STAR ODYSSEY

Chapter 19: Timestop

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Lu Yin was caught off guard, "You guys weren't the ones that started Earth's evolution?"

Jeraldine shook her head, "No, the planet where we were originally supposed to train on is actually quite far away."

This was shocking information. If Earth's evolution hadn't been triggered by the Great Yu Empire but somehow initiated locally, could it have been that corpse?

"Who is this escaped criminal?" he asked

Jeraldine coughed a few times, "I don't actually know. Their identity is classified, so no one knows what they look like or even what their name is."

"Then how are you supposed to find them?"

"This is a planetary trial, of course, it wouldn't be that simple."

"But even if you manage to track the criminal down, are students enough to capture him?"

"Probably. They come from the Innerverse, but they've sustained heavy injuries so there's no way for them to be stronger than a Melder. On top of that, all their equipment is destroyed so they have nothing to rely on."

Lu Yin released Jeraldine after ten more minutes of conversation, having someone take her to a place where she could bathe and get treatment. She took an entire day to take care of herself, only meeting him the next afternoon. While she had been in pain for the entirety of the past few weeks, a special healing potion that she'd brought on the trip ensured that the shoulder injury

was all that remained. At their next meeting, Lu Yin led Jeraldine to an empty field outside Nanjing, "So you've recovered completely outside of your shoulder? Do you want to try and beat me to avenge the humiliation?"

Jeraldine glared at Lu Yin; her limbs were still bound with metal chains. However, he only laughed, "Stop pretending. With your strength, these things can't restrain you."

Clang! Jeraldine immediately broke free of the chains, but this caused pain to shoot up her right arm. She paled instantly, "I told you I'd help you."

"Would you still be afraid if I got rid of this?" Lu Yin removed Terence's gun from his belt and threw it on the ground. Jeraldine stared in shock at the weapon; this gun that could injure even Sentinels was the primary reason she had been afraid of him. How could he toss it aside so easily?

"Come on, see if you can beat me. Victory means control of Nanjing and vengeance, wouldn't that be perfect?" he taunted her.

Jeraldine 's eyes gleamed and she tossed her hair behind, rushing towards Lu Yin with full force. Even if she wasn't sure of defeating him, she knew that she could at least hold her own in combat. After all, he was only a new Sentinel himself. Sparks flew from the ground whenever her feet made contact, flames condensing around her left hand as she swept it forward.

Using Roving Step, Lu Yin dodged the Flame Palm with ease before tossing out some crystals, "Not enough fire, try again."

Jeraldine was surprised but didn't hesitate. Since she had already started, she would use everything she could to win. The fire crystals broke apart to release towering flames that she condensed with a twist of her hand, gathering it all into a single attack. Lu Yin merely took a step back and raised his own hand, stars appearing on his palm.

BANG! The impact shattered the ground, launching flames high into the sky where they exploded like fireworks. Jeraldine was blown away by the shockwaves, spitting out a mouthful of blood in the air and coughing up another when she crashed into the ground. On the other hand, Lu Yin remained in place with an indifferent expression. His Cosmic Palm had killed Terence when he was just a Seeker, and now he was a Sentinel. The only reason Jeraldine wasn't dead was mercy.

"How?" Unable to even get up from the ground, the girl just wheezed in shock. Although she was aware that Lu Yin had a powerful battle technique, it had only beaten her before because she was incapable of using her full strength. This time, her Flame Palm hadn't even pushed him back!

Soldiers from the camp rushed over after hearing the noise, but they were held back by Lu Yin. He walked over to Jeraldine, "Are you going to keep resisting?"

"What battle technique was that?" she asked, blood dripping from the corner of her mouth. Her once-beautiful face was now pallid.

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Lu Yin smirked, "Shockwave Palm, 3x."

"What do you mean? There's no way that was Shockwave Palm," she protested weakly.

Lu Yin smiled while retrieving the energy gun, "Haven't you heard the legends? A powerhouse once stacked a hundred Shockwave Palms to shatter the stars. Three are more than enough to defeat you."

Jeraldine was still incredulous; she couldn't accept that a person who she had been able to easily crush was now able to beat her so easily.

"Go and heal your injuries. From now on you are my bodyguard," Lu Yin smiled, leaving as she spat out another mouthful of blood. She finally realized

why this jerk had allowed her to challenge him; he had only wanted to subdue her completely.

Lu Yin struggled to contain his excitement as he returned to his quarters. While his combat level was only 1,500, his Cosmic Palm was now something that even a peak Terence wouldn't be able to handle. He could finally be confident in defending himself. Asking Xu San to guard him while he trained, he headed to a sealed arena within Nanjing and took out a star crystal and crushed it. This time he didn't absorb it, instead summoning his die once more. He had noticed its dullness after the previous use, and while it had been regaining its luster on its own, he believed that star energy would be able to empower it as well. That expectation was met, and the die rapidly absorbed the crystal's energy until the room was empty once more.

Lu Yin continued to take out star crystals, watching as the die slowly recovered its glow. It was only when he had a single crystal left that it completely returned to its former glow, shrouded in starlight as before. He cleaned the nervous sweat from his brow; this thing just ate up too much star energy. After calculating, he realized that adding up the star crystals he had taken from Terence and Jeraldine and the energy the die had passively recovered over the past few days, the die had absorbed nearly half a cube of star crystals. If he also added up the energy it had absorbed from the burst of energy released when he had become a Sentinel, the die had probably needed an entire cube of star crystals to recover! Even a wealthy student like Terence couldn't possibly bring that much of such a valuable resource.

This incident gave Lu Yin a premonition that he was destined for destitution in the future. He needed to find a way to earn large sums of money, or he wouldn't even be able to use his innate gift that he would never be able to abandon. The first use of it had brought him an unbelievable skill like the Cosmic Art with no repercussions to speak of; no matter whether it took one

cube of star crystals or a hundred, he would keep using it. In the worst-case scenario, he would just rob people.

He swallowed in anticipation as he watched the die float before him, rubbing his hands before tapping it gently. His breathing grew hurried as it started to spin, "Come on, give me something good..."

Five of the die's faces slowly faded, leaving only the one with four pips visible. The space around him changed before he could think about it, the arena and even all of Nanjing disappearing. All he could see was an endless space of gray and white, with no beginning nor end. Above him was limitless darkness, and the ground below was made of some tough material he didn't recognize. The only other thing was what seemed like a countdown behind him. 259200, 259199, 259198...

The words Timestop Domain floated into his mind, leaving him stunned. Was it actually possible to pause time? That was something he'd only heard of in legends! He soon knew that the countdown he was seeing was seconds, depicting the time he would be allowed to stay here. 259200 seconds, or exactly three days for a roll of four. The outside world wouldn't change at all until this timer ended.

Lu Yin released a big breath as he stared at the numbers slowly counting down. Wasn't his innate gift just too terrifying? He cleared his mind and shook his head, raising his hand to look at the die, but saw that it was dull once more. He now understood why so much star energy was needed; it was used to gain access to this space.

A small test with his final star crystal left him speechless. The number went up as he threw the crystal over, but only by five seconds. Wasn't that way too small?