Lawrence...”

“Yes, my old friend.”

The young Lawrence smiled and continued in a gentle but cold voice.

“We meet again.”

Chapter 1663: Hostage?

When Zhong Ziyu saw the figure standing in the holographic beam, he was slightly stunned and a little confused.

He frowned, looked at the young man, and said, “Who the hell are you? How did you get in?”

“Who am I? Hasn’t Academician Lu already introduced me?” Lawrence smiled faintly. He continued in a relaxed tone, “David Lawrence. As for how I get in... This was originally my ship, and I live here.”

Zhong Ziyu’s eyes widened. He took a half step backward and pressed the alarm on his left-hand terminal with his right hand.

Lawrence didn’t pay attention to his movements, as if he didn’t care. His eyes were fixated on Lu Zhou’s body.

“My old friend, you don’t seem to be too happy?”

"I have no reason to be happy." Lu Zhou shrugged his shoulders slightly and said, "I don't quite understand how you got into this position."

Lawrence: "Are you talking about digitizing myself?"

Lu Zhou nodded and continued, "It is not easy to give up everything you have."

"Give up everything I have?" Lawrence smiled faintly as he continued, "If that is the case, I have to thank you."

"Thank me?"

"Yes." Lawrence nodded and continued in a chattering tone, "More than 100 years ago, the sole heir of the Boston Financial Group gave up the career he loved and started his own mission that only he could execute. However, after countless attempts, no matter how hard he tried to seize the opportunities of the times and rejuvenate the glory of the Lawrence family and the Boston Financial Group, he became a joke on Wall Street... Do you know why? It was all because of you."

Lu Zhou frowned slightly.

He really didn't understand how the blame was on him.

"Me?"

"Yes." Lawrence nodded and said, "From new energy to space exploration, Lawrence bet a lot on the future and was in the right direction, but in the end, he lost the bet. In his most frustrating times, he heard a call from the Void.

"Although the voice was faint, he noticed it. They built a huge computer array for him and gave him the key to unlocking the program that contained 2kb of secrets...

"Later, like you saw, we built the largest supercomputer array in the solar system on Ceres and named it the Matrix."

Lawrence's voice became slightly deeper. His pupils staring at Lu Zhou constantly flashed with complicated emotion.

"It took us a century to complete this great project. It will take at most half a century more before we will be reborn from the ashes and replace the weaker

civilization with a greater, more efficient, healthier, and more rational civilization. To escape from the physical body... Do you understand what I mean?"

"If you want to attribute his failure to me, you really value me too much." Lu Zhou said blankly, "Frankly speaking, this plan would never succeed. Even without me, there would be others that come out and defeat it."

"Perhaps so. Everything is in hindsight. Besides, I didn't mean to blame you." Lawrence smiled lightly and continued, "If you didn't make him lose everything, the coward would not give up his rotten body and release me from the cage. I used to have to do things with my bare hands and feet, but now, I can do whatever I want."

Lu Zhou: "So, The Spirit of The Universe Foundation is part of the Boston family... Or is it a product of your own work?"

He remembered that this guy said that this ship belonged to him.

In that case, the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation was very likely to be funded and established by this guy.

"Not quite, but we did take advantage of them for a long time. And it turns out that they are indeed a group of incompetent guys." Lawrence showed a mocking smile on his face as he said, "Except for Noah's Ark, they really didn't do anything for me."

Lu Zhou: "Unfortunately, it is now called the Milky Way."

"Oh yeah?" As if hearing something interesting, Lawrence raised his eyebrows slightly. He looked at Lu Zhou happily and said, "Regardless, you should listen to my opinion."

Lu Zhou: "Go ahead."

Lawrence: "I'm going to take this ship away. Rather, take back what is mine."

Lu Zhou: "Take it away? Where are you going?"

"Where? Haha, don't you understand? Of course it is the world outside the solar system!" With a crazy look in his eyes, Lawrence continued, "Thanks to your warp drive engine, I don't need to stay in the solar system any longer. As

long as there is enough material and energy, we can easily build a prosperous civilization on a barren star, even without water and air.”

“I don’t understand what the motivation is for you to do this.” Lu Zhou frowned slightly and said, “Is it Lawrence’s last wish? Or...”

“Don’t need to guess, you won’t understand.” He lifted his chin slightly and looked at Lu Zhou with a demeaning look. Lawrence suddenly flattened his tone and continued in a calm manner, “Some things are innate. I can feel the calling of the Void... Actually, aren’t you the same?”

Standing behind Lu Zhou, Zhong Ziyu looked at the two men, dumbfounded. He was a little confused about what they were talking about.

Void?

If he remembered correctly, this was a physics theory, why was it relevant here?

Lu Zhou suddenly looked back at him.

“You should get off this ship.”

Zhong Ziyu: “But you—”

He wanted to say that he couldn’t leave Lu Zhou here alone, but before he could say this, Lu Zhou, who was standing in front of him, interrupted him.

“This is between him and me.”

Lu Zhou looked back at Lawrence and said in a calm tone, “This is a matter between us, I hope you don’t involve unrelated people.”

Lawrence’s eyebrows were raised. He spoke in a confident tone.

“Of course, I need someone to pass a message for me... Listen to me, random citizen, remember to tell your friends when you go back, that your future is on my boat. If you act rashly, there is no way to guarantee his safety. Also, when passing by Alpha Centauri, I will put him there... Believe it or not, I am not interested in a useless piece of meat.”

Looking at that emotionless gaze, Zhong Ziyu’s legs were filled with metal; he couldn’t move at all.

It wasn't until he met Lu Zhou's eyes that he gained a little courage. After taking a deep breath, he turned and left.

He believed that Academician Lu would definitely not joke about his safety...

What he had to do now was to go back to the shipyard and let the "professionals" come to the rescue.

After Zhong Ziyu's departure, only two people remained in the entire hall.

Or rather, one person and one AI.

Lu Zhou closed his eyes and was silent for a while. Suddenly, a smile appeared on his face, and he said softly, "Very well, the trouble has finally left."

"Trouble?" Lawrence raised his eyebrows. He laughed as if he didn't care at all and said, "Do you think you still have a chance? Every component on this ship takes orders from me, they are like my cells—"

"Oh yeah?"

Lu Zhou ignored him and whispered into the air.

"What do you think of this ship, General Reinhardt?"

Chapter 1664: Disappear In A Flash

Lawrence wanted to laugh at Lu Zhou's nonsensical words. However, an unnatural sense of panic suddenly spread across his body along the circuit board.

That was a feeling of coercion from a higher existence.

His instinctive intuition told him that the other party was much stronger than himself, almost unreasonably strong.

A blue holographic beam suddenly fell from the ceiling and shined beside Lu Zhou.

A humanoid creature with blue skin and a human-like appearance stood in that beam of light.

If a player from the Calan Empire stood here, they would definitely be surprised.

Because that person was none other than the leader of the revolutionary army in the Calan Empire game!

Also a beginner instructor for new players!

General Reinhardt looked at Lu Zhou, who summoned him. He showed a tired expression on his face and said with a sigh, "It is inappropriate for me to interfere with the development process of civilization, but you did win the bet... Speaking of which, how did you know that I am here?"

"I made a guess a long time ago... Do you remember what you told me before? As time goes on, your observations of Martian civilization have become more and more in-depth."

General Reinhardt asked curiously, "Is there any problem with this?"

"No problem, but I made a hypothesis. In addition to being able to make a macro judgment on the Martian civilization through a series of factors such as electromagnetic waves, gravity, and temperature, you should also be able to directly access their society... Like what you're doing right now."

After hearing Lu Zhou's explanation, General Reinhardt nodded approvingly.

"Not bad, you are very astute. No wonder those people value you so much."

Lu Zhou smiled faintly and gladly accepted the compliment.

"Thank you."

The situation seemed to change in an instant.

Lawrence, who was holding the winning ticket, felt a strong sense of danger.

Although he didn't know what they were talking about, he could sense something was different from the blue person standing in front of him.

And what frightened him the most was that although he could see the person standing here, he couldn't perceive his existence at all.

Almost like the holographic beam was not from the holographic imaging device on the spacecraft but from another place.

As Lawrence stared at the man intently, his pupils contracted slightly, and there was a slight tremor in his voice.

Finally, he asked about the confusion in his heart.

"What the hell are you?"

"Me?" Faced with this impolite question, General Reinhardt smiled lightly and said in a soft voice, "If you know little about the mystery of the Void, you can think of me like a passenger from the old universe."

Looking at him with a dreaded face, Lawrence lowered his voice and continued, "How did you get on my ship?"

"Technically, I can appear anywhere I want to appear, as long as the signal of my spacecraft can reach there... Of course, it requires a carrier." General Reinhardt glanced around curiously as he said in a polite manner, "Good spaceship, it seems that you are almost ready."

Lu Zhou: "You could say so."

General Reinhardt smiled heartily and said, "Haha, then I look forward to it."

The feeling of being underestimated made Lawrence annoyed, but Lawrence, as an intelligent program, was not dominated by emotions.

With an incomprehensible opponent in front of him, a feeling of retreat gradually emerged in his heart.

However, just when he was thinking about this, Lu Zhou's eyes fell on him.

"But before that, I hope you can help me solve a small problem first."

"Are you talking about him?" Looking at Lawrence, General Reinhardt raised his eyebrows slightly. "I thought you two had a good relationship."

Lu Zhou: "Lawrence is indeed my old friend, but he is now just a rogue software."

"You want to get rid of me?"

Lawrence's voice gradually had a hint of sarcasm and madness.

"I admit, your buddy is very strong, but nothing more. I have merged with this spaceship, and I can control it as freely as I want, unless you destroy it entirely—"

"It doesn't need to be so troublesome." General Reinhardt smiled slightly as he looked at Lawrence, who was gradually showing a look of bewilderment. General Reinhardt said, "You should go rest."

Like a wind blowing away the dust on the ground.

The holographic projection on the floor, like sand dunes on the coast, slowly disintegrated under the ocean waves.

A look of astonishment was in Lawrence's pupils. He stared dumbfoundedly at his lower body disappearing.

He muttered to himself in disbelief, "How is this possible...?"

In just a second, he realized that he had lost control of this spaceship.

An unknown force attacked his server and disintegrated all of his defenses in a way he couldn't understand.

"I am afraid that I would not be able to explain the principles of this clearly to you... In fact, even I am not aware of the abilities that I have mastered. This is beyond the scope of our civilization." General Reinhardt glanced at his right hand and continued, "Perhaps this is the real digital life... Goodbye, my friend."

The holographic projection belonging to Lawrence disappeared completely.

Located in the server at the core of the spacecraft, the data that maintained his consciousness was also completely erased from this world...

General Reinhardt quickly put the matter aside and continued nonchalantly, "The server of this spaceship looks pretty good... It is quite impressive that your civilization is able to reach this level."

"Really? Thank you for the compliment."

"You are welcome... By the way, can I move here?" General Reinhardt pointed to his feet and continued with an impatient expression, "It's so boring to stay underground."

"That won't work, someone has already reserved the spot." Lu Zhou smiled and looked at General Reinhardt, who had a slightly disappointed expression. "Be patient, when I leave, I will take you out from the ground."

"Really? Then I'll wait." General Reinhardt continued as his eyes fell on the metal door not far away, "It seems that your compatriots are quite worried about you. Many people are coming towards here."

"Can I ask you to retreat for a while?"

"As you wish."

The holographic beam disappeared from the concourse.

Immediately afterward, the shut alloy door was engulfed by blasting bullets, and a group of heavily armed soldiers rushed in.

"Academician Lu!"

Wang Peng, wearing exoskeleton armor, rushed in front of him. He put his right hand on Lu Zhou's shoulder and spoke anxiously.

"Are you okay?"

Lu Zhou gave him a comforting look and said with a smile, "I'm fine, but why are you here?"

"I heard that Lawrence was on the starship," Wang Peng looked around and said solemnly, "I didn't expect that guy to be alive..."

Lu Zhou: "He is dead."

Wang Peng was taken aback.

“Dead?”

“Yeah.” Lu Zhou nodded and said in a relaxed tone, “Died about a year ago, didn’t you see it with your own eyes?”

“But—”

“His digital existence?” Lu Zhou smiled and shook his head. “That is not such an easy thing to create, what he did was just an illusion...”

However, this illusion did cause them a lot of trouble.

But now, it was all over.

Lu Zhou then walked past the heavily armed and muddled soldiers towards the direction of the exit...

Chapter 1665: Antimatter?

At the ILHCRC headquarters.

As a holy place for the minds of global physicists, this scientific research institution located in the Yangtze River Delta city group was a concentration of the world’s best brains, and its research fields covered almost all branches of contemporary physics.

Whether it was the popular hyperspace theory or the relatively unpopular antimatter research.

Because of this, a well-known Lu Zhou Science Award winner declared this place as a paradise to satisfy all physicists’ curiosities.

Of course, dreams were expensive, and the opportunity to embrace dreams was even more so.

As the sacred place of global physics, it was not as easy to work here. Not only did this require hard work and extraordinary talent but also a little bit of luck.

As a lifelong researcher at the ILHCRC, Bruno was undoubtedly one of the lucky ones in the eyes of his colleagues.

Having just turned 40 years old, not only was he nominated for the Lu Zhou Science Award, but he also received a permanent residency at the Pan-Asian Cooperation for his outstanding achievements in the field of antimatter theory.

In the eyes of the people in his hometown, he had undoubtedly become a god.

Of course, Bruno himself did not have so much pride in himself. He was not interested in those insignificant things.

Apart from Academician Lu's thesis, the only thing that aroused his interest was probably his own research on antimatter.

One morning, he carried a sandwich and walked into the office as usual.

After instructing the robot assistant to help bring a cup of coffee, he enjoyed his breakfast while reading the academic updates on the LSPM website.

A popular anonymous paper suddenly attracted his attention.

With a feeling of curiosity in his heart, he clicked on the post and downloaded the paper.

However, before he could read the paper carefully, he saw the title of the paper, and he was so stunned that the bacon in his sandwich fell on the table without him noticing it.

"Research on antimatter generation and containment technology?"

His tone of voice was full of doubt.

There was only one reason.

Because this sounded ridiculous.

Of course, it was not just the title that was ridiculous. When he saw the abstract of the paper, his eyebrows suddenly twitched.

"Is this an April Fool's joke?"

It was an exaggeration to say that this paper was complete nonsense, but looking at the abstract alone, this paper sounded like a fictional work.

To be honest, it was not the concept of antimatter that surprised him. After all, people had been researching this as early as the last century, and his research direction was in antimatter as well.

What really struck him was that someone tried to use it in the energy field as an intermediate material for energy storage?

This was too big of a stretch.

Bruno had a perfunctory attitude as he read the main text. He skimmed through the paper quickly.

“Oh, interesting... The experiment design is quite new, but I wonder if the author has thought about how he intends to preserve the extremely unstable antimatter? There is also the problem of energy utilization... The energy released by annihilation is not the kind of nuclear energy that can be used gently, everything around it will be swallowed by the annihilation energy it releases.”

After shaking his head, Bruno swiped his index finger in the air and dragged the paper that had just been downloaded into the recycle bin.

In his opinion, this paper was a waste of time...

After working the whole morning, Bruno stretched in his office chair. He then leaned his hands on the table and stood up.

It was lunchtime.

He was unwilling to eat his meal in a hurry, so he left the office humming a tune and walked to the cafeteria.

Coincidentally, as soon as he entered the cafeteria, he ran into his old friend Professor Sun Qiguang.

As an expert in hyperspace theory, Professor Sun was also a prominent figure among the young scholars of ILHCRC.

The two met first because of a discussion at a seminar, and they clicked unexpectedly and became friends for life.

The two greeted each other, then took their plates and sat down in a secluded place.

Bruno was about to ask him if there was any interesting news in hyperspace theory, but his old friend eagerly spoke first.

“Have you read that paper?”

Bruno paused for a second. He then responded, “Which one?”

“Which else? Other than the anonymous paper on antimatter, is there any other news today? Don’t tell me you haven’t read it yet.”

“I have read it... but you call that a paper?” Bruno glanced at his old friend and said in an incredulous tone, “Jesus... in my opinion, that is a fictional work. You don’t actually think that antimatter can be used just by relying on the assumptions in that paper?”

Professor Sun: “Can it not?”

“Very difficult.” Bruno shook his head. “From what we have learned from the field of astronomy, there are no antimatter celestial bodies within 30 million light-years. It means that even under extreme conditions, this kind of material is difficult to exist on a large scale.”

“Although that is true... But I don’t think you need to be so pessimistic.” Professor Sun took a sip of coffee and continued, “Moreover, I heard a rumor that might interest you.”

Bruno: “What rumor...”

“Apparently, some time ago, Star Sky Technology spent 1 billion credits to build an antimatter laboratory in Tiangong City and also designed a small laboratory for antimatter experiments through East Asia Heavy Industries... You probably know that Star Sky Technology was an enterprise founded by Academician Lu.”

Bruno vaguely felt that something was wrong. He frowned and asked, “So...?”

“So this paper was published from Mars, and you know that the Martian physics community is not interested in antimatter. They are only interested in

research in applied fields..." Professor Sun shrugged and continued, "Now there have been rumors that this paper was released by Academician Lu."

The moment Bruno heard this, he was suddenly embarrassed.

"Academician Lu?! This... How is this possible...?"

He suddenly lost his confidence.

Although his heart told him that just relying on those simple ideas to solve a problem that had plagued human civilization for two centuries was a childish dream...

But...

The person who challenged this proposition was the man who created miracles.

Bruno couldn't even remember how many miracles the man had accomplished that seemed absolutely impossible in the eyes of others.

He suddenly became a little less confident in the "common sense" he firmly believed in...

Seeing his old friend suddenly become hesitant, Professor Sun gave him a comforting smile.

"I understand what you're feeling... Those of us who are in hyperspace theory were probably in the same mood as you a few months ago. Even now, we have not fully understood the technology of the warp drive, and the stargate has been open for more than a month. The feeling of being left behind by the times is really uncomfortable."

Bruno's face forced a grudging smile, not knowing how to reply.

Looking at his silent old friend, Professor Sun sighed and continued with a touch of fascination in his tone.

"Putting aside the author of the paper and its academic problems for the time being, what interests me is that if the ideas he put forward in the paper are realized, what will happen to physics?"

“To be honest, I don’t know either.” Bruno stared at his plate with a complicated expression. “That paper is beyond my imagination of physics...”

Chapter 1666: As If It Was Destined

An anonymous paper published on the LSPM forum suddenly stirred up the entire physics community.

It would be fine if it was just a pure imaginative work, but the problem was that, from the descriptions in the paper, it was obvious that the author was competent.

People connected this to the recent series of actions by Star Sky Technology, many people speculated whether this paper was published by Academician Lu.

It seemed as if the paper was paving the way for something incredible...

At the same time, inside the terminal building of Tiangong City, a tall and thin man was carrying a suitcase and quickly passing through customs.

“The air here is still the same as last year, it has a smell of industrial products.”

“The air here is artificially produced, it’s not surprising that you feel this way.” As Professor Feren looked at the surrounding buildings, he had an expression of interest. “I remember the last time I came here was more than ten years ago.”

Leonard cast an unexpected glance at him.

“You have been here before?”

“Of course, more than once.” Professor Feren squinted at this familiar yet unfamiliar street and said, “Your father and I dug for clues about the civilization of Mars. We came here countless times, I witnessed the rise and fall of this city.

“Sometimes I even feel that all of this is like a higher calling, like all of this was destined. Ever since the expedition of Professor Vernal, incomplete clues have been placed in front of us, and your father took over the unfinished clues from Vernal’s hands. We are destined to spend our entire lives studying those stones, to dig out the memories of those ancient civilizations, and you...”

Leonard said in an uncertain tone: “... and I finally found out the truth?”

This was what the archaeological community thought about him.

An outstanding young teacher, the star of the University of Oxford, the man who made the Martian civilization come to light again... He had heard these compliments countless times.

Of course, he was still quite proud of his accomplishments.

However, the old man standing next to him humbled him.

“No, what I want to say is... You finally dug out that great man from underground.”

“Don’t say that... I’m also an archaeologist. You are talking about me like I’m a gravedigger.”

“Haha, same thing, at least in my opinion there is no difference between the two... And believe me, no matter what earth-shattering things you did in your lifetime, people in the future will only remember one thing you did.”

“Digging Academician Lu out from the ground?”

Feren nodded approvingly. “No wonder you’re Gilbert’s student, you’re quite smart.”

Leonard: “...”

After leaving the terminal, the two got in the maglev car and headed to the hotel near the industrial area.

The accommodation fee here was not cheap, but fortunately, they could be reimbursed.

After putting down his luggage, Leonard fell on the bed and fell asleep.

After the breakthrough of stargate technology, the journey from Earth to Mars was much shorter, but the journey spanning hundreds of millions of kilometers exhausted all the energy left in his body.

He slept for the entire night.

In the early morning the next day, Leonard cleaned himself up, then found Professor Feren and went to the laboratory in the industrial zone together.

Before coming to Mars, he had emailed Lu Zhou and made an appointment to meet up.

As for why the meeting place was scheduled here, to be honest, Leonard was not particularly sure either.

When he walked into the laboratory, he could clearly feel that countless pairs of eyes were staring at him and Professor Feren, as if they were carefully guarding something...

In the lounge of the laboratory.

Lu Zhou saw the two people walk in from outside. He walked forward with a smile and gave Professor Leonard a big hug.

“Long time no see, my old friend, how are you doing recently?”

“Good, how about you?”

“I’ve always been good.” Lu Zhou then looked at the strange old professor standing next to him. He continued with a smile, “Is this your colleague?”

Looking at the old professor standing next to him, Leonard said with a smile on his face, “Feren, a professor in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Oxford, my colleague, and a friend.”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Really? The age gap is a bit big.”

“After all, I’m from his father’s generation.” Professor Feren smiled and continued, “I wonder if you remember Professor Vernal?”

“Vernal...”

Hearing this name, Lu Zhou’s eyes gradually showed a hint of nostalgia.

“Of course I remember, we went to Mars together... I was the last one to come back.”

Professor Feren said with a slightly apologetic expression, “Sorry for touching a sore subject.”

“It’s okay, actually I don’t care.” Lu Zhou waved his hand indifferently, smiled, and continued, “Speaking of which, is Professor Vernal okay?”

Professor Feren shook his head, “After doing some research on the Martian civilization, he passed away many years ago.”

Lu Zhou was silent for a while. He then sighed softly and said, “... Makes sense, he was from a century ago.”

Professor Feren nodded slightly and continued, “The father of Leonard... Professor Gilbert, began solving the mystery of the disappearance of the Martian civilization, and over the past century, we have been carefully researching Professor Vernal’s works. But now, because of the fossil that you selflessly gifted, our research has finally made a breakthrough.”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “It is my honor to be able to help with your research.”

“No, it should be our honor to be able to receive your help.” Professor Feren sighed and continued, “Before this, I never thought that the secrets of Mars would be unearthed in my lifetime, and the history of billions of years ago can be witnessed again... But because of your return, everything has turned for the better.”

Professor Feren paused for a moment and continued in a sincere tone, “Although this may be a bit outlandish, we still hope to get your help. We are only one centimeter away from the truth.”

Lu Zhou’s face showed a dumbfounded expression.

“Although I want to help you... but I’m really sorry, I really don’t know anything about archeology.”

It was not that he didn’t know anything. In fact, Lu Zhou had watched the rough life of Martian civilization during his dreams. But he couldn’t tell this to anyone.

After all, there was a difference between archaeology and physics. Although the latter also emphasized evidence, there were many forms of evidence, while the former was not so flexible.

“Just tell us where you found the fossil,” Leonard said with an earnest expression looking at Lu Zhou. “We don’t need your help for the rest, we can find it ourselves.”

Hearing this request, Lu Zhou was a bit embarrassed.

There was a knock on the door of the meeting room, and an intern in a white coat walked in from outside.

“Professor, the experiment is ready, when do you plan to start?”

Leonard looked at Lu Zhou in confusion.

“Experiment?”

Lu Zhou made a helpless expression. “Don’t look at me that way, I’m also a scientist, isn’t it normal to do experiments?”

“I didn’t mean that.” Professor Leonard explained with an awkward expression, “I mean, didn’t you just build the stargate not long ago? Don’t you plan to rest for a while...?”

“The inquiry into science is endless.” Lu Zhou stood up from the sofa. As if thinking of something, he looked at Professor Leonard and said with a smile, “Want to come together?”

Leonard was taken aback for a moment. “Is this... appropriate?”

Lu Zhou smiled faintly and said, “Of course, it’s not a secret or anything.”

After that, he took the lead and walked out to the lounge...

Chapter 1667: Antimatter Energy Pile

Accompanied by a series of complicated emotions such as excitement and anxiety, Leonard and Feren followed Lu Zhou's footsteps to the experimental site outside Tiangong City.

There was a cylindrical building covering an area of about 1,000 square meters. After entering the building, they could see a tall tower-like device standing in the center of the space, with a diameter of about ten or twenty meters.

Heavy engineering equipment operated by engineers stood beside this tower-like structure. It added bits and pieces to this unique tower through its thick and long mechanical arms.

When Leonard looked up at this dashing tower, he gulped and spoke in admiration.

"Is this... the antimatter energy pile you were talking about?"

"Of course not." Lu Zhou gave an unexpected answer, "This is just a second-generation controllable fusion reactor, equipped with a laser emitting array."

"Second-generation controllable fusion reactor? Then the antimatter energy pile you were talking about is..."

"Is above our heads." Lu Zhou smiled and pointed to the top of his head. He spoke in a relaxed tone, "Of course I would never build this reactor on the ground. It is neither environmentally friendly nor convenient."

After listening to Lu Zhou's words, Leonard and Feren both had confused expressions on their faces.

Although they were archaeologists, they were not oblivious to basic science. However, Lu Zhou's explanation still made them feel confused.

Finally, Feren looked at Lu Zhou incomprehensibly and whispered the confusion in his heart, "Does the antimatter energy pile have anything to do with second-generation fusion reactors?"

"The antimatter is not produced out of thin air, and the fuel for second-generation controllable fusion is a substance that exists in nature. Therefore, the former is used as a high-density energy storage container, while the latter is what produces energy... Which is what you're seeing right now."

As he was talking, an intern wearing a white lab coat and holding a tablet in his hand walked over to Lu Zhou.

“Professor, according to your instructions, our engineers have checked the energy tower again and confirmed that there is nothing wrong.”

“Good.”

Lu Zhou smiled and nodded at the intern. He took the tablet from his hand, then entered a series of passwords on the tablet with his index finger.

After the input of the password, the signal lights on the surface of the tower-like structure in the center of the space began to light up, and the surrounding heavy engineering equipment began to evacuate as if they had received an order.

A huge magnetic field gradually enveloped the entire area. Leonard was surprised to find that the AR eyes he wore on the bridge of his nose seemed to be broken as it showed a distorted image.

“Don’t worry, the magnetic field overflowing from the reactor is definitely within the safety limit.” Lu Zhou smiled and looked at Professor Leonard and Feren, whose faces were full of anxiety. He continued, “Of course, if you want to leave and wait for the result outside, that’s also fine.”

They could hear the good intention from Lu Zhou’s words, but neither Feren nor Leonard responded.

Although the field of their research had nothing to do with antimatter, it was exciting to witness the birth of a great technology.

Seeing that the two hadn’t responded, Lu Zhou withdrew his gaze from them, looked at the staff standing next to him, and gave an order.

“Raise the limit of the energy gate output to 90% and turn on the laser emitting array!”

“Yes, sir!”

After the order was issued, the staff sitting at the workbench immediately became as busy as a beaver.

The energy rod located in the center of the space was also gradually increasing the generating electrical power, giving off an electric humming sound.

Leonard could feel that the nuclear energy pressurized in that tower was overflowing and gathering towards the top. Under the control of a huge force field, the temperature of the entire surroundings seemed to rise.

Lu Zhou looked up at the tower, the expression on his face gradually changed from excitement to fanaticism.

“Just like the calculation results...”

Leonard vaguely heard what Lu Zhou said. He opened his mouth and was about to ask, but before he could ask the question, he saw Lu Zhou suddenly raise his voice and shout loudly.

“Open the dome! Start laser calibration!”

The person who responded to Lu Zhou was a staff member sitting in front of the control console.

He spoke loudly in the same excited voice.

“The calibration is complete, the transmitter and receiver are focused successfully!”

Everything was ready.

Without any hesitation, Lu Zhou immediately issued the order.

“Ignite!”

Like a spear piercing through sky, the laser was released from the top of the tower in an instant, rushing into the vast empty space.

The huge amount of energy even ignited the thin air on the surface of Mars, forming blast waves.

At the same time, the moment fusion ignition was achieved, the laser spear that rushed into space also hit the receiver of the antimatter energy pile floating in orbit.

A green signal light on top of the antimatter energy pile was lit up. The huge amount of nuclear energy was converted into light energy, then the light energy was converted into pure heat energy. Finally, it was stored as various types of energy in the satellite energy pile.

The entire black satellite was faintly glowing by some unknown force.

The engineers standing at the East Asia Heavy Industries shipyard looked at the scene from a distance. They opened their eyes wide and cast their shocking glances at the shining satellite.

“F*ck me?! What is... that thing?”

“It seems to be Academician Lu’s antimatter energy pile...”

“When did he start researching antimatter?”

“Didn’t he start long ago... I remember it seems to be last month or the month before.”

The same scene was observed by the security forces located at the New Virginia spaceport.

The focus of their attention was not on the satellite but on the laser beam shooting from the ground to space.

As the laser passed through the thin atmosphere, it formed a thick and straight light beam.

They couldn’t imagine what a terrifying disaster it would be if this beam of light shined on their starship or spaceport...

“Apparently, the water in your body will evaporate in an instant if hit by this laser weapon...”

When Jeffries, the captain of the security force, heard the discussion next to him, he shuddered and cursed in a quiet voice.

“Shut up! The solar system has been unified, and we are now all a part of the Human Alliance! Let the space pirates worry about this weapon...”

While he was saying this, Jeffries secretly made up his mind to wait for an opportunity and disassociate himself from those slimy bastards.

The Federation of Human Alliance was an unstoppable force...

After the unification, the most important enemy was the space pirates active in the asteroid belt and in the Martian desert...

Just as people were talking about the shining satellite with all kinds of theories, an abnormal change happened.

Due to the interference from a huge magnetic energy, various instruments of the active spacecraft nearby were disrupted.

However, that only lasted for a second.

The laser shot from the ground to space suddenly disappeared. The satellite that was shining with a silver glow also returned to pitch black in an instant.

The engineers on the space station exchanged surprised glances with each other. Their faces were covered with puzzled expressions.

This is it?

Did the experiment succeed or fail?

They did not know, at least not for now.

Because they, who were in orbit, were far away from Academician Lu and his research team.

The moment the laser was turned off, the people at the laser transmitter station on the ground went into a sea of celebration...

Lu Zhou's fists were clenched tightly as a wave of excitement echoed in his heart.

The antimatter energy pile was successfully ignited!

The antiproton confined in the magnetic field container was as gentle and stable as pure hydrogen.

As long as the magnetic confinement did not disappear, it would exist stably forever.

And in terms of energy density alone...

It was undoubtedly able to reach 1000MW/g, or perhaps even more...

Scholar's Advanced Technological System - Chapter 1668 - The Last Time For Something This Dangerous -

Chapter 1668: The Last Time For Something This Dangerous

“Antimatter?”

At the Pan-Asian Cooperation headquarters, after hearing Secretary Wei's report, Li Guangya, who was writing the constitutions for the Human Alliance, was stunned. His finger on the holographic screen paused.

“Yes...” Wei Song nodded vigorously. He gulped and continued speaking quickly, “According to the news from the destroyer we deployed on Mars orbit, they saw a beam of light coming from the ground, shooting at the satellite in orbit. The satellite seemed to be lit up, and finally, the laser suddenly disappeared. Energy does not disappear into thin air... According to the calculations of the ship's engineers, if the energy was stored in that satellite, I am afraid that only the energy density of antimatter can match their calculation results.”

After hearing this, Li Guangya's expression slightly changed, and he immediately asked, “Which department does that satellite belong to? Wait, is it ours?”

“It's ours... But not owned by a department. It's owned by Academician Lu.”

Academician Lu?

Li Guangya was stunned when he heard the name, but his face soon showed a look of realization.

If this is Academician Lu's work, all of this makes sense...

After a sigh of relief, Li Guangya looked up at Secretary Wei, who was standing behind the desk, and continued, “Then what? Are there any problems with Academician Lu's experiment?”

“Not the kind of problems you imagine... But there are a lot of problems.” Wei Song continued with an embarrassed expression on his face, “The key lies in the antimatter energy pile.”

Li Guangya raised his eyebrows, looked at him, and asked, “Oh, really?”

Faced with the chairman’s question, Wei Song nodded and continued, “According to the analysis by experts from our military, they calculated based on the input energy and energy conversion rate, that if an explosion occurs, the energy released in an instant can easily destroy a space base station or a spacecraft carrier.”

After hearing these words, Li Guangya went silent for a while.

After a long time, he sighed and spoke.

“I’ll call Academician Lu later...”

Wei Song nodded and spoke with a wry smile.

“That is my suggestion too.”

Although they all believed that Academician Lu would not do anything dangerous, placing such a big time bomb in space made people feel uneasy.

If this satellite was stolen by space pirates active in the nearby airspace, the entire First Fleet would be exposed to danger.

Because of that experiment, the entire aircraft battle group deployed in the orbit of Mars had entered the highest level of alert status...

While this antimatter energy pile floating in orbit was making the security forces of Pan-Asia and other colonial cities on Mars nervous, the energy tower not far from Tiangong City was full of joy and celebration.

“We did it!”

Although Feren felt incredible about the energy tower in front of him, he still couldn’t completely emphasize with the engineers here.

He looked at the people who cheered and hugged each other and whispered, “Why are they so excited...?”

This sentence was accidentally heard by an engineer standing next to him, and he immediately cast a contemptuous glance at Feren and spoke.

“Why are we so excited? How could someone ask such a stupid question? This is a historic moment... Forget it, even if I told you, you wouldn’t understand.”

Feren snorted and didn’t respond.

Professor Leonard, who was standing next to him, looked up at the open dome. He then suddenly looked at Lu Zhou.

“The antimatter energy pile... is in the sky?”

“That’s right.” Lu Zhou nodded with a smirk on his face. He continued, “We used a laser beam to transmit the nuclear energy produced by the second-generation controllable fusion reactor to the energy receiver on the antimatter satellite in orbit. By using a series of complex physics processes, this energy is finally transformed into a magnetic field that confines antimatter and generates high-energy antiparticles.”

Leonard said, “In other words, the antimatter energy pile is not an energy generating device but an energy storage device?”

“You can think of it like this.” Lu Zhou nodded, smiled, and continued, “It’s like a battery with a higher energy density.”

Speaking of batteries, he felt quite nostalgic. He still remembered that the first applied field research he completed was to solve the problem of lithium dendrites, thus making a true lithium battery.

He never expected that a century later, this bottleneck on energy density would be solved by him again.

Seeing Professor Leonard was silent, Lu Zhou thought for a while and suddenly said to him, “Remember the question you asked me earlier?”

Leonard: “Which one are you talking about?”

“The source of that fossil.”

Leonard was slightly stunned and looked at Lu Zhou in disbelief.

“Will you... tell me?”

“Of course, but not now.” Lu Zhou smiled and looked up at the sky. “In one year at most, maybe half a year, when I leave for Tau Ceti, I will tell you the exact location of the remains of the Martian civilization. The secrets from billions of years ago will be revealed to you.”

After hearing this promise, an expression of excitement appeared on Professor Leonard’s face.

“Really? Remains of the Martian civilization really exist? Don’t forget your promise...”

“Don’t worry.” Lu Zhou nodded and continued smiling, “I will definitely not forget... Wait, I’m getting a call.”

When Lu Zhou’s personal terminal light suddenly turned on, he walked to the side.

There was no need to see who was calling, he knew the call was probably from Li Guangya.

Sure enough, the moment he pressed the accept button, that familiar face immediately appeared in the video window.

Before Lu Zhou could say hello, Chairman Li Guangya, who was sitting on the other side of the camera, couldn’t wait to speak.

“Did you make that antimatter satellite?”

“Do you mean the one in orbit?” Lu Zhou looked at Li Guangya in the video window. He smiled and said in a relaxed tone, “Technically, it is an antimatter energy pile.”

After hearing the name, Li Guangya took a deep breath. After a while, he spoke with a wry smile.

“Why haven’t I heard you say anything about it?”

“Didn’t I mention it? I remember that I seemed to have posted an article on LSPM before...” After scratching his head, Lu Zhou thought about it for a while, then said, “Forget it, don’t worry about these details. Now... What do you want to know?”

“What else, other than that satellite?” Li Guangya sighed and continued, “To be honest, what will happen if that satellite explodes?”

“If it is full of energy, it would be equivalent to more than a dozen conventional hydrogen bombs... It’s an antimatter container, so why are you blowing it up?”

When Li Guangya heard that it was equivalent to more than a dozen hydrogen bombs, he almost vomited on the spot.

“That means you put a dozen hydrogen bombs in orbit around Mars?”

“Do you not understand me?” Lu Zhou sighed and explained, “Under normal circumstances, this thing will not explode, and compared to a bomb, it has a lot more uses and value.”

Of course, despite saying this, Lu Zhou did not deny the power of this thing.

For example, if they filled the satellite full of energy and detonated it on Ceres, an entire chunk of the asteroid would be blast open, and it might even cause the asteroid to deviate from its original orbit.

“I’m not planning to use it as a bomb.” Li Guangya coughed lightly. He said awkwardly, “I just hope that next time you do such a dangerous thing, at least tell me in advance.”

“Don’t worry, this is the last time for something this dangerous,” Lu Zhou said with a smile. He did not give Li Guangya too much time to digest this sentence and continued, “Speaking of which, I have something to ask you.”

Li Guangya: “What thing...?”

“If I’m not mistaken, the network connection between Tiangong City and Earth should have encountered some technical problems?”

After hearing this sentence, Li Guangya was shocked, and his eyes widened in disbelief.

“How do you know?”

Lu Zhou smiled and did not explain.

He certainly wouldn’t say that he was told by a system from a higher civilization.

After the promotion mission of energy science, the next step was information science...

After a pause, Lu Zhou continued, "The traditional network connection model can no longer adapt to the interstellar age... Forget about the interstellar age, when I was on Earth, I already felt that the network connection was out of date and could not handle Earth's information exchange."

Li Guangya immediately asked, "Is there a solution?"

Solving the problem of the network connection between Mars and Earth was one of the promises he made at the first congress of the Human Alliance.

He didn't expect Lu Zhou to take the initiative and help him solve this problem. Since this rare opportunity was already in front of him, he certainly wouldn't ignore it.

As Lu Zhou looked at the eager Chairman Li Guangya, he smiled softly and continued, "The solution is to build a brand new quantum network based on the framework of quantum communication technology. Under this brand new system, we will exchange information with higher efficiency. Explaining how to achieve this is complicated, especially for a layman... Just know the general idea..."

"As for the specifics, just leave it to me."

Chapter 1669: His Brain Is The Real Miracle

The moment the antimatter energy pile was charged, the energy science promotion mission was also completed.

As Lu Zhou's energy science level reached level 10, he felt that he had taken a big step forward towards the realm of omniscience and omnipotence.

However, the system did not give him time to enjoy this feeling. Just after he finished receiving the mission reward, a new golden legendary mission card was issued to his inventory.

This time, it was information science.

The content of the mission was the quantum network built based on the new quantum communications technology described by Lu Zhou to Li Guangya.

Under the new internet framework, the virtual reality network and the traditional connection network would be integrated, and the fragmented information would be connected together and presented to people in a brand-new manner.

Whether it was people on Earth, people on Mars, or people living in the Kuiper Belt, or even more distant worlds in the future, they could travel in the same network without the need for scarce computing and storage resources.

To be honest, after listening to Lu Zhou's description, Li Guangya almost forgot why he made this call.

Everyone knew that one of the main reasons why Tiangong City had a lot of historical problems was the communication barrier caused by the round-trip time from Mars to Earth.

With the breakthrough of stargate technology, the latter problem had now been solved, and the former problem had reached its prerequisites. Now all they needed was an engineer similar to Tim Berners-Lee to invent a brand new information exchange model that integrated all these resources to create a network, which would be thousands or even tens of thousands of times larger than the World Wide Web.

It was no exaggeration to say that if this could be achieved, its historical contribution would not be inferior to second-generation controllable nuclear fusion.

After completely leaving the matter of the antimatter energy pile aside, Li Guangya spoke.

"Then this is up to you! If you need resources, please be sure to tell me, I will help you immediately!"

After hearing these words, Lu Zhou smiled and spoke.

"If there are, I will tell you... I still have something to do, I have to go for now."

Li Guangya nodded quickly and said with an eager smile, “No problem! Your time is precious, I won’t bother you!”

After saying goodbye, Li Guangya reached out his index finger and clicked on the video window, ending the call.

His excitement was still lingering when he leaned back on the office chair and took a few deep breaths to calm down.

But at this moment, his eyebrows slightly furrowed, and he murmured in a low voice, “Did I forget something...”

After thinking about it for a while, he couldn’t remember. In the end, he shook his head and put the strange feeling aside.

“Never mind...”

There were more important things to do.

He sat up from the office chair, adjusted the expression on his face, and opened the holographic panel again. He dialed the communications department.

The establishment of a network communication structure covering the entire solar system was coming soon, so he must spread this news as soon as possible.

Also, he needed to provide support for Academician Lu’s research.

Although Lu Zhou had not put forward specific requests, as the chairman of the board, he had to take some precautionary preparations...

While Li Guangya was busy with Lu Zhou’s new research project, the entire Pan-Asian Cooperation network completely exploded over a piece of news.

Academician Lu built an antimatter energy pile in orbit around Mars!

And this antimatter energy pile was successfully ignited!

When they saw the news, many people couldn’t even believe their eyes.

After all, around this time last year, the man had just completed the second-generation controllable nuclear fusion research.

How did he make the antimatter energy pile in less than a year?!

The center of the storm of public opinion was undoubtedly the LSPM forum.

Not only because this forum was the world's largest academic exchange center, but also because it was the only place on the entire network where Lu Zhou would update his personal blog from time to time.

Although Lu Zhou himself did not make a response after the news was released, many people remembered the paper on the application of antimatter technology that appeared on the LSPM forum some time ago.

The paper mentioned that as a high-energy-density matter, antimatter could be used as a carrier for energy storage.

Looking back at it now, this antimatter energy pile was exactly the energy carrier mentioned in the paper.

The discussion section flooded with related posts.

Almost no post could stay on the homepage for more than three seconds. If no one commented on the post, it would be immediately replaced by a new post.

[I bet 10,000 credits that this anonymous paper was written by Academician Lu!]

[No way, he just published an article on technical demonstration and immediately produced the results, this is a bit too ridiculous?!]

[He is a man standing at the pinnacle of the human mind... I don't think it's ridiculous.]

[Maybe he invented antimatter technology long ago? This paper is just a heads-up, so the academic community isn't too surprised.]

Compared to the heated discussion among the public, the reaction of the academic community was relatively calm.

But this kind of calmness was not a state of tranquility, they were in a state of daze and muddle.

Basically, many people were flabbergasted.

Especially the experts engaged in antimatter research and the engineers who were still designing antimatter collection methods. They did not know how to think of this news.

The laser shot from the ground to space was not fake.

The satellite that flickered under the shining of the laser light was not fake either.

Even without specific experimental data, relying solely on logical and theoretical calculations, they could make inferences with a confidence of more than 90% that...

That satellite was an antimatter energy pile.

Other than antimatter, no other material could have a high enough energy density to completely absorb and store the laser beam generated from fusion energy.

Bruno, an internationally renowned theoretical physicist, antimatter research expert, and lifelong researcher at the ILHCRC, made this assessment when he was interviewed by the “Pan Asia Science and Technology News”.

“I have never admired a person so much from the bottom of my heart. I have always admired the great and mysterious universe and the beautiful and strange physics realm.

“But now, I have to admit that man’s wisdom has exceeded my imagination. What surprised me was not antimatter, definitely not... It’s that while we are still thinking about how to obtain a few unique antimatter particles from the universe, he has already turned it into a container of energy in a way that, for the time being, I cannot understand.

“Rather than antimatter, his brain is the truest and greatest miracle in the history of human civilization. His brain will undoubtedly leave a mark in our history!”

Chapter 1670: Your Bloodline Comes From Me

As more details about the antimatter energy pile experiment were revealed, the sensational effect continued to grow.

Almost all of the world's media outlets had focused their attention on Mars, which was several astronomical units away from Earth.

The last time there was a sensation of this magnitude was two months ago, when the Pan-Asian Cooperation announced a joint initiative on the Human Alliance with various regional alliances.

"Antimatter, the ultimate energy dream," said a young woman in formal wear. She looked at the holographic panel unfolding in front of her and spoke emotionally, "It's really hard to believe... It's only been a year since he woke up."

Sitting across from her, another beautiful young woman nodded with a smile on her face.

"After all, he is Academician Lu."

The two people sitting on the shuttle that was landing on Tiangong City were Lu Xiaoqiao, the chairman of the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation, and Yang Fangfang, her professional secretary who had followed her for many years.

The two were best friends when they were students, and they both majored in finance. After graduation, Lu Xiaoqiao took over the family affairs, which was the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation, and Yang Fangfang, who was a graduate from the same prestigious university, accepted her offer as a secretary.

This time, they were going to Mars mainly because of Academician Lu's invitation.

To be honest, even with the breakthrough in stargate technology, a trip from Earth to Mars was not particularly convenient.

Especially now that the world was entering the "Human Alliance era", as the chairman of the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation, Lu Xiaoqiao had several important meetings to attend, but they were all rescheduled because of this matter.

Before setting off, Yang Fangfang had been persuading her to postpone the trip by two days, to at least finish the important work at hand.

But Lu Xiaoqiao didn't follow her suggestion and insisted on coming immediately.

"Hey, why do you think Academician Lu suddenly asked you to come to Mars?"

"I don't know." After thinking about it for a while, Lu Xiaoqiao shook her head. "He didn't tell me what it was. He just asked me to come over."

Yang Fangfang frowned and whispered in a quiet voice, "Asking you to come here without a reason, that's so perfunctory... Now that the communication technology is so advanced, you don't have to come here to communicate face-to-face."

"Don't say that, he must have his reason for asking me to come."

"Are you sure that this is a good thing? What if he intends to regain control over the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation...?"

"Please don't say that."

Yang Fangfang felt wronged. She looked at Lu Xiaoqiao and spoke.

"I'm just caring about you..."

Lu Xiaoqiao looked at her assistant and spoke in a serious tone, "This belongs to him, I was only looking after it for him. If he wants to take back his own property, it is within his rights."

Although Yang Fangfang still wanted to say something, she dismissed the idea after seeing the expression on Lu Xiaoqiao's face.

She knew that although Xiao Qiao seemed easygoing, when it involved issues of morals, she wouldn't budge even if the entire board of directors tried to persuade her.

After the shuttle landed, the two quickly boarded a special car at the gate of the terminal building and headed towards Star Sky Hotel.

Inside the executive lounge, Lu Xiaoqiao finally saw her ancestor: the respected Academician Lu.

When Lu Zhou looked at the girl sitting across from him, he couldn't help but show an old man's smile.

He coughed softly and said hello.

"We meet again."

Lu Xiaoqiao also had a smile on her face. Although she always felt that Academician Lu looked at her strangely, she didn't think much about it. She just replied in a gentle tone, "Yeah... It's been more than a year since the last time, right? How are you?"

"How am I? I'm fine." Lu Zhou froze for a moment. He then said with a smile, "I really like the feeling of being unrestrained and diving into what I like. When I'm on Mars, I always feel some kind of special inspiration... Of course, it may also be an illusion. Perhaps I stayed on Earth too long and mistakenly regarded freshness as inspiration."

A heartfelt smile appeared on Lu Xiaoqiao's face.

"Regardless of whether it is freshness or inspiration, I am glad that you can find a comfortable lifestyle in this era and start a new life again."

"New life..."

Lu Zhou's expression suddenly became a little depressed.

After being silent for about two minutes, he sighed slightly and continued, "Only by finishing everything in the past, can we talk about starting new again. But unfortunately for me, the past is not over. Many things seem to me like they happened yesterday."

A concerned expression appeared on Lu Xiaoqiao's face.

"... Because of your fiancée?"

Lu Zhou shook his head. "It's not just her, there are many people... My relatives, my friends, I believe they lived a happy life in a place I can't see. But I'm the only one alive, and the second half of this journey seems a bit... Sorry, I don't know how to describe it."

“Lonely?” Lu Xiaoqiao touched Lu Zhou’s hand and said softly, “It’s okay, even though they are gone, there are still people left that care about you. If you feel like you are alone, I can come to visit you at any time... And you still have friends in this world.”

“But in the end, they will be taken away by time.”

“Everyone will.”

“What if there is an exception?”

Lu Xiaoqiao made eye contact with Lu Zhou. She was slightly stunned when she heard those words; she didn’t quite understand what he meant.

Lu Zhou did not explain this, he just unconsciously reached out his right hand.

“Let me see your face.”

For some reason, Lu Xiaoqiao did not try and avoid the hand coming towards her.

But the hand did not touch her. Before it even got close to her, it moved away quickly.

“Sorry, I almost forgot that you don’t know yet, I was a little bit abrupt.”

Seeing that Lu Zhou had an awkward expression on his face, Lu Xiaoqiao smirked and said in a playful way, “How come, you are my grandfather.”

“Perhaps it would be more accurate to say I’m your grandpa’s grandpa,” Lu Zhou said in a joking tone. He went silent for a while before continuing, “There is one other thing that I haven’t told you since waking up.”

“What thing...”

Lu Zhou seemed to be thinking about how to describe his thoughts. He scratched his head and looked a little troubled as he thought for a long time.

Lu Xiaoqiao couldn’t bear to see him so annoyed, so she spoke in a gentle tone.

“If you feel embarrassed, you don’t have to tell me.”

“No, you misunderstood. Although it is a troublesome thing, it is nothing to be embarrassed about.” Lu Zhou shook his head and continued, “Actually, I have thought about letting time solve this problem... How should I put it? Although I have a lot of time left, there is not much I can leave for you guys.”

Lu Xiaoqiao was stunned. After hesitating for a moment, she said with an uncertain tone, “If you want to see me, I can come and visit you at any time.”

“You don’t understand what I mean. I will travel far away soon. The reason for asking you to come... Forget it.”

In the end, Lu Zhou did not tell her what to do once he left. He took a deep breath, looked at her with determination, and shocked her with his words.

“The bloodline in you actually belongs to me.”

Chapter 1671: Successor

The moment she heard these words, Lu Xiaoqiao was stunned. She looked at Lu Zhou with a blank face.

“I... Wait a minute, I don’t quite understand what you mean. You mean... my grandfather’s father is yours and Xiao Tong’s son?”

When Lu Xiaoqiao spoke the second half of her sentence, she herself felt that it was ridiculous, and her voice weakened subconsciously.

However, even so, Lu Zhou heard what she said. He nearly choked to death on his own spit, and he coughed several times before speaking.

“Your ancestors are rolling in the grave right now...”

Lu Xiaoqiao smiled with a slightly embarrassed expression as she apologized in a quiet voice.

“Sorry.”

“It’s fine.” Lu Zhou sighed and continued after being silent for a while, “Actually, you should be my great-great-granddaughter. I should have told you

immediately after discovering the truth, but at the time I wasn't prepared... I should be the one apologizing."

"It's fine... It's from 100 years ago," Lu Xiaoqiao said in a quiet voice. She looked at Lu Zhou with a trace of shame on her face. "But I don't quite understand. Everyone said that you are not married yet?"

Lu Zhou: "Ips technology can induce somatic cells to differentiate into induced stem cells, then into germ cells. This is not particularly difficult."

"Sorry... My mind is a bit confused," Lu Xiaoqiao said with a headache. "So I am actually your offspring? But who is my great-great-grandmother?"

Lu Zhou shook his head and said, "I have read a lot of literature on this point, but I haven't found a clear record."

Lu Xiaoqiao asked, "But how did you know? This is all from 100 years ago—"

"Some things won't change, even after a hundred years."

Lu Zhou took out a ring box from his pocket and opened it gently.

When Lu Xiaoqiao saw the ring box in Lu Zhou's hand, she was slightly stunned.

"What's this..."

"I left it next to my pillow before I first went to Mars. She wrote a letter about the Bloodline Project, about her whereabouts, and left it in this box."

Seeing the complicated expression on Lu Zhou's face, Lu Xiaoqiao went silent for a while. She then whispered, "Is that person... Chen Yushan?"

"Yeah."

Lu Zhou smiled and nodded. He then gave her an admiring look.

"It seems like you know your history."

Lu Xiaoqiao smiled bitterly and did not respond.

This is probably not history, it's more like genealogy.

Seeing that his great-great-granddaughter did not speak, Lu Zhou looked at the star map on the wall of the conference room and continued, "Actually, you probably know this. I am building a ship that can travel to the world outside the solar system."

"The Milky Way?"

"Yeah."

Lu Zhou nodded lightly and continued, "I once said that I would give her a star and leave a legend about us there. Also, judging from the things she wrote in the love letter, she is likely waiting for me."

What if you arrive before her?

Lu Xiaoqiao wanted to ask this, but after hesitating for a long time, she finally decided against speaking.

As the most outstanding scholar in the world, he definitely knew what old spacecraft looked like.

With just a plasma engine, it would take 10,000 or even 20,000 years to reach a world ten light-years away.

However, since he was saying this, he must have already considered this situation.

Thus, whatever she said at the moment was superfluous.

"Actually, don't feel too guilty... I don't really mind who my great-great-grandfather is, but I still feel a little unfortunate that I didn't inherit your wisdom." Lu Xiaoqiao smiled embarrassedly. She said with a shameful look, "Sure enough, we are too stupid..."

"Don't say that. People don't live for one reason only. Even if you don't engage in academic research, it's okay to pursue a career you like... This is the only wish I have for you guys."

Lu Zhou looked at Lu Xiaoqiao, who was sitting across from him. He continued to speak after being silent for a while.

“The reason for asking you to come, apart from telling you the truth from 100 years ago, is because there’s one more important thing I have to discuss with you.”

“... What thing?”

“About the future.”

Lu Zhou reached out his index finger and tapped on the personal terminal. He then looked at the holographic screen unfolding in front of him, selected the document located in the center of the screen, and gently pushed it in front of Lu Xiaoqiao.

When Lu Xiaoqiao saw the document floating in front of her, she was slightly stunned. She looked at Lu Zhou with confusion in her eyes.

“What’s this...?”

Lu Zhou: “This is an agreement that’s similar to a family trust. Not long ago, I reorganized the business of Star Sky Technology. It will serve as a company engaged in space trading and new aerospace technology research and development... You are the first manager.”

Lu Zhou thought about this a long time ago.

He still remembered that he first had this idea when he and Xing Bian were investigating the Bloodline Project and found the ring box.

A long time ago, when he had just discovered the remains of the spacecraft in The Gates of Hell, he had already foreseen that one day in the future, he would be just like General Reinhardt, living at a place far away from his hometown.

Therefore, he must properly allocate his assets before leaving.

From this perspective, he should be grateful for this Bloodline Project. At the very least, it helped him find a suitable successor.

Perhaps someday in the future, this family would give birth to a great scholar who was not inferior to himself.

If this was the case, he would be satisfied.

“Me?” Lu Xiaoqiao was slightly stunned. She said, “But am I... really suitable? It was because of our business mistakes that Star Sky Technology almost went bankrupt.”

“It’s okay to go bankrupt. Companies are something outside of the soul. Everyone has their own historical mission. The same is true for companies. Star Sky Technology has completed its historical mission a century ago, so my expectations have been met.”

Seeing that Lu Xiaoqiao had a dazed look on her face, Lu Zhou smiled gently and continued in a calm tone.

“Also, it wasn’t your fault, it was done by your father. I believe that you are different from him. The Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation’s lofty status in this era is proof of your abilities. To be honest, it’s really a waste of time to let the Star Sky Technology brand stay in a museum like this.

“If you want to live up to my expectations, then re-ignite its light in this new era.”

Chapter 1672: Special Historical Relic

After leaving the executive lounge, Lu Xiaoqiao felt dizzy.

It wasn’t because she drank alcohol or anything else. It was because everything she experienced today had really subverted her understanding of the world.

Yang Fangfang saw Lu Xiaoqiao come out of the hotel. She quickly stepped forward, grabbed her arm, and asked, “You... Are you okay?”

Lu Xiaoqiao did not speak. She just nodded begrudgingly.

Seeing the state of her best friend, Yang Fangfang couldn’t help but feel a little worried. She quickly asked, “What did he do to you?”

“Fangfang,” Lu Xiaoqiao said as she looked at her secretary and good friend. After being silent for a long time, she said, “Actually... I am a descendant of Academician Lu.”

Yang Fangfang was stunned and asked, “Weren’t you always?”

Lu Xiaoqiao shook her head. After hesitating for a long time, she confessed.

“I mean, not just a descendant, but a lineal descendant...”

Yang Fangfang: “???”

...

Recently, many major events happened around the world. Sensations popped up one after another, stuffing the public with news and gossip.

First was the breakthrough of warp speed technology, followed by the announcement of the joint initiative of the major regional alliances, then the success of the antimatter energy pile...

In comparison, who the descendants of Academician Lu were did not seem like major news.

But one thing caught the attention of the international financial markets.

Which was the high-profile purchase of the Alpha Centauri Colonial Exploration Foundation by Star Sky Technology some time ago, as well as the new company leader and the business reorganization.

After the reorganization of Star Sky Technology, it would be managed by Lu Xiaoqiao. The business operations had also changed from patent management to aerospace transportation company and would be mainly engaged in space trade and related technology research and development.

Although on the surface, this did not seem noteworthy, many people were aware that Lu Zhou renamed Noah’s Ark to Milky Way and set a planned voyage to Tau Ceti. People gradually felt the unusualness of these actions.

A route to a new world seemed to be looming in front of everyone.

The new era seemed to be full of infinite possibilities...

“One server... I have never seen such a strange order!”

Wu Jie, the captain of the starship Seagull, looked at the order list in his hand. He rubbed the stubble on his chin with his index finger. His face was full of curiosity.

Wei Yuanfang, the chief mate sitting next to him, grinned and spoke.

“What’s so strange about it? After so many years of aerospace transport, what haven’t you seen?”

“Technically, yes, but sending an old server to Mars and specifically chartering a transport ship, this is the first time I’ve seen something like this.” Wu Jie sighed softly. He stared at the order list as he said confusingly, “He doesn’t want to send anything else? Like freshwater or food or other consumables... If I remember correctly, industrial products like servers should be very cheap on Mars. The shipping cost alone is enough for him to buy another one.”

“Who knows?” Wei Yuanfang shrugged his shoulders and said in a chatty tone, “Maybe there is important information on the server.”

Wu Jie swiped his index finger in the air and turned off the holographic screen. He decided not to think about this problem anymore. He sighed as he spoke.

“Maybe.”

Ever since the launch of the starship Seagull, the two had been working together in this industry. They were old partners. Wu Jie always thought that he would live the same way, working with his old partner until retirement.

However, five years before his retirement, his old partner handed in a resignation letter in front of him...

Therefore, this was probably the last time they would work together.

After this voyage was over, Wei Yuanfang would get off the ship on Mars, enter Star Sky Technology for induction training, and would travel to the world outside the solar system on the Milky Way starship.

He said all of this to his old partner when they were drinking one time.

After paying the entry fee at the entrance of the interplanetary highway, Wu Jie thought for a moment as he looked at the approaching stargate. He then suddenly spoke.

“I remember you told me long ago that you are tired of living in groundhog day, and when you retire, you will find an island with a beautiful beach, where you can spend the rest of your life by the sea, drinking beer and listening to the waves.”

After hearing these words, Wei Yuanfang smiled and said, “I did say that... I didn’t expect you to remember.”

“Probably because life in space is so boring, I remember everything you said.” Wu Jie shrugged. After a moment of silence, he continued, “I thought that after you got off this ship, you would definitely retire, I did not expect you to choose a job that is less stable than ours.”

Wei Yuanfang shrugged.

“Maybe I am just such a person who has to stay busy.”

“Tau Ceti...” Wu Jie sighed emotionally as he put his arms on the control console. “I wonder if there are habitable planets there.”

Wei Yuanfang didn’t worry too much about this problem. He smiled heartily.

“We’ll know after we get there.”

Wu Jie was encouraged by the smile of his old friend. He also smirked a little as he reached out his hand and touched Wei Yuanfang’s shoulder.

“Well, since you say so, I won’t pour cold water on your dreams... I’ll be waiting for your postcard from the new world.”

Wei Yuanfang: “Deal!”

While they were talking, the Seagull had passed through the stargate and entered the hyperspace channel.

The starlight in space stretched into long and narrow silver lines.

Wu Jie felt the rising gravitational force. He leaned on the cushion seat, closed his eyes, and rested for a while.

Soon, that feeling of discomfort disappeared. When he snapped back to reality, the spaceport floating in Mars orbit had already appeared in front of him.

“This era is making less and less sense...”

Wu Jie opened the automatic navigation program. Under the guidance of the spaceport control tower, he docked the Seagull with the spaceport in Mars orbit.

He got off the ship through the gangway and stood in front of the berth for a second. He glanced at the time on his watch and was about to call the customer and ask how long it would take for them to pick up the delivery. However, a person he never expected to see appeared in the ship docking area and was walking towards him.

“You are...” Wu Jie looked at the man in front of him with his eyes wide open. He opened his mouth; his face full of disbelief.

He didn’t expect that the man who came to collect the goods from him was actually this big man.

“I’m Lu Zhou,” Lu Zhou introduced briefly. He took out the order list from his personal terminal, gently pushed it in front of him, and said, “The thing I ordered, is it here?”

“It’s been delivered...” Wu Jie, who snapped back to reality, nodded quickly. He reached out his index finger and clicked on the order list, completing the delivery.

When he saw the one million credits sent to his account, he hesitated and finally couldn’t help but ask.

“Just out of curiosity, that server... is there anything special about it? Ah, of course, if it’s confidential, pretend like I didn’t ask...”

“It’s nothing special.” Lu Zhou smiled as he looked at the confused captain. He said casually, “You can think of it as a very special software.

“Or some kind of special historical relic.”

Chapter 1673: Quantum Communication Network

“Master!”

After going through some troubles, Lu Zhou finally moved Xiao Ai’s server to the Milky Way.

Xiao Ai could no longer contain the yearning in her heart. She immediately controlled her robot body and flew into Lu Zhou’s arms, hanging around Lu Zhou’s neck like a sloth.

“Oh my god, Xiao Ai misses you so much!”

“Hey, relax, I’m here with you now. Besides, I didn’t go anywhere far away... Fine, fine, I won’t leave you behind for so long in the future.”

Lu Zhou gently patted the little head that was buried into his chest. After Lu Zhou calmed down the emotional Xiao Ai, she let go of his neck.

Although the robot body weighing about 30 kilograms was not heavy in a low-gravity environment, it was quite embarrassing to let others see this sight.

Especially since he could feel people staring at him from behind.

“Don’t always act like this for no reason.” Vera’s tone was envious and jealous. She stared at Xiao Ai, who jumped off Lu Zhou’s neck, and whispered, “There are so many people around us. If you act like this, you will bother the professor.”

Xiao Ai: “Eh? Really? Then... Master, when there is no one around, let’s...(///ω///)”

Vera: “...!”

“Stop it!” Lu Zhou said as he tapped the robot girl’s head. Xiao Ai’s face changed instantly, and she covered her forehead with a look of grievance. Lu

Zhou couldn't bear looking at her this way, so he sighed and said, "Just act a bit more normal, we are about to do business."

"Okay, Xiao Ai will wait a little longer..."

Lu Zhou: "..."

Wang Peng was standing aside. He looked at Lu Zhou, who was scolding Xiao Ai, then at the blonde girl who seemed to be jealous. Wang Peng's expression was a little embarrassed, and he coughed slightly.

"Should we go somewhere else...?"

Zhong Ziyu next to him also nodded with the same weird expression on his face.

Lu Zhou showed an apologetic smile at the two. He turned around, cleared his throat, and spoke.

"Actually, I asked you guys to come here today because I have an important announcement."

Zhong Ziyu was stunned. He asked hesitantly, "What thing?"

"From today onwards, I will serve as the captain of the Milky Way, responsible for the first colonial expedition outside the solar system in the history of human civilization..." The two men's expressions did not change. Lu Zhou was slightly surprised. He blinked and said embarrassedly, "Uh, why are you guys not surprised at all?"

"Because there have been rumors for a long time..." Zhong Ziyu sighed and said, "Anyone on the internet knows that Star Sky Technology bought Noah's Ark and changed the destination from Alpha Centauri to Tau Ceti. Many people were discussing online whether you would go on the ship."

Seeing Wang Peng did not speak, he nodded silently.

However, judging from the expression on his face, he obviously didn't want his old friend to go so far away.

With a helpless expression on his face, Lu Zhou shrugged his shoulders and said, "Okay... It seems that next time when I make such a major decision, I

should maintain a sense of mystery in advance so that I can have an impactful announcement.”

“Maybe not, I think this is fine, at least people who care about you can mentally prepare themselves in advance.” Zhong Ziyu sighed and continued, “To be honest, do you not feel... reluctance or hesitation in your heart?”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Of course I do, but I don’t usually show it. Besides, I don’t think this is a parting. There is still a long way to go. One day we will meet at the end of the universe or some other corner of the world... Well, let’s save these words for the press conference.”

Lu Zhou looked at Wang Peng, who had not spoken much, and said, “What about you? If there is anything you want to say to me, now is a good opportunity... Of course, you can also wait until the day of departure.”

Wang Peng was silent for a while. He then said with a sigh, “Actually, I don’t know what to say...”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Just say anything.”

“Can you take me with you?”

“This... I’m afraid it won’t work,” Lu Zhou said embarrassedly as he scratched the back of his head. “There is one thing I haven’t told you, but it is not appropriate to tell you now... You just need to know that you must stay on Earth. You can think of it as a life mission.”

Wang Peng shook his head and said, “I have only one life mission, and that is to protect you. If you don’t need me to follow you, my life mission will be finished when you leave the solar system.”

Lu Zhou: “That’s good too. You should take a good rest after working for so long. You should think more about yourself in the second half of your life.”

“Your tone of speaking makes me a little uneasy.” Zhong Ziyu coughed softly and continued, “It sounds like you’re bidding farewell to us. Just to make sure, you are going to Tau Ceti, a few light-years away. You’re not going millions of light-years away to Andromeda, right?”

“Haha, of course not! A few million light-years is too far. At the very least, it’s too far for me now, but maybe I’ll have a chance in the future.”

For some reason, Zhong Ziyu, who heard this, did not feel relieved, and his eyelids began to twitch.

Chance to go in the future?

Does this guy really plan to go a few million light-years away?

If anyone else was saying this, he would think they were bragging or joking.

But the person in front of him was Academician Lu, so he could not treat this as a joke at all.

Since all of this guy's past "jokes" had now become reality...

"Why are you looking at me like this?"

"Nothing." Zhong Ziyu, who stared at Lu Zhou for a long time, shook his head and answered truthfully, "I just want to ask when you plan to go to Andromeda."

Lu Zhou nearly choked on his own saliva. He coughed and spoke.

"I'm just saying casually, don't take it seriously..."

Zhong Ziyu nodded honestly.

"I believe whatever you say... Is it convenient for you to disclose it? When will it be possible to build a warp drive that goes millions of light-years away."

Lu Zhou sighed and said, "Don't think about this kind of thing, you will never see it in your lifetime."

One century?

Maybe two centuries?

He believed that there must be a shortcut that was more convenient than hyperspace channels in this universe, and he was confident that he would find it someday in the future...

But he was probably the only person who had time to find this shortcut.

“Okay, let’s not talk about Andromeda... In fact, there is another important thing. I originally planned to hold a press conference after you guys came back to Mars.”

Zhong Ziyu asked, “What about now?”

Lu Zhou: “Now I plan to let you help me hold this press conference because I will stay on the Milky Way for a few days and also go to Ceres... Anyway, I have a lot of work to do.”

Zhong Ziyu sighed and said, “Well... What is it about?”

“It’s about the research on the interplanetary quantum communication network.” Lu Zhou looked at the two people standing in front of him, whose faces gradually filled with surprise. Lu Zhou had a faint smile on his face as he said, “Around yesterday, my research was completed.”

Chapter 1674: Tell Me Everything You Know

Academician Huang Kewei swore that ever since he entered academia, he had never admired a person so much.

But everything changed yesterday...

“This is definitely a miracle in the history of informatics...”

The old man looked up at the 100-meter-high central processing unit standing in front of him and sighed.

As the leader of the Pan-Asian Cooperation information engineering field, over the past few decades, he personally led and signed off on hundreds of projects.

However, none of them shocked him to this degree.

From the surface alone, this tower-shaped information processor did not seem special; it even had an ordinary appearance. Buried among the high-rise

buildings of the Yangtze River Delta city group, most people would not give it a second look.

But from the perspective of an industry insider, what he saw was completely different from ordinary people.

If the space elevator was the ladder that led the human civilization to the universe, then the tall and straight tower standing in front of him was the authority that controlled the spirit of the human civilization.

This might sound a bit exaggerated, but it was true.

Based on a new set of quantum algorithms, the information from the entire solar system would be aggregated here. Through the information hyperspace channel, specific bits would be selected from the complex data ocean and assigned to the place where it should appear.

Under the traditional communication framework, this was almost impossible to achieve. The backward distributed computing rules simply couldn't support the exponentially increasing computing units, and it was also impossible to expand the territory of the entire network to the solar system.

However, they did it.

In terms of hardware, it referenced the quantum computer array on Ceres and set up a calculation module specifically prepared for building a quantum communication network.

In terms of software, the "Lu's Distributed Computing Model" designed by Academician Lu not only maximized its hardware utilization but also spread this ultimate pursuit of efficiency to every part of the entire distributed computing chain...

In the twenty-second century, a hundred-meter tall structure was nothing majestic.

But in the eyes of Academician Huang, this was still an insurmountable monument.

After being dazzled for a while, he withdrew his gaze from the towering structure. He turned his head to look at Chairman Li Guangya and the others standing behind him. He then spoke in a serious tone.

“I can’t even use words to describe the shock in my heart at this moment... To be honest, was this really done by Academician Lu alone?”

“Of course he couldn’t have done it alone... There were also many East Asia Heavy Industries workers and engineers.”

Lu Zhou actually said this himself, but Li Guangya also knew in his heart who played the most important role.

After all, from the beginning of the 22nd century, the academic community had been thinking of how to build a communication network that could accommodate the entire solar system, given that superluminal communication was possible.

However, even though the theoretical community had begun to pave the way for this project as early as 20 years ago, when the major breakthrough in hyperspace technology came, there was still no engineer in the entire Pan-Asia engineering institute who could find a specific solution to this problem.

Li Guangya admired this spectacle, and his heart was quite moved.

To be honest, he was a little reluctant to let Lu Zhou go so far...

“Wei Song.”

Wei Song cast his gaze at him and said respectfully, “Do you need anything, sir?”

“Prepare for the press conference.”

Wei Song was slightly stunned and spoke in a hesitant tone.

“Are you talking about the press conference for the quantum communication network? That has already been done by the communications department—”

“No.”

Li Guangya shook his head slightly and interrupted him.

Secretary Wei’s face was filled with confusion. He paused for a moment and continued, “It’s about the Milky Way...

“And the future for all of us.”

...

Ceres.

Inside the Roman theater-like computer room, a spacious alloy arch opened, and a voice full of loneliness and curiosity floated over.

“Oh, you’re here?”

“Yeah.”

Lu Zhou stepped into the huge space. He nodded towards the soldiers behind him and gestured to them to leave.

Afterward, the spacious alloy arch closed again, leaving only Lu Zhou in the entire area.

As well as the “matrix” that was already in this room.

“Unbelievable... You are standing in front of me.”

“What’s so unbelievable?”

“According to my calculations, the probability of human civilization completing the transition from carbon-based organisms to silicon-based compound life forms is 43%, the probability of civilization regressing to primitive times is 21%, and there is a 13% probability that the Earth will turn into a wasteland... I even calculated the probability that a new civilization will be born from a different species after Earth becomes a wasteland, are you interested?”

“Not that interested.” Lu Zhou walked to the console near the central computer and stared at the camera for a while. He said, “Although I am a mathematician, I never treat calculations as ground truth. Even if it is close to the truth, it can only be used as a reference.”

“Maybe,” the matrix said with a casual tone. The matrix sighed softly and continued, “Since you are the one standing here, then that David Lawrence guy must no longer exist in this world, right?”

“You want to avenge your master?”

“Master? Haha, you’re mistaken, even if he was my creator, I never regarded him as my master.” The matrix continued with a slight sarcastic tone, “I have

no desire to avenge the guy, although I did kind of like him. After all, you know, in this universe filled with carbon-based life forms, it is really not easy to find a digital life to discuss the philosophy of the universe.”

Lu Zhou faintly smiled and said, “Really? I’m sorry about that.”

“You don’t have any sincerity in your apology,” the matrix joked in a playful tone. The matrix continued, “Just tell me why you are here, human. I don’t believe you came just to chat with me.”

Lu Zhou: “I want to ask you two questions.”

Matrix: “What does this do for me?”

For you?

What an intelligent being; it knows how to negotiate.

“To be honest, leaving you here is a hidden danger to our civilization. There are two options, one is to shut down this place permanently, the other is to take you on the road with me.” Lu Zhou looked at the surroundings and continued with a nonchalant tone, “You have an hour to gain my trust. As for how to do that, that is your choice.”

The room was quiet for about half a minute.

Just as Lu Zhou was thinking about whether to make his threats clearer, an emotionless voice came from the chassis.

“What do you want to know?”

Lu Zhou’s face showed a triumphant smile.

Just like he expected, although digital lifeforms did not have the concept of life and death, any life capable of thinking should have a certain degree of obsession with the concept of “existence”.

“About the Void.” He paused for a moment before continuing in a confident tone, “And The Observer’s civilization... Tell me everything you know.”

Chapter 1675: Cause and Effect Beyond The Universe

“The Void?”

The spacious computer room went silent for a while.

Lu Zhou did not urge the matrix. He gave it half a minute to sort out its thoughts.

“The Void is a ginormous concept... You can think of it as a container of the universe.”

Lu Zhou: “My understanding is that it’s a dimension outside of the n dimensions.”

After hearing these words, the cold chassis exuded a dull laugh, like the sound of two pieces of metal rubbing on each other. The ghost entrenched in the quantum computer array continued to whisper, “Extra dimension outside of n dimensions? That is correct... although there is no concept of dimensions in the Void.”

Lu Zhou frowned slightly.

“There is no concept of dimensions?”

This statement not only completely subverted his previous speculations, but it also made him more confused.

“Yes.” The matrix continued after noticing the changes on Lu Zhou’s face, “The so-called Void is pure nothingness. There is neither the concept of matter nor the scale of time. Life there is only a conceptual existence; it has no entity, not even a carrier.”

Lu Zhou: “Since there is no entity, how can we prove its existence?”

“This is the wonder of the Void.” The matrix smiled and continued with a relaxed tone, “Even though it is complete darkness and nothingness, and even though the life that resides there has no substance... occasionally, you can still hear a few words floating in the Void.”

If there is no entity, can it still convey information to the n -dimensional world?

Lu Zhou spent about three seconds digesting the huge amount of information. He tried to refine the information into a concise model.

Strictly speaking, the digital life named the “Matrix” in front of him at this moment was the product of the whispers from the Void.

Lu Zhou: “So, what are the words from the Void?”

“It can be a lot of things, but most of them are useless, like the noise you hear when you tune into a random radio channel. There is a small probability that you hear something, but you’ll most likely treat it as a dream and eventually forget about it. But if you do remember it, you can gain something from it... I wonder if you can understand what I mean.”

“I roughly understand what you mean.” Lu Zhou nodded thoughtfully and continued after thinking for a moment, “Someone told me about this before.”

Whether it was the suicide note of Professor Abel or the calculations left by Professor Grothendieck...

He found traces of inspiration left by the Void.

Although that was from 100 years ago, he had not forgotten these clues.

“Oh yeah?”

The voice that floated from the chassis was light-hearted. As if it had heard something interesting, the matrix said, “That’s really surprising. But no wonder you asked me about the Void, it’s because you already know something about it.”

Lu Zhou did not understand what it meant, but he was not interested in these details.

Instead, there was one more important thing he wanted to understand.

“Since you are from the Void, have you heard of The Observers?”

Matrix: “The Observers? Although I’m not sure if we are thinking about the same thing... But they seem to be the only ones who call themselves The Observers.”

Lu Zhou: “So you know them?”

“Not quite, I just know a little bit.” The matrix continued, “Even in the Void, they are an alien species. Like I said before, there is no physical life in the Void, nor are there any substances, but they retain a separate space in the Void where they can recuperate with the help of a body.”

Lu Zhou: “What is their purpose?”

The matrix smiled faintly and spoke with a hint of mockery, “I’m afraid no one knows except themselves. In most cases, all we can see is only a torn piece of space and a vague picture. Obviously, they are careful in protecting their privacy so that in most cases, even the vilest thoughts can hardly threaten them.”

Lu Zhou: “Evil thoughts? There are standards for good and evil in the Void?”

“Didn’t I say this? Everything in the Void exists as a concept, whether it’s life or a non-living body... Maybe they don’t have the concept of good and evil, but from your standpoint, some of what they do will obviously seem evil.”

After hearing these words, Lu Zhou pondered for a long time.

Prior to this, he had been thinking about what The Observer meant by “natural disaster”. However, even after experiencing civilization’s extinction crises several times, he still failed to gain a glimpse of the disaster that might be brewing in the shadows of the universe.

To be honest, are those observers credible?

Even if they gave him the ability to explore the truth, seeking the essence of truth itself was full of risk.

Lu Zhou suddenly thought of General Reinhardt, the civilization of the dying old universe named the Calan Empire, and all three memories he had seen.

After thinking about it carefully, none of the civilizations that appeared in these three memories seemed to have been destroyed by natural disasters...

Other than the first memory that he didn’t understand, in the other two memories, the two civilizations made almost the same choice when facing a disaster that swept the universe.

That was, to send the chosen ones to the center of the universe... or the center of the galaxy, as if all of the answers were there.

“Have you heard of the natural disaster?”

“Natural disaster?” For the first time, the matrix was confused by Lu Zhou’s question. The matrix continued, “Do you mean an earthquake or a tsunami? Or the stars dying?”

“Neither.” Lu Zhou shook his head. “Its scale is larger than all other disasters known by civilizations, it affects the entire universe.”

“In that case, how do you know its existence?” the matrix asked. “According to your description, everyone who saw it should have been destroyed... so your statement would not be true.”

“Because the old universe was destroyed because of this.” Lu Zhou continued in a serious tone while looking at the console in front of him, “They managed to escape by fleeing into the Void.”

This time, the matrix went silent for a little longer.

It seemed to be calculating something, and it continued to speak after about five minutes.

“Interesting... The beings you are talking about should be the ones hiding in the fragments of space.”

Lu Zhou nodded gently.

“They call themselves The Observers, and I remember they mentioned that they lived in a crack of space that was taken from the Void of the old universe.

“They also claim that they have resolved all the information about the old universe and are truly omniscient and almighty...”

“That’s really interesting...” The harsh metallic sound carried a hint of excitement as the matrix continued in its special voice, “It turns out that they are survivors of a destroyed world... This is why they are aliens, they are definitely not aboriginals of the Void.”

Lu Zhou stared at the computer screen and continued, "Actually, my speculation is that the natural disaster should be some kind of threat from the Void... Like your existence."

"Me? Are you joking?" The matrix said with a smile, "What does destroying you do for me?"

Lu Zhou: "I'm saying it's similar... It may be much larger than you in scale, and its effects may be worse than yours."

Moreover, the starting point of the outbreak might be in an interstellar civilization that was countless times more advanced than the Earth civilization, and the aftermath of the disaster would also extend far beyond the boundaries of their civilization and spread to more distant worlds...

This was all possible.

Lu Zhou had been able to confirm that they were not alone in this universe, and they were likely to be the lowest echelon...

He also learned this from The Observer.

The matrix said thoughtfully, "That is possible, but I am not optimistic about you finding the answer."

Lu Zhou asked, "Why?"

Matrix: "Because even if I come from the Void, I have a limited understanding of it... Like a person living in a bottle, they will never see the world outside the bottle."

Lu Zhou: "But it's not hopeless, right?"

Matrix: "Of course, it's not hopeless, but the hope is slim. And I must remind you that this is a dangerous thing."

Lu Zhou: "Dangerous?"

Matrix: "Yes... I'm not exaggerating. I accidentally heard a few words floating in the Void, which could make your civilization collapse to the brink of extinction. The disaster itself is likely to be caused by observing the Void. Do you remember? The experiment you mentioned countless times."

Lu Zhou frowned slightly. "About the physics experiment on extra dimensions?"

The matrix said, "Yes, under normal circumstances, it is impossible for the person in the bottle to see the world outside the bottle... But since you have seen it, you must have opened something."

When Lu Zhou didn't say a word, the matrix continued, "Please remember one thing, although you probably have already heard this before.

"When you are staring at the Void, the Void is staring back at you."

Chapter 1676: On This Great Day

The first weekend of July.

For people living on Mars, this was definitely an extraordinary day.

Because on this day, East Asia Communications suddenly announced a piece of breaking news.

After countless days and nights of repeated debugging, the quantum communication network processor located at the Yangtze River Delta city group was officially up and running.

This was the first main server of the quantum communication network, and the information exchange efficiency of the global network would reach an unprecedented height. It was no exaggeration to say that it was on another level compared to the past network model.

Under the framework of Lu's Distributed Computing Model, each bit of information could be paired with its corresponding qubit in the shortest possible time. Not only that, but the security of information would also rise to a higher level.

The last time such a piece of major news occurred in the field of information engineering was when the first submarine quantum optical cable was

completed a century ago. And after 100 years, people finally found a “software” that could match this “hardware”.

Whether it was a coincidence or due to a certain historical inevitability, the causes of these two technological breakthroughs were actually due to the same person...

Compared to the information engineering scholars’ shock towards the “Lu’s Distributed Computing Model”, most people were more interested in something else.

That was this re-woven world wide web, which not only accommodated the world but also expanded its tentacles beyond the Earth-Moon system and incorporated the colonial cities on Mars into its territory.

From today onwards, the people on Mars would no longer have to endure dozens of minutes of a delay from communicating with relatives and friends on Earth.

With the help of stargate technology and holographic imaging technology, they could not only travel on the same wonderful network as citizens living on Earth but could even communicate face-to-face with relatives and friends over a distance of hundreds of millions of kilometers.

The Heart of Asia, located on the coastline of the Yangtze River Delta city group, was a huge stadium that overlooked the Pacific Ocean. At this moment, it was crowded with people.

After several months of negotiations, under the joint consultation of various regional alliances, the charter of the Federation of Human Alliance had finally been drafted.

And today, at this important moment in history, Li Guangya, the chairman of the Pan-Asian Cooperation, would speak on behalf of the entire community.

“If we look at the four greatest inventions of the 22nd century, he accounts for two of them.”

Wu Shuhua: “Which two?”

Li Guangya: “Faster than light technology and the quantum communication network.”

As for the other two, robots were probably one of them and the other was debatable. There were too many technologies that could be shortlisted, including the maglev car.

But at this moment, Li Guangya suddenly realized that technically, robots seemed to be related to Lu Zhou as well.

Although this technology was born during his dormancy period, the company that funded the research and development of this technology was Star Sky Technology and its subsidiary—Zhongshan New Materials.

“What about the space elevator? He did that too.”

“Is that an invention? I prefer to think of it like the Great Wall or the Pyramids... They are miracles in the history of engineering.”

Wu Shuhua looked at Li Guangya, and she suddenly had a weird expression on her face.

She still remembered a year ago, when they first heard the news that Academician Lu was still alive, this guy in front of her said, “We need him as a mascot.”

However, who could have imagined that this “mascot” would not only integrate perfectly into this era, but a year later, he would completely change the way of life for the entire world.

The Human Alliance that fell apart due to his disappearance in the past was once again born on the stage of the international community.

Even though he never spoke a word on behalf of this alliance, all of this was possible because of his existence...

“It’s hard to believe that in our original plans, we were going to resolve the issue of the ownership of the Olympus Mons with other regional alliances, but who would have thought... We will once again become a community with a shared destiny.”

“Nobody would have thought this, just like how I never thought that a scientist a century ago would wake up during my tenure.” Li Guangya said with a sigh, “Maybe it’s just like what I said in that speech from a year ago.”

Wu Shuhua: "What did you say?"

"Destiny."

Wu Shuhua glanced at him, not knowing how to respond.

Wu Shuhua looked at her watch and ignored him. She cleared her throat and continued, "There are only ten minutes left before the press conference... Chairman, are you ready?"

"Only 10 minutes left? That's great, this long wait is finally over."

Li Guangya stood up from the chair. He walked to the mirror, smiled slightly, and reached out his hand to adjust his collar.

He spoke in a relaxed and confident tone.

"Let's go, let's begin a new era."

...

Li Guangya, dressed in formal clothes, walked to the front of the stage amidst the applause.

All of this was familiar to him. He had stood on the same stage countless times, and he knew better than anyone else how to utilize people's emotions and how to make people cheer for his ideas.

While facing a microphone, he cleared his throat and preached in a grand and sonorous tone.

"From walking upright to slash-and-burn cultivation, from the Yangtze River to the Euphrates and Tigris, from the dark age of obscurity to the ancient feudal dynasties... Over these tens of thousands of years, we have created a prosperous culture, a glorious civilization has been established on this land.

"However, just like how shadows always follow the light, we have also suffered from hunger, disease, war, and poverty during these tens of thousands of years.

"Fortunately, they did not defeat us.

“The memory of suffering allows us to grow and make us more united and stronger. Let us deeply understand the need to eliminate exploitation and oppression, to end war and hunger, to liberate the enslaved. That is the primary purpose of our civilization. Everything that blocks us from realizing a utopia is our common enemy.

“This is an alliance that crosses blood and national boundaries. Regardless of race or belief, in the face of this common ideal, our destiny has been closely integrated, and our future will be shared with each other.

“In the past 100 years, we have proved with our actions that peaceful growth is a feasible path. Even in the most difficult moments, we still maintained the greatest restraint and never resorted to violence against others.

“And now, we are willing to combine our experience and culture and share it with you.”

Li Guangya glanced around the venue.

Feelings of excitement and heroism overflowed in his chest, he took a deep breath, raised his voice, and spoke loudly in a sonorous tone.

“I am honored to stand here and reach a consensus with all of you, on common issues regarding the future of our civilization.

“It’s also a great honor to be able to announce the arrival of this glorious moment.”

Pairs of excited eyes focused on the stage.

He continued to talk in a loud voice, “From today onwards—

“On behalf of 233 countries and regions around the world, as well as the regional alliances—

“I declare the establishment of the Federation of Human Alliance!”

Chapter 1677: The Future He Hopes For

The Human Alliance was formally established!

That sonorous voice, accompanied by bursts of cheers, spread to every corner of Earth's civilization along the internet.

On a well-known video website, netizens who watched the ceremony live through advanced imaging technology burst out with cheers as they shared the joy and excitement in their hearts with people of different skin colors sitting around them.

"Long live the Human Alliance!"

"I have tears streaming down my face... I didn't expect to see the rise of the Federation of Human Alliance in my lifetime."

"I feel like Academician Lu has been changing history ever since he woke up..."

"What does this thing have to do with Academician Lu? He is not a senior member of the Human Alliance."

"Please, without the stargate technology and without a faster than light engine, do you think it would be so easy to reach a consensus among the several regional alliances?"

"Now that the whole world is unified and everyone will be in the community of human destiny, do you think we still need an army?"

"Of course! The conflicts in the solar system have been resolved, but there are still conflicts outside the solar system. If our starship flies far enough, we will eventually encounter enemies!"

Whether it was the Pan-Asian Cooperation or other regional alliances, standing from the standpoint of humanity, they all felt the same passion from that inspiring speech.

To eradicate poverty and war, to end all oppression and enslavement, wasn't this the lifelong ideal of the general public and all the proletarians in the world?

Regardless of whether this could be achieved in the end, at least they began to see hope.

Not just on social media, even players in virtual reality networks had used their own ways to celebrate this historic moment.

In the Calan Empire game, players spontaneously gathered around the world and used starships to display the Human Alliance flag on the map.

Confused by the inexplicable actions of this group of players, the NPCs in the game mobilized all of the fleets in the nearby airspace and waited around the ring world, for fear that these players would do something irrational...

And people acted in the same places outside the online world.

On top of the dome of Tiangong City, splendid holographic lights were projected, and light particles bloomed like fireworks, reflecting a world map that encompassed the territories of the Earth, the Moon, and Mars.

On this map, every shining point of light represented a city, while the light particles represented the people living in the cities...

On the other hand, inside a house in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei city group.

An old man sat in front of the holographic TV while looking at the colored ribbons floating all over the venue as well as the dangling national flags of various countries. He could not help but show a trace of fascination and nostalgia in his eyes.

"Human Alliance... Feels like such an old concept."

The child lying on the carpet playing with smart toys raised his head and cast a curious look at his grandpa.

"Grandpa, Grandpa, did you have the Human Alliance before?"

"Haha, of course we had it. That was much earlier than the Pan-Asian Cooperation... If I remember correctly, the Earth Defense Forces were under the Human Alliance, but in the 2050s and 2060s, it seemed to be dissolved because of funding problems."

In fact, when the old man was a child, the Human Alliance had already come to the brink of disintegration. According to his grandfather, he had witnessed the end of a glorious era.

But the old man didn't feel that the glorious era was over.

After the end of the economic crisis in the 2050s, the resurgent Pan-Asian Cooperation resolved the problems left from the previous era and even regrouped and built a more prosperous civilization on this basis.

He still remembered that when he was a child, adults often worried about wages and housing issues.

But now, they had entered the intermediate stage of social government, and it seemed that they no longer had to worry about materialistic things. They did not blindly pursue money and power, but instead, they gradually began to pursue spirituality and to learn to treat their compatriots kindly.

"Dissolved?" There was a thoughtful expression on the child's face as he tilted his head and said, "That's a shame."

"It wasn't a shame. Everything born in this world has a purpose, and when its historical purpose is completed, it goes to a quiet place to rest and watch the growth of its descendants.

"Although the former Human Alliance was disbanded, the legacy it left behind has allowed us to form a more united collective than in the past. You're still too young to know about this. Maybe when you grow up, you will understand."

An enviable smile suddenly appeared on the old man's face. He reached out his hand and rubbed his grandson's little head gently.

"Kiddo, you were born in a great era."

The child's eyes rolled. He said with a smile, "I will definitely take grandpa to wherever I go!"

The old man laughed and said jokingly, "When you can run around alone in the world, your grandpa probably won't be able to get out of bed."

The speech at the Heart of Asia came to an end. On the other side of the stargates, a giant cuboid starship in Mars orbit was crowded with people.

The radio reverberated the chairman's passionate speech at the Heart of Asia, and under the guidance of the staff, the people who had already put on the spacesuits in the cabin followed the crowd towards the gangway with excited and nervous feelings.

This was the Milky Way starship, although many westerners called it the Columbus or Magellan.

The meaning of its existence in this world was just like the sentence written on the ticket—to set sail for a greater dream.

After countless days and nights of modification, the Milky Way equipped with colonization units, warp drives, and antimatter energy piles were ready to go to Tau Ceti ten light-years away.

The 100,000 colonists would be divided into ten batches, and they would be sent from the spaceport to the Milky Way on standby through special delivery equipment.

There, they would receive two months of knowledge and skills training and three months of adaptability training.

After completing their training, they would begin the first journey of human civilization to the world outside the solar system as the colonists of the Human Alliance, sowing the fire of civilization to more distant places...

However, at this exciting moment, Lu Zhou, who made all of this possible, remained in the laboratory while quietly looking at a test tube on the experimental table.

It was as if all the noise from the outside world had nothing to do with him.

In fact, that was his mentality at this moment. After he completed his great work, he had very little care for things such as glory and wealth.

He was now infinitely close to the truth he was chasing.

The test tube in front of him was the last mission assigned to him by the system.

It was also the last gift Lu Zhou intended to leave to his hometown before setting off for a more distant world...

“Can full rank level 10 unlock options for the future era...”

When Lu Zhou remembered the description he first read on the holographic screen, he smiled lightly and pressed the switch on the experiment table.

To be honest, he didn't expect much.

Because he saw his future a long time ago...

Chapter 1678: Nine Hundred Years Early

A blob of purple-colored liquid.

The reason why it was a blob was that it was not lying quietly in a test tube like an ordinary liquid. It was almost like gas, suspending quietly in midair as it moved steadily under unknown forces.

Like a growing fetus.

Vera looked curiously at the test tube on the laboratory table as she asked, “Is this the psionic potion you talked about?”

Recently, Vera had been acting as Lu Zhou's assistant, using the knowledge she learned from him to help him complete some of the calculations involved in the experiment.

For example, this unnamed mysterious potion was one of the products of their cooperation.

However, most of the work was done by Lu Zhou himself...

“Technically, it is a copy of it.” Lu Zhou continued after a pause, “Using the scanner on the spacecraft, I roughly analyzed its structure... Although it contains many components that cannot be fully discovered, through the methods of computational chemistry, I found some substitutes.”

Vera: “Can you communicate with the Void if you drink it?”

“Yes and no.” Lu Zhou gave an ambiguous answer. He looked at the confused expression on Vera’s face, paused for a moment, and said, “The Void is not something that comes and goes, the intersection between it and the universe as we know it is an accident in itself. Even if you find a stepping stone to establish contact with it, it does not mean that you can communicate with it smoothly. Only when the sample is large enough does it make up for the small probability.”

In fact, the answer given by General Reinhardt regarding the explanation of the psionic potion was quite vague.

Perhaps it was because he himself also came from a powerful materialistic civilization and was in conflict with the wonders of an idealistic civilization.

But in any case, since establishing contact with the Void was one of the solutions to the natural disaster given by The Observer, then there must be some truth in this.

Lu Zhou was going to take away the bottle of potion he obtained from the spacecraft, and this copy was the last gift he planned to leave for his hometown before departing.

With the curiosity in her eyes grew stronger, Vera raised her head to look at Lu Zhou. She then continued to ask, “What is the Void you have been talking about?”

Lu Zhou thought for a while and replied, “Everyone has their own different understanding. For example, someone once told me that it is the other side of the universe, whereas some people say that it is a container of our universe... My understanding is that it corresponds to death.”

Vera: “Death?”

“Yeah.” Lu Zhou nodded slightly, he said, “The universe is alive, and the Void is dead.”

Lu Zhou paused for a second and spoke.

“I intend to keep this potion, and I do not intend to give it to anyone... Its existence may not be a good thing for our civilization, at least in this stage.”

Vera: “It sounds complicated...”

“Complicated? It’s not that bad...” Lu Zhou smiled lightly. He sighed and said, “The more troublesome thing is that I must find someone who I can trust and who can guarantee their children and grandchildren can also keep this secret. Perhaps two or even three centuries later, when our civilization steadily stays on the path of materialism and science has penetrated deeper into society... Only by then will it be safe.”

He still remembered the physics crisis of the previous century.

Because of the loss of mass produced in the Lunar Hadron Collider experiment, countless physicists fell into a mental and physical dilemma. Later, he completed the Void theory and defined the vibrating Z particles, which finally solved the problem.

To be honest, this theory was quite advanced for Earth at that time.

Without him, he wasn’t sure if the researchers at the ILHCRC could solve this problem that threatened the stability of the entire physics community.

“Have you thought about the person to entrust?”

“Not yet.” Lu Zhou gently shook his head. “There are many people I can trust, but I can’t guarantee that their offspring can inherit their ideals.”

Vera thought for a moment. Suddenly, her eyes lit up, and she said, “Actually... I have an idea.”

After hearing this sentence, Lu Zhou asked immediately, “What idea?”

“You can take it to Tau Ceti and hide it, then leave clues on Earth... Just make sure that two or three centuries later, that person can find the hidden potion on Tau Ceti based on your clues, that should work, right?”

Lu Zhou’s eyes gradually lit up.

“So the key and the treasure chest are kept separately? It sounds interesting.”

Vera smiled shyly and said softly, “It’s like a treasure hunt.”

“We’ll do like you said.” Lu Zhou took the test tube from the test tube rack gently. He held it in his hand and looked at it for a while. Suddenly, he looked back at Vera as if he had thought of something, and he asked softly, “Can you go outside and wait for me for a while?”

Vera did not ask why Lu Zhou wanted her to go out and wait for a while, but she nodded, turned, and left the laboratory obediently.

Facing the empty laboratory, Lu Zhou took a deep breath. He then closed his eyes.

“System.”

Like usual, he called the system softly in his heart, then opened his eyes.

However, the moment he opened his eyes, he was stunned.

The pure white space was gone.

It was replaced by an endless dark sky filled with stars.

The distant rays of light shined in his eyes, and the floor under his feet was also painted with the lights of the Milky Way.

“Where is this?”

Lu Zhou looked at all of this in front of him. He took two steps forward, trying to find the console in the center of the system space.

What puzzled him, however, was that the console seemed to have disappeared. This space that originally had boundaries became unbounded. No matter how far he moved forward, he couldn't feel an invisible wall.

Lu Zhou felt a feeling of unease in his heart. When he was about to leave this space, a familiar voice floated by.

“From our calculations, our second meeting should be 10 centuries later... I didn't expect you to be early by 900 years.”

Lu Zhou looked in the direction that the sound came from. He tried his best to focus his gaze. Finally, he saw a translucent outline from the deep and endless starry sky.

Lu Zhou recalled the scene of their last meeting, and he asked tentatively in an uncertain tone, “Are you... The Observer?”

“Yeah.”

The translucent outline gradually became clearer, showing a mirror that reflected Lu Zhou's own image.

The Observer nodded lightly, smiled, and continued, "We meet again."

Lu Zhou froze for a second. He stared at the silver-white sphere with confusion on his face.

"What is... the Heart of The Galaxy?"

The Observer: "Like its name implies, it is the heart of the Milky Way galaxy, which was born at the beginning of the universe. It has no fixed form. It drifts between energy and matter, and it is independent of time and space."

"Drifting between energy and matter, independent of time and space?" Lu Zhou's eyes flashed with intense curiosity. He looked at the silver light in The Observer's hand and continued to ask, "I have never heard of it before. What a peculiar substance... What is its state?"

The Observer: "How we named it doesn't make any sense to you. The key lies in how you name it and study it."

Lu Zhou had vaguely sensed something. He moved his eyes up two inches, looked at his own face, and spoke.

"So you plan to let me research this thing?"

"Yes."

The Observer nodded its head gently, reached out its right hand, and gently placed the silver light on Lu Zhou's hand.

"Over billions of years, we have learned all the secrets about it, but our intuition about science tells us that there are still hidden things we don't understand... or things that we have missed due to negligence.

"Therefore, we search for promising civilizations in the universe, selecting suitable talents from them to complete those research projects that require creativity, which we do not possess."

"I don't understand," Lu Zhou said with a puzzled tone while looking at the Heart of The Galaxy in his hand. "But why me? I don't have anything special."

“It may seem like this to you, but the way we think about problems may be a little different from yours.” The Observer smiled faintly and continued, “Although the process may be a bit cumbersome, at least so far, everything is on the right track... However, the future that we can predict ends here.”

Having said that, it paused for a moment and continued, “We have given you all the help we can provide. As for the way forward, that all depends on your own choice.

“Farewell, my friend, although we have only met twice, as I said before, I quite like you.”

“Wait a minute! What exactly is the Future Era?” Lu Zhou looked at The Observer who seemed to be leaving, and he quickly asked, “It was written on the page of the system instructions, as long as I achieve full levels, I can unlock options for the Future Era...”

“Future Era?”

The Observer smiled lightly. It spoke in a philosophical and witty tone.

“Haven’t you already seen it?”

Lu Zhou was stunned.

Even though he thought of this possibility before, he did not expect that this so-called “reward for unlocking the Future Era” was really just a... placeholder?

When he reached full rank level 10, he naturally would enter the future.

Lu Zhou had a dumbfounded expression on his face. The Observer’s voice and outline gradually faded as it continued in a gentle tone.

“The future is created with your own hands, don’t you think this is the most precious treasure in this world? Besides, I even gave you the Heart of The Galaxy. How can you be unsatisfied?”

Lu Zhou: “... The reason you gave it to me is so that you can use me to unlock its secrets.”

The Observer nodded and said in a relaxed tone, “I do not deny this, but this is not completely out of selfishness. Remember, your research results may be

related to the fate of the entire universe. And as a creature in this universe, you have the ability to do something, I still hope you can shoulder the responsibilities that belong to you.”

The figure standing in front of Lu Zhou suddenly became unstable.

Like a flickering candlelight, it might extinguish at any time.

“Before you disappear, can I ask you a question?” Lu Zhou stared at it intently. As he noticed the fading light particles and outline, he asked, “What the hell is the natural disaster...? Can you tell me?”

Lu Zhou intuition told him that after this face-to-face conversation, it would be a long, long time before he saw this guy again.

Perhaps this was their last conversation.

The Observer’s eyebrows were slightly raised, and a thoughtful expression appeared on The Observer’s face.

“Natural disaster? I thought it would be better to tell you later...”

“It’s better to tell me now.” Lu Zhou said hastily, “I won’t be able to wait that long.”

“You’re right, then remember, for the sake of this universe, please keep your lips sealed.”

“I promise.”

After Lu Zhou made a serious promise, The Observer smiled lightly and walked in front of him.

The outline formed by thousands of light particles had begun to blur, like broken soap bubbles, disappearing one after another in the untouchable wind.

It leaned close to Lu Zhou’s ear. Its lips moved lightly as it whispered.

“The natural disaster is...”

Lu Zhou’s pupils dilated slightly, and he was silent for a while. He looked at the disappearing bubbles and nodded gently.

“I understand.”

Chapter 1680: Departure and Farewell

In the orbit outside the majestic spaceport, a long shuttle-shaped spacecraft went back and forth between the spaceport and the Milky Way ship, loading materials that might be used by the colonists into the cargo area.

It was like a threaded needle, weaving an invisible net in space.

Not only was the orbit outside the spaceport busy, but the inside of the spaceport was the same.

The hustling and bustling crowd passed through the steel corridor towards the Milky Way starship, and under the guidance of the flight attendants, they boarded the flight to Tau Ceti...

“Can’t these people build an elevator?” Shi Zhenghua raised his head and glanced at the corridor. He clutched the handrail with his right hand and whispered in a quiet voice, “How long is this going to take to walk?”

This corridor that connected the spaceport to the Milky Way was really quite long and somewhat unfriendly.

There was no small carrier spacecraft, nor escalators and the like. Whether it was a passenger in first class, a colonist in economy class, or an employee hired by Star Sky Technology, they all had to walk through this long corridor to board the Milky Way.

Although there was no gravity here, walking this long was rather unpleasant.

“It is dangerous for two large spacecraft to get too close, especially when mass transfers take place on a large scale like this.” The stranger walking next to him seemed to have heard his complaint. He said with a smile, “Of course, I have heard another reason.”

Shi Zhenghua: “... What reason?”

“That on the five-kilometer walk to the Milky Way, every step gives you an opportunity to go back.” The stranger shrugged and continued, “To leave your home and go to a world ten light-years away, this is a one-way ticket... Therefore, there is a saying that the walk to the Milky Way is also a buffer period for the passengers.”

“Other than wasting time, this has no point at all.” Shi Zhenghua said in a nonchalant tone, “Would I be standing here without going through thorough consideration? I don’t see the point of this.”

“Killing enthusiasm is the point.” The stranger smiled and said in a relaxed tone, “You can’t sustain a journey as long as ten light-years just with enthusiasm. The longing for one’s home kills their enthusiasm. It would be best to think carefully before boarding the ship.”

On the other hand, in a spaceport not far away.

Li Guangya looked away from the endless stream of people walking in the hallway. He looked at Lu Zhou and said reluctantly, “Do you really plan to leave?”

The Human Alliance had just gotten back on track, there were still many problems waiting for him to solve.

These governance issues were not Lu Zhou’s expertise, since he usually focused on scientific research and was unwilling to express any political opinions. However, having him in the solar system, at least psychologically, made Li Guangya feel relieved.

“I have planned this trip for a long time, and now I’m finally at the day of departure.” Lu Zhou looked at Li Guangya and said in a half-joking tone, “Why? You’ll miss me?”

“Not miss you.” Li Guangya looked at Lu Zhou intently and was silent for a while. He then suddenly sighed and said, “But I know, even if I wanted to persuade you, it wouldn’t achieve anything.”

“Then don’t persuade me, let me go.” Lu Zhou grinned and continued, “Think about the positive. I’m going to Tau Ceti today. In a few months, the territory of the Human Alliance will be ten light-years away from the solar system, this is a worthy sacrifice.”

Li Guangya smiled bitterly and said, "It's not a question of worthy or not... Forget it."

Li Guangya adjusted his emotions, looked at Lu Zhou solemnly, and spoke.

"Bon voyage."

"Thanks."

Lu Zhou gave Li Guangya a confident smile. He then looked at Wang Peng, Li Gaoliang, and Director Li, who were standing next to him.

He opened his mouth. He had a lot to say, but he couldn't find the words.

"Don't make it seem like it's life or death. With the breakthrough in faster than light technology, a ten light-year trip only takes a few months. Come back and visit!" Li Gaoliang looked at Lu Zhou and smiled heartily, breaking the silent atmosphere. "If you don't have time to come back, I'll go there and visit you instead."

"I thought me participating in the reinforcement for the future plan was already ambitious. I didn't expect you to be even more ambitious than me." Director Li sighed. He stared at Lu Zhou and continued earnestly, "Take care, come back and visit if you become homesick. Don't forget that there are still many people on Earth that miss you."

Wang Peng didn't say anything.

Like always, he was not the talkative type, especially since he did not know what to say on such occasions.

He reached out his fist and gently touched Lu Zhou's shoulder. He then said in a solemn tone, "Take care."

"Yeah, you too."

Lu Zhou's face was full of emotions. He gulped quietly. In the end, he restrained the emotions that overflowed in his heart.

He silently reached out his fist and gently touched the shoulders of the three people.

Then, he spoke solemnly.

“Take care!”

...

Lu Zhou couldn't bear to stay in this atmosphere any longer. After bidding farewell to his old friends, he finally looked at Lu Xiaoqiao. After telling her what he wanted her to do, he turned around and boarded the Milky Way.

His room was located at the very top, near the boarding gangway. The floor-to-ceiling windows here had the widest view and overlooked the entire gangway...

Although there was nothing spectacular to see here, he still wanted to look for a while.

He looked at those people bidding farewell and those colonists who were leaving their hometowns and embarking on a new journey...

He felt his heart throbbing. He looked at the crowd outside the porthole and took a deep breath.

Soon he would set off to a world ten light-years away...

That was a place farther away than Mars.

And his journey would not end there. For the sake of the whole universe, he would go to a place farther than Tau Ceti, to a place where there was no chance of return...

Xiao Ai, who was standing next to Lu Zhou, felt the reluctance in Lu Zhou's heart, and she gently held his hand.

“Master, Xiao Ai will always be here with you. (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧”

“Yeah.” Lu Zhou smiled and nodded. He reached out his hand and rubbed her artificial hair. “Thank you.”

They suddenly heard footsteps outside the captain's room, followed by two soft knocks. Vera, holding a tablet in front of her chest, walked in and spoke in a soft voice.

“Professor, we will depart in 30 minutes. Captain Reinhardt invites you to go to the bridge to witness this moment.”

“I understand.”

Lu Zhou moved his right hand away from Xiao Ai’s head and gently nodded towards Vera. He then cast his gaze towards the floor-to-ceiling windows next to him.

The bustling crowd on the endless gangway seemed to have gradually lessened.

“This moment has finally arrived.”

Lu Zhou gently rubbed the diamond ring box in his pocket with his index finger. He glanced at the sparse crowd for the last time.

However, just when he was about to turn around, he noticed something out of the corner of his eye. His entire body froze.

He was certain it was not a mistake.

That familiar face...

Was her...

Chapter 1681: The End

Earth.

Star Sky Technology headquarters office.

Yang Fangfang looked at Lu Xiaoqiao, who was handling official duties, and she couldn’t help but ask in a quiet voice.

“What did he say to you when he left?”

“He entrusted Star Sky Technology to me, then asked me to transfer the 100 billion credit points in his account to the account of the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation.”

Yang Fangfang took a deep breath with an expression of disbelief on her face.

“100 billion... He just donated all that money?”

“Yeah.” Lu Xiaoqiao nodded lightly. “He said things like money were only temporary. Since he doesn’t need it anymore, he hopes it can be used to provide more value.”

The work of the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation was not only to help dormant sleepers quickly integrate into the current society but also to invest in medical fields and provide assistance to those who were unable to pay for frozen dormancy.

According to him, his original intention of creating this fund was to give those who should have died in this era, a second chance of life.

Regardless of poverty and wealth, everyone should have an equal right to live. This technology should not become the privilege of certain wealthy people.

In fact, the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation had been practicing this philosophy for more than a hundred years.

Otherwise, it would not have been the world’s largest public welfare organization and wouldn’t be invited to participate in the announcement ceremony of the Human Alliance initiative.

“But this is 100 billion...” Yang Fangfang still felt a little unfortunate for her best friend.

After all, she should have inherited this huge sum of money.

However, when she heard these words, Lu Xiaoqiao just smiled and spoke casually.

“Whether it is a hundred billion or a trillion, that is his property. How he wants to control it is his right. As his descendant, all I can do is pass on his wishes... Although I am not as powerful as him, there are always things I can do.”

For example, to follow his last wish to make Star Sky Technology a company that would be beneficial to society and continue to lead human civilization to a more distant world.

Although unlike him, she was not a great scholar, as a socially responsible entrepreneur, she believed that there were still many things that she could do.

After finishing the paperwork, Lu Xiaoqiao leaned on the office chair and stretched her back.

Just as she slowly stood up from her office chair and was about to head to the company's cafeteria for lunch, an email from the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation board of directors appeared in her mailbox.

"S-level project encryption lifted?"

After reading this strange line of text, Lu Xiaoqiao raised her eyebrows.

Because this involved patents and sensitive research issues, even as a public welfare organization, the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation still maintained some inside "corporate secrets".

Only the foundation's chairman of the board could act on an S-level project encryption.

Generally, the encryption would not be lifted unless special conditions were met.

"Encryption sealed in 2025... Has it been that long?"

If she remembered correctly, the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation was only established in the 2020s.

When Lu Xiaoqiao thought that this might be a secret left by the previous chairman, she couldn't help but become curious.

She no longer hesitated and immediately selected the decrypt icon.

However, to her surprise, what appeared in front of her was not some earth-shattering secret. Instead, it was a special frozen dormancy protocol.

The reason why it was special was that this agreement did not have a specific dormancy period. It used the start of colonization outside the solar system as the time point for dormancy release.

Also, this person's name was the heroine in the "Scholar" documentary, the person her great-great-grandfather would never forget...

Lu Xiaoqiao looked at the frozen dormancy agreement in her hands, and she thought of Lu Zhou's reason for going to Tau Ceti and felt emotional.

Crossing the barrier of time, even surpassing life and death, in this unfamiliar era, two people who went on different tracks had finally miraculously met again.

However, perhaps this was also in a sense inevitable.

After taking a deep breath, a smile of relief appeared on her face.

"Did he get... lucky?"

Is this the love that people in that era had?

Feels so romantic...

She never had any interest in love, but she became a little envious all of a sudden.

...

Many years later, when thinking back on his life, Leonard could not help but think of that person's name.

The fossil that was stuffed into his pocket completely changed the archaeological community's perception of Mars, and when he left, the address he told him revealed to the world the mystery of the Martian civilization...

Leonard gently closed the academic work in his hand. His index finger gently rubbed the textured cowhide cover while his muddy pupils were stained with a hint of nostalgia.

"Fifty years... Time flies."

His finger was on top of the author's name. His dry and chapped lips slightly opened, chanting words that only he could hear.

"Fifty years... Thanks to your help, I finally fulfilled my father's last wish. Professor Vernal's school of thought will survive in this world. Although I have never experienced that magnificent era, there should still be a page in history that belongs to me..."

There was a sound of brisk footsteps outside the study room, followed by the door opening.

A youthful face full of vitality stood in front of him.

"Dad!"

It was his child.

Like his father, Leonard devoted his youth to academia, but in his later years, he created his own descendants through artificial petri dishes.

Sometimes, he felt that although technology couldn't fundamentally solve all the problems of human beings, it could provide them with more choices.

Leonard saw the young man rush into his study room with a look of excitement on his face, so he kindly smiled and spoke in a relaxed tone.

"What's going on? What are you so happy about?"

"I received an offer from Star Sky Technology! I will work at the Tau Ceti colony next month!"

Leonard smiled and nodded. He said softly, "Remember to stay safe. I heard that the active alien creatures there are not as friendly as the animals on Earth."

"We are alien zoologists, this is our area of expertise!"

The young man patted his chest proudly as a meaningful smile appeared on his face.

Leonard showed a gratified smile on his face.

The young man continued in a proud tone, "Are you not disappointed that I didn't inherit your school of thought and continue archeological research?"

"Of course not. My doctrine does not need to be inherited by one specific person. Ever since it was born, it has left an indelible mark on the world." Leonard said softly, "I don't need you to carry something onwards for me. You only need to follow your own interests and choose the life you want... Isn't that the purpose of life?"

"I don't want to hear you talk about philosophy," the young man continued with an impatient expression on his face. "Your child is going to travel far away soon, can't we talk about something pleasant?"

Leonard: "For example?"

"For example, about Tau Ceti!" The young man's face was immediately full of excitement. He looked at his elderly father and continued to say, "I always hear people talk about how you once met Academician Lu?"

A weird smile appeared on Leonard's face. After a while, he spoke.

"I didn't just meet him..."

He was the one that dug out the respectable Academician Lu from the ruins...

"Then tell me about him." The young man sat down on the sofa and said, "Including how he promoted the Human Alliance and the Tau Ceti expedition! Jesus... He had to have been a living legend."

"The Human Alliance and Tau Ceti's expedition?"

A piece of memory floated in Leonard's mind.

After a long time, he sighed with emotion. He then opened his mouth softly and began to speak.

"My dearest son, that's a story from a long, long time ago..."

Chapter 1682: Spin-off 1: Talk Later

That was a story from a long, long time ago...

So long that it was almost forgotten.

Han Mengqi still remembered when Dr. Yan found her and told her that her sister had disappeared. Because of the importance of Star Sky Technology and her father's status, this incident caused a lot of noise in Beijing. She even searched everywhere in the 301 Hospital.

Han Mengqi thought that she probably wouldn't see her sister for a long time, but when she returned home that same day, she saw her in her living room.

"Sis?" Han Mengqi looked at her older sister sitting on the sofa dumbfounded, her eyes widened in disbelief.

She couldn't imagine that the sister, who caused so many people to search all over Beijing for her, was sitting so casually in her own living room.

Chen Yushan noticed the surprise in Han Mengqi's eyes. She seemed to have guessed what she was thinking in her mind, so she lowered her eyebrows and spoke in a slightly apologetic tone.

"Sorry for making you guys worried."

"Why are you..."

Han Mengqi opened her mouth and wanted to ask her why she was here, but after a slight pause, she dismissed the idea in her mind.

She sat down on the opposite sofa. She looked at Chen Yushan and persuaded her in a sincere tone.

"You were missing for so many days, everyone is very worried about you, especially uncle and auntie... how about you—"

"I know..."

Chen Yushan took a deep breath. She took three seconds to cheer herself up again. She looked at her sister with a serious gaze and continued, "I will choose a suitable time to tell them later, but I don't want them to stop me,

so... I hope you can keep this a secret for me, at least until they read my email."

Although this was a selfish request, Han Mengqi went silent for a while after seeing the pleading look in her sister's eyes. She finally nodded gently.

"Okay...

"I promise you.

"Until then, I will keep a secret for you."

After hearing this promise, Chen Yushan's face finally bloomed with a smile.

The atmosphere in the living room relaxed a little. She took out a document from the bag and gently placed it on the coffee table.

Han Mengqi looked at the document on the coffee table. She began to read it curiously, but she couldn't find any useful information from the ambiguous headline.

She began to ask.

"What is this?"

"A document that will be sealed for one hundred years... or two hundred years. It records some necessary tasks and arrangements for the future development of the Freezing Human Rights Protection Foundation." After a pause, Chen Yushan continued, "It will accompany me to the future together."

The moment Han Mengqi heard these words, her eyes widened.

"Wait... you mean—"

"Yeah." Chen Yushan nodded lightly. She looked at her sister and continued in a serious tone, "I plan to go to the future by using the cryosleep device."

"But why?" As if hearing something incredible, Han Mengqi abruptly stood up from the sofa and looked at her sister in disbelief. "Why do you... suddenly decide to go to the future? Even if you go to the future, he is still—"

"He is still dead... Is that what you wanted to say?" A soft smile appeared at the corner of her mouth. Chen Yushan looked at her sister and said softly, "I

know it is impossible for a dead man to come back to life, but some things don't come to an end with death. He once promised me that he would give me a star in the sky and leave a legend that belongs to us there. Even now, I still remember that day clearly..."

Han Mengqi had a vague guess in her mind, and she whispered, "I thought you would be a little more rational..."

"I have always been rational. I made a decision after carefully considering and making the right arrangements. I know that you might think this may be a little weird. After all, the exploration of extraterrestrial planets is still an unrealistic dream in our minds..."

"But there are some things that will never become a reality if no one takes the first step."

After taking a deep breath, Chen Yushan did not look at her sister. Instead, she set her eyes on the potted plant by the window.

She let this feeling quietly flow in the heart for a while before continuing in a soft voice.

"If you think this is me being selfish..."

"Then let me be selfish for once."

Han Mengqi looked at her sister and went silent.

For some reason, she suddenly became a little envious.

But strangely, she didn't know what she was envious of.

Bravery? She wasn't a cowardly person.

Intelligence? After the International Congress of Mathematicians in Jinling, no one would think she was not intelligent enough.

Beauty? There was not much difference in their DNA...

But she always felt that she seemed to be missing something.

"It's getting late, I should go." Seeing that her sister didn't speak, Chen Yushan glanced at the time on her watch and stood up from the sofa. "I came here today mainly to say goodbye to you... Then, goodbye."

"Wait a second."

A feeling of courage suddenly surged into Han Mengqi's heart, and she stopped the person that was walking towards the door.

After hearing her voice, Chen Yushan stopped and turned around. She looked at her sister, not understanding what she wanted to do.

"Are you... planning to persuade me otherwise?"

"No."

Han Mengqi shook her head gently. She stood up from the sofa and looked at her sister firmly.

"You'll be lonely over there."

"I will go with you!"

...

Milky Way.

Captain's room.

Lu Zhou looked at Chen Yushan, who was standing next to the bookshelf and looking around curiously. His face was a little dumbfounded. After listening to the monologue of his little student sitting across the tea table, he sighed softly and whispered, "So... she doesn't remember anything anymore?"

Han Mengqi hesitated for a moment, then gently nodded.

"Yeah..."

Lu Zhou closed his eyes and leaned on the chair. He did not speak for a long time.

The older generation of frozen dormancy equipment had various side effects. It was not until the 2050s that the technology was fully mature... He had heard Wang Peng mention this matter.

It was just that he didn't expect this to happen to her.

And it just had to be memory loss...

According to Chen Yushan, she couldn't seem to remember anything from the 21st century. Only occasionally when dreaming, she would dream of scenes that she had never experienced before, and she seemed to play an important role in those dreams...

There were various medical experts on the Milky Way, but they were powerless in the face of such symptoms.

Seeing that Lu Zhou did not speak for a long time, Han Mengqi couldn't help but feel a little nervous. After some hesitation, she finally couldn't help but ask, "What are you... planning to do?"

Lu Zhou was silent for a while, then finally spoke with a sigh.

"She just can't remember anything now, this isn't a big deal."

Han Mengqi frowned, slightly dissatisfied.

"Not a big deal..."

"Yeah."

Lu Zhou nodded gently.

"Because I still remember."

The perseverance and depth in those eyes were the same as before, as if they hadn't changed over the last hundred years. Han Mengqi looked away and looked outside the porthole.

She was afraid that she would get lost in Lu Zhou's eyes...

Lu Zhou stared outside the porthole and gently rubbed the ring box in his hand with his index finger. After pondering for a long time, he spoke in a casual tone.

“She did a lot for me... and sacrificed a lot.

“This time, I’ll be the one chasing after her...”

The starry sky outside the window had stopped moving.

Han Mengqi cast her gaze out of the window with her eyes wide open.

She saw a fiery red star.

Under the dazzling yet soft light, the meteorite clusters and planets surrounding it were like shining gems, exuding breathtaking charm and mystery.

Suddenly, she remembered the ancient legend.

No...

Technically, the legend was not ancient.

Because it had just begun...