

Chapter 231: Warfront

After hearing Lu Yin's comment about his lack of star essence, Mandy chuckled before saying, "This is a gift from us. We'd like to thank you for taking care of our family."

"Are you talking about Lulu?" Lu Yin asked.

Mandy smiled and nodded. "The Mavis family has always had very few members, and we are well aware that you have been looking after Ms. Lulu all this time. The amount of star crystals that you withdraw today will be rounded up as a bonus from the Mavis family. That's the most I can do."

"What do you mean?" Lu Yin was confused.

Mandy smiled. "The conversion rate between star essence and star crystals is one to one hundred thousand. Regardless of how many star crystals you withdraw from this branch, we will round that up to the nearest multiple of ten and give you the equivalent in star essence."

Lu Yin's heart jumped. "I have 710,000 star crystals."

"Then we can give you ten star essences. You can also keep ten thousand star crystals for some pocket change," Mandy said with a smile.

Lu Yin was rendered speechless. He felt like he had judged this woman too quickly. From what she had just said, this woman was going to give him ten star essences even if he only had a single star crystal. She was basically giving him free money. These people were way too rich! And this woman was only the manager of this branch!

"Your gift is too much for me, Manager Mandy. Besides, Lulu doesn't need my protection anymore. She's far more powerful than I am. When she was just a Melder, she was already able to tame Explorer level beasts," Lu Yin gently declined.

"This is a show of goodwill from the Mavis Family. Please do not reject it," Mandy said with a smile. As she spoke, a staff member briefly took the purple card away before quickly returning. "This is yours now, Mr. Lu."

Lu Yin accepted it and took in a deep breath. Ten star essences: that was the same as a million star crystals! He had suddenly gained 300,000 star crystals out of nowhere, and this was something that just a mere manager could hand out as a gift! The Mavis Bank was really incredibly wealthy. He even had the urge to start chasing after Lulu with the intention of becoming a son-in-law of this family.

Mandy left after that, as she had only introduced herself to give him the money. Meanwhile, Lu Yin withdrew the ten star essence and placed them inside of his cosmic ring. He also withdrew the ten thousand star crystals for pocket change. Although he still had quite a few Mavis Bank cards on him, he didn't have any actual money on him.

Star essence and star crystals had an exchange rate that could go as high as one to one hundred thousand. It wasn't just a matter of quality; more importantly, it was much quicker to absorb star essence than star crystals. Many disciples from large organizations would directly absorb star essence, which greatly lessened any chances they had of encountering obstacles on their path to becoming an

Explorer. In addition, getting used to structural forms of energy star essence was very important in the Innerverse. This was because the Astral River was made of pure energy. If one cultivated in the Innerverse, it was impossible to guarantee that they would never fall into the Astral River. No matter if it was a main current or a side tributary, becoming accustomed to high energy structures meant a better chance of surviving in the Astral River. This made the value of star essence especially high, even higher than its direct equivalent of star energy.

Lu Yin had always wanted to get his hands on some star essence before he arrived in the Innerverse, but his funds had been too limited, and he had never found a good way to increase them. To his surprise, the Mavis Bank had suddenly given him exactly what he needed. He'd definitely remember this favor.

He looked back and took a last look at this Mavis Bank. Lu Yin had to tip his hat to the way these people treated money. By using universal currency as trash, they flaunted their wealth while also reducing the risks that they faced. They would sometimes show goodwill to cultivators like him with powerful innate gifts, treating it as an investment. They didn't lose much money while doing so, and if they ended up benefiting a future powerhouse, then they would reap a huge return. They invested a small amount of money to buy a favor that would be difficult to return. The Mavis Bank had survived for this long in the universe by relying on not only money, but also the manner in which they conducted business.

Just as he left the bank and was about to leave, Lu Yin's gadget received a call. Lu Yin took a look and saw that it was from an unknown contact. He seemed to remember something and quickly accepted. "Hello."

"Little Seven."

"You're finally contacting me, Uncle Reuben!" Lu Yin was delighted.

"I'm glad you're fine, Little Seven."

"I'm fine, but what happened at the pirate port? Why was Da Chong there? What happened to him?" Lu Yin shot out a barrage of questions.

"Do you remember when we escaped from the Innerverse to the Outerverse? We were also pursued in the Outerverse."

Lu Yin narrowed his eyes and he said in a chilly tone, "You mean... the Leo family?"

"Yes, it was the Leo family that tried to kill us. However, we weren't certain before that, which was why we sent Da Chong to investigate the pirate port. Unfortunately, he was discovered. The Leo family didn't want that incident to be exposed, and so, they destroyed the place themselves before going into hiding. That was what happened at the pirate port."

Lu Yin frowned. "It was no secret that the Leo family ruled the pirate port. Would revealing that matter really affect them in any real way? They're probably trying to protect someone else."

"That's true, or it could even be that someone ordered them to do it. However, we don't have any clues for now. The Leo family's gone. Do you know who did it?"

The old man on Driftcharge Planet appeared in Lu Yin's mind, and he quietly replied, "I don't know his name, but an old man managed to drag down all the Explorers and other powerhouses in the Leo Family to the planet, where he died alongside them. I was the one who destroyed their spacecraft."

"I see. I'm glad that you managed to survive! Da Chong was very upset that he didn't save you back then."

"I'm glad that he's fine," Lu Yin replied with a smile.

"Are you going to the warfront?"

Lu Yin nodded. "Yes, I'll be there soon."

The line fell silent for a moment before Uncle Reuben said, "Do your best to survive. Don't think that having five-lined battle force will ensure your survival. Cruisers and Hunters die all the time at the warfront. Your defenses aren't nearly strong enough to protect you from the attack of a powerful beast."

"I know, Uncle."

"Also, try your best to get some Honor Points if you can."

"Honor Points? Those are useless to me, I'm a Lockbreaker."

"I know that you're a one star, Discerning Junior Lockbreaker, but while that title can save your life, honor is power. I can't explain too much right now but try to get as many Honor Points as you can. But, as always, don't overdo it. If the opportunity arises, don't hesitate to take the points." Uncle Reuben sounded solemn.

Lu Yin nodded. "Got it."

Uncle Reuben then hung up without saying another word.

Lu Yin put his gadget down. Many of the questions that he'd been pondering over had finally been answered. However, this call had dredged up some bad memories as well. He shook his head and left, following the Explorer realm soldier back to the space station.

It had taken the warship just fifteen days to travel from the Frostwave Weave's Astral-10 to the warfront of the Inverse's Erudite Flowzone. The speed at which they had crossed this vast distance with the expedited military route was astonishing. It also made it obvious how vitally important the Human Domain treated the ongoing battle at the warfront for them to have created this expedited route for the soldiers.

After crossing the Erudite Flowzone's Tributary Astral River, Lu Yin saw a spectacular sight from the warship. There was a whole line of planets right beside the Tributary Astral River. This was the Human Domain border, and with so many warships in the area, it was enough to send a chill running down anyone's back.

A single warship had enough power to kill an Explorer, and there were so many of them here.

The entire region's space had been sealed off, and there were defensive formations everywhere, all centered around the planets. At times, startling beast howls could be heard off in the distance, resounding throughout outer space.

"The commander of our Erudite Flowzone Allied Troops is Shui Chuanxiao. The strongest astral beast that's fighting against us is called Emperor Blazewhiz." The pilot had walked up to Lu Yin's side at some point and started speaking.

"Emperor Blazewhiz?" Lu Yin was confused.

"It's an ultra astral beast that controls three different flames: black, white, and red. It's also one of the seven strongest beings in the Beast Domain's Desolate Beast Alliance. It has a terrifying power level that's over 200,000," the pilot explained.

Lu Yin was surprised. A power level over 200,000? That meant that it was much more powerful than a Hunter. In the human region, reaching that level meant being an Enlighter, every one of which was considered all-powerful. It was a surprise to hear that such a terrifying being was on the other side of the battlefield.

"Did you just say the Desolate Beast Alliance?" Silver asked curiously as he walked up.

The pilot glanced at him and said, "The Desolate Beast Alliance is an organization made up of the seven strongest astral beasts. It's meant to deal with us humans and is the Beast's version of the Blaze Realm and Sword Sect. Don't underestimate them; their intelligence isn't any worse than ours. In order to invade the Human Domain, they've been constantly probing us for weaknesses. They even habitually use star energy to forcibly alter the structure of their bodies to gain a human form. Sometimes, they even imitate humans and set up their own academies to discuss ways to fight humans. They are always evolving."

It was not difficult to use star energy to forcibly alter one's body structure, but the pain that one had to endure to do so was intense. If these beasts were actually willing to endure such agony, then the threat that the Human Domain was facing was even worse than what the two students had imagined.

With a loud boom, the warship landed on the barren ground. A huge field had been marked out, and the edges of the field rippled, showing that the space had been sealed off. Not too far away, there was a metallic base with glinting light reflecting off of it.

"We're here. This is one of Planet Conan's bases. The boss ordered me to send you two here," the pilot told Lu Yin and Silver.

Lu Yin was filled with gratitude. "Thank you so much for all your help, sir."

The pilot smiled and patted Lu Yin on the shoulder. "Remember, you need to be careful if you want to survive here."

Lu Yin grunted in acknowledgement and slowly exited the warship.

Not long after, it rose and flew away.

Lu Yin looked at his surroundings, but there was only brown earth everywhere and a violent gale blowing through it. There was no greenery to be seen anywhere, and the ground under their feet was incredibly desiccated. As the wind whipped up around them, a layer of fine sand blew away and revealed the dark red soil hidden underneath. It was the color of dry blood. This was the battlefield.

There were quite a few troops patrolling the area. The occasional aircraft came and went from the sky; a bit further away from them, another warship landed. It looked like it had come to deliver some supplies.

Lu Yin and Silver were taken to the bottom of a cliff. There were already people there waiting to receive them, and among them was a veteran who was training new troops.

“Astral-10’s Lu Yin reporting for duty.”

“Astral-10’s Silver reporting for duty.”

Everyone looked at the two of them in awe. They weren’t surprised to see the two students since the Astral Combat Tournament had been broadcast across the universe. Countless people now knew these two.

The veteran nodded. The only expression on his aged face was one of calm. “My name is Gildor, and I’m one of the centurions at this base. From now on, I’ll be your instructor. I won’t be teaching you how to fight, but rather how to survive on the battlefield.”

“Yes, sir,” Lu Yin answered seriously.

“Yes, sir,” Silver answered as well, though there was still a smile on his face.

Gildor nodded. “Go to the barracks over there and change into the clothes on your bunks. You’ve got one minute. All miscellaneous items should immediately be stored in your cosmic ring.”

Lu Yin and Silver immediately entered the barracks and changed into their uniforms.

Gildor looked towards the barracks with a surprised expression. He had assumed that these two would be problematic since they were talented geniuses from the Astral Combat Academy, but that didn’t seem to be the case.

When new soldiers first arrived at the barracks, Gildor did not teach any battle techniques, just as he’d said before. All he did was ask them to stand up, instruct them on various methods to adapt to various scenarios at the battlefield, and introduce them to different kinds of astral beasts.

Chapter 232: Attack

This new group of troops were all volunteers. Some had come from large organizations or were disciples of large families who had been sent here for training. There were also others like Lu Yin who had come from academies and had considerable individual power. The only thing that these rookies lacked was experience on the battlefield.

“Have any of you seen blood before?” Gildor suddenly asked.

From among the new troops, a male voice loudly responded, “Sir, I am Trifa from the Beast Tamers Flowzone. I’ve killed beasts before.”

“Sir, I am Keyao from the Beast Tamers Flowzone. I’ve killed beasts before.”

“Sir...”

...

Many of the cultivators present had grown up in very cruel environments. Gildor’s question was pointless, since everyone present had seen blood.

“Have any of you killed before?” Gildor asked once again. This time, he sounded more serious than before.

The crowd fell silent. Trifa was the first to speak up again. “Sir, I’ve killed two before.”

“Sir, I’ve killed pirates before. I killed about ten or so of them.”

“Sir, I’ve killed criminals before.”

Quite a few looked at Lu Yin, waiting for him to speak.

Lu Yin said, “Sir, I came from a planet’s evolutionary trial.”

A large number of people were shocked, including Gildor. A planet’s evolutionary trial was a very cruel climate. The fact that Lu Yin had come from one meant that he had been a native, and for a native to reach Lu Yin’s current status was astounding.

Gildor gave Lu Yin a meaningful look and then told the rest, “The reason why I’m asking you these questions is because I want to know if you’ll be able to do what’s needed if you’re thrown into a situation where you have to kill your comrades.”

“Sir, why would we have to kill our comrades?” someone asked. His name was Feng Tao, and he was from the Tempest Flowzone. It was a small flowzone, but there were perennial powerful winds, causing the weather to always be terrible.

Gildor answered, “Because you’ll often be met with two choices; one is to kill your comrade and the other is to let them be eaten by astral beasts. Tell me, what would you choose?”

Everyone went silent.

Lu Yin narrowed his eyes. This was the warfront with the Astral Beast Domain. Since they were fighting against astral beasts, being eaten after losing was a commonplace occurrence.

“Sir, I’m sure that they’d all be very happy to choose death,” Silver answered with a grin, causing many to feel a chill when they heard his words.

At this moment, everyone was forcefully reminded of the fact that it wasn’t just the final four of the Astral Combat Tournament who had come to the warfront—there was also the demonic killer. During the Three Academies Guarding the Gate stage of the tournament, Silver had killed as many students as the other two guards combined. The domain that Silver had comprehended was specifically aimed towards killing and was very terrifying, although many of the rookies weren’t quite sure what a domain actually was.

The first day of training passed without any issues. Once they were finished for the day, Lu Yin wandered around the base. The defenses here were very solid, but the troops still patrolled and inspected every single corner of the base, especially the areas that were dark. No place was safe; that was what the pilot had told him.

“Aren’t you Lu Yin of the Astral Combat Academy Tournament’s final four? Let’s have a duel!” The man named Trifa appeared in front of him, eyeing Lu Yin in a combative manner. There was an entire group behind him that was mainly composed of the newly arrived troops whom Lu Yin had been training with earlier. Many of them were now looking at Lu Yin with curious expressions.

“Why?” Lu Yin asked.

Trifa clenched both of his fists. “I heard that the Astral Combat Academy is the best in the universe. I want to see how strong you students really are.”

Lu Yin found his reason hilarious. “Didn’t you watch the tournament?”

“What can I see through a screen? There were a few students who won by just standing there without even moving. What a joke! That tournament felt more like a fake show put on by the Astral Combat Academy,” Trifa arrogantly replied as he looked up. Quite a few people nodded, clearly agreeing with his words.

Lu Yin was caught speechless; these people didn’t even know what a domain was! This meant they probably didn’t understand battle force either, but that made sense. These cultivators from the Beast Tamers Flowzone mostly focused on taming beasts. There were very few like Kuang Wang who could cultivate three-lined battle force. Besides, Kuang Wang was from the Divine Grade Hall, while this guy probably couldn’t even enter the First Grade Hall.

“Not interested.” Lu Yin then turned to leave.

Trifa frowned unhappily. “How dare you look down on me! In that case, I’ll show you my strength!” He rolled up his sleeve, causing the strange fish tattoo on his arm to splash to life as it soared into the sky. The aquatic beast then opened its mouth at Lu Yin in a threatening manner.

Lu Yin tilted his head to one side and dodged without any difficulty. Just as he was about to counterattack, a miserable cry on the upper side drew everyone’s attention. They all looked over, only to see a soldier’s body crumbling away. In the blink of an eye, he had been reduced to a mess of flesh and blood.

An alarm pierced through the base as a huge crack appeared in the sky. Numerous single-footed sparrows flew out, bringing a large amount of rain with them.

Trifa’s pupils shrank. “Crap, the beasts are attacking! It’s the single-footed sparrows that have the ability to summon acid rain.”

While the fresh troops were still processing what was happening, numerous beams of light crisscrossed in the sky. All of the weapons on the base had been activated, and they mowed down countless single-footed sparrows in an instant.

However, the spatial crack was still open, and a vast number of single-footed sparrows were flying through with each passing second. All of a sudden, a strange, reptilian creature wrapped in metal crawled out of the spatial crack and struck the void with tremendous force. Forceful ripples spread through the void until it finally crumbled apart.

An enraged roar came out from deep within the base. "It's Void Wanderers! Attack and kill them first!"

Void Wanderers were a unique kind of astral beast. They didn't have very high attacking power, but in exchange, they had the ability to easily tear space apart. This meant that they were involved in every surprise attack of the astral beasts. Most of the time, the astral beasts would initiate their attacks by having Void Wanderers pave the way. However, if the Void Wanderers were killed, then their spatial cracks would automatically close.

There was more than one Void Wanderer attacking the base this time, and spatial cracks had been torn open everywhere. Besides the single-footed sparrows spraying acid rain everywhere, numerous other strange-looking beasts also charged out. They consisted of not only astral beasts, but also other beasts that were being controlled by the astral beasts. Those beasts were the other sides' cannon fodder.

Trifa and the others no longer had the will to challenge Lu Yin as enemies were running rampant throughout the base now.

Lu Yin never expected that there would be an attack on the base during his very first day on Planet Conan. It was quite a unique feeling. He lifted his palm and struck out into the void with the ninetieth form of the Skybeast Claw, wrapping his hand in battle force as he did so. The claw hurtled through the air and jolted a Void Wanderer so badly that it died.

Trifa nearly died from shock when he saw this. Lu Yin was just a Melder, but he was already able to tear through the void. Someone like that was not a person that Trifa could fight against. What he had seen on the screen was completely different from real life. He had thought that the Astral Combat Tournament was fake; how could so many young people possibly be able to tear the void?! That was ridiculous! It was only at this point that he finally realized that everything that he had seen during the tournament was real. Being able to crush the void was as simple as playing with a toy for Lu Yin.

Not too far away, at the same time that Trifa was staring at Lu Yin in shock, silver rays of light flashed through the void, cutting down the Void Wanderers one after another as they were all cleaved in twain.

Everyone was shocked to see that it was Silver who had acted so decisively. Slicing through the void was a trivial task for him too.

Gildor's shock was just as apparent as the new recruits'. His boss had allocated some pretty amazing people to his group.

There were a handful of soldiers in the base who were Limiteers, but not many could slice through the void. However, not that many Void Wanderers had accompanied this surprise attack, and with Silver's rapid slices, nearly half of them were eliminated in no time at all.

At the beginning, the beasts weren't able to react to Silver's lightning quick offense, but after they discovered Silver, they immediately focused all their efforts into killing him. Numerous beasts appeared

from the void to target Silver. They were all giant beasts with powerful defensive abilities, and even with Silver's offensive strength, it would be difficult for him to break through their defenses.

Lu Yin grabbed a nearby Void Wanderer and smashed it to the ground. With a swing of his hand, he used a Nine Stacks, Ninefold Shockwave Palm and caused the void to tremble for a hundred meters. Numerous Void Wanderers were sent flying, only to be destroyed by the light beams.

A strange howl was heard from the void as a huge beast that looked similar to a mantis charged out from underground while brandishing nine blades. It slashed the void apart and destroyed quite a few of the base's weapons.

Trifa and a few others were only a short distance away from the newly emerged beast. It gave them a look of obvious contempt before immediately attacking.

Gildor bellowed in rage and brandished his sword to block the beast's slash. With a resounding clang, the ground collapsed and shockwaves erupted forth, causing Trifa and the rest to be blasted away. All of them coughed up blood while Gildor had been smashed into the ground, looking incredibly pale. Although Gildor was a peak Melder, he was just an ordinary cultivator. Against beasts that were at the equivalent of the Limiteer realm, it was difficult for him to block their attacks. This was especially true when the beasts were intelligent, like this mantis-looking one.

After seeing that Gildor managed to survive its attack, the beast lifted three of its blades and slashed downwards again. This attack also cracked open the void. This beast had a strength that was comparable to an Astral Combat Academy's Area Master.

Gildor watched on in despair as the blades fell. There was nothing more that he could do.

Right at this moment, Lu Yin used Flash to appear in front of Gildor. He grabbed one of the blades and broke it with a clang as he simultaneously swung out horizontally with his other fist, breaking the other blades as well. Then, he exerted some strength through his hands, crushing another blade before throwing the shattered shards at the beast.

It retreated incredibly quickly and looked at Lu Yin with fear as star energy whirled around its body. The four blades that had been destroyed grew out from its body once more. Those blades were not external weapons like what humans used, but were rather formed from its own body. "You're strong, human." The beast's mouth did not move, but it nonetheless managed to speak by creating vibrations in the air with star energy.

Lu Yin's eyes narrowed, but just as he was about to reply, Gildor quietly spoke up from behind. "It's trying to stall for more time so that more beasts can exit from the void."

Lu Yin's eyes grew cold. He had actually forgotten that he was on a battlefield. With this in mind, four-lined battle force covered his body before he instantly appeared in front of the beast and slammed a Nine Stacks, Fifteenfold Shockwave Palm into it.

The beast released a startling cry and lifted its nine blades to slash at Lu Yin. At the same time, the void cracked open once more as numerous beasts as strong as Limiteers emerged and began to attack Lu Yin.

Boom!

The ground trembled as a huge crack separated the base into two halves. The void trembled violently as terrifying shockwaves pulsed out. Lu Yin's attack had torn numerous beasts to shreds and even caused the void itself to tremble, resulting in the deaths of countless Void Wanderers.

This base did not have any Explorers or strong cultivators. Lu Yin was the strongest person there, and he was sure of it. Just one attack from him had caused everyone's scalps to go numb. At that moment, he had become the sole focus of the entire battlefield.

Trifa and the others were frozen from shock and couldn't even make a sound. That attack had been so frightening that if they hadn't seen it themselves, they would have thought that it had come from an Explorer .

The beasts had infiltrated everywhere within the base. Firearms exploded everywhere as all the soldiers rushed into battle. The entire area degenerated into a chaotic whirlwind of blood and metal.

Even though Lu Yin was powerful and he did everything he could to kill the Void Wanderers, it wasn't enough to change the battlefield's state. He couldn't handle all the beasts in an area by himself. However, the other combatants in the base were at most comparable to an Astral Combat Academy's Area Master.

The beasts and soldiers intermixed indistinguishably on the battlefield. At this point, even if Lu Yin had powerful battle techniques that could strafe an area, he couldn't use it without fear of killing fellow soldiers.

At this moment, a warship arrived above the base and aimed its cannons at one of the few areas that had no human soldiers. Soldiers jumped out of the warship to provide aid.

Soon, other warships also appeared.

All of a sudden, a gigantic spatial crack appeared in the sky. An enormous metallic hoof emerged from it and brutally kicked a warship, causing it to explode violently.

Chapter 233: Cosmic Palm's Power

"Zi Tie, how dare you!" someone bellowed as the void was torn apart. A man then charged into the void that the giant hoof had emerged from. A shocking fluctuation rippled out soon after; this was a battle between space-exploring powerhouses.

Densely packed black dots fell down from the sky. Each one was a soldier, and some were even people who Lu Yin knew.

The idea had been for the four strongest students as determined by the Astral Combat Tournament to lead the top thirty two students in battle at the borders of the Human Domain. Lu Yin was one of the four top students, and Silver was not the only student under his command. Most of the other top thirty two students had not arrived yet. So far, only three had arrived: Chao Zhi, Liu Yin, and an Area Master named Tasha.

Everyone who had reached the top thirty two, especially Chao Zhi and Liu Yin, was as strong as a typical academy leader. Their participation in this small battlefield had caused the astral beasts' forces to suffer great losses this time around.

Chao Zhi's four-lined battle force and Liu Yin's Soundless Field were both amazing tools of slaughter. From the very start, they continuously killed beasts without pause. Tasha was not weak either. Having the title of Area Master meant that she was strong enough to rank in the top five of her own academy, and she easily wiped out a batch of Limiteer astral beasts.

When the reinforcements arrived, the Void Wanderers were quickly massacred by Lu Yin and the rest. Although the enemy's numbers had been reduced, a quaking aftershock soon followed afterwards, sweeping out and crushing the subdivision base. An incomparably large astral beast emerged from the void, but it quickly left after tearing the void open again. This was a sign that the battle had finally concluded.

The remaining beasts could not escape without the Void Wanderers and thus were left with no choice but to fight to their deaths. By the time the last beast fell, the ground had been stained a dark red by all the spilled blood. It was unknown whether the blood was from humans or beasts, although that felt strangely insignificant within this meat grinder of a battlefield.

This was not Lu Yin's first contact with a battlefield. Earth's evolutionary trial had also been a bloody battlefield, but this was his first time participating in the Human Domain's border wars. Just the aftershocks of the movements by the astral beasts that had reached the Explorer realm or above were enough to crush more than a hundred soldiers to death. This was the warfront; here, luck was equally as important as power.

The surviving soldiers calmly started to clean up. There was no hint of terror, unease, or even grief in their actions. It was as if they had all accepted that they would one day be the spilled blood that merged into this land.

But for Trifa and the rest, this was the first time they had ever encountered such a gory battle, and they had almost died on top of it all. It wasn't just them; even veteran soldiers like Gildor had almost died.

Lu Yin and the few other students from the Astral Combat Academy had the most outstanding performances today. Without them, the battle would not have ended that quickly as the number of powerhouses who could kill Void Wanderers at this base was too few. Furthermore, those few powerhouses had been targeted by the beasts. It had been an organized sneak attack, and Lu Yin and the others could be considered to be unexpected reinforcements.

Gildor allowed Lu Yin and the rest to return to the barracks to recuperate while the rest of the soldiers cleaned up the battlefield. However, Lu Yin and the others didn't take advantage of this opportunity to rest and instead joined in to help the others clean up. At the warfront, they were all mere footsoldiers.

Countless mangled corpses had to be cremated, regardless of if it was human or beast. The battlefield even contained the wreckages of some high technological weapons.

"Please, please, kill me, kill me..." a feeble voice pleaded, causing Lu Yin to look over with the others. There was a young soldier who only had half of his body remaining begging in agony. Those around the young man were at a loss and only looked at him blankly.

Gildor walked forward and killed the soldier with a single strike. He looked at the onlookers and gruffly said, "Remember, this is a battlefield. There was no chances of him surviving. To him, death was the best release."

The battlefield grew even quieter and everyone silently continued going about their own matters.

Suddenly, a brilliant light flashed past the group as Silver's butterfly knife flew right in front of a new soldier named Maggie, splattering blood all over a nearby metal wall. In front of the wall, the head of an astral beast fell down, truly dead this time.

"Tha- thank you." Maggie's face was deathly white.

Silver grinned. "No problem."

Right next to him, Feng Tao stared at Silver in shock. So this was the power of a top student from the Astral Combat Academy. He had seen that beast at the same instant and wanted to save Maggie, but Silver had already taken care of it by the time he could even think to act. If he battled with Silver, then his outcome would almost definitely be the same as that astral beast's; he would be instantly killed out before he could even make a move. The Astral Combat Academy had produced many freaks.

Half a day later, a new layer of sand covered the dark red ground. The fresh bloodstains had been buried underneath, restoring the battlefield to the same state that Lu Yin saw when he had first arrived. This new layer would also turn black with the passage of time. Within the base, many soldiers were busy at work, repairing various structures. They had already become accustomed to this life.

Gildor assembled all of the new recruits and spoke to them briefly before arranging for them to patrol a specific region of the base. Their captain was Lu Yin.

Another half a day passed again when another warship arrived. This one brought someone who shocked the base, and quite possibly even the entire Planet Conan: Liu Shaoqiu, the first-rate genius of the Sword Sect's younger generation, had arrived.

Lu Yin was also astonished by the news as he never expected that Liu Shaoqiu would appear here on Planet Conan.

The most senior commander came out to personally welcome Liu Shaoqiu in. This was a sign of respect to the Sword Sect, as it dominated the first Flowzone and was a peak power of the Inniverse. There was also a portion of the frontier's allied armies that hailed from the Sword Sect, and any of their disciples would receive similar treatment, least of all Liu Shaoqiu.

Although Liu Shaoqiu had received this courtesy during his arrival, there was no other special treatment, and he also started as a normal footsoldier who was assigned under Lu Yin. Liu Shaoqiu himself did not act very arrogantly and calmly looked at Lu Yin after joining the group.

Trifa and the rest no longer dared to challenge Lu Yin anymore. The previous battle had shown them what it meant to be called a freak, and now, their curiosity was turned towards Liu Shaoqiu. The fame of the Thirteen Swords was too overwhelming, and they really wanted to experience it for themselves since they could not understand what had happened in the tournament through the screen.

But Liu Shaoqiu simply did not bother with them. The only thing he did was faithfully carry out his duties as a basic soldier.

Another two Astral Combat Academy students arrived not long after Liu Shaoqiu. It was Xue Liuyun and another Area Master named Lanke.

The four strongest students each led a team composed of eight Astral Combat Academy students, which made for a total of thirty two students.

Lu Yin did not know where Xia Luo and the others had been sent, but his team was definitely not simple. It was already astounding enough that the team had five members with the power of a Realm Master.

The eight Astral Combat Academy students were joined by Trifa and the other new soldiers to form a new team captained by Lu Yin. They were assigned to patrol the base.

The first day went by smoothly.

The second day was similarly uneventful.

On the third day, while the rookies were patrolling outside the base, they ran into a sudden ambush from underground beasts. One of the new soldiers died, and Lu Yin was chastised accordingly by Gildor.

Lu Yin himself found it slightly difficult to tolerate this lecture as he had honestly not noticed the underground beasts. Those beasts had had a strange innate gift that allowed them to perfectly disguise themselves as stones. They had turned completely cold and erased all signs of life. Not a single person in their group had sensed them, which had led to the surprise ambush that resulted in one of the new soldiers dying.

This matter made Lu Yin treat the battlefield even more cautiously.

Liu Shaoqiu and the rest reacted in a similar manner as they similarly became more alert.

Over the span of seven days, Lu Yin and the rest gradually adapted to military life and slowly began to learn who their fellow troop members were.

No one knew how many regional bases were on Planet Conan other than the planet's commander. This was partially to blunt the surprise attacks of the mutant beasts, but more importantly, it was to prevent the beasts from ever taking root on Planet Conan.

Many of the bases had been hidden extremely well, and it was quite common for a batch of newly arrived mutant beasts to be coincidentally spotted by a base. The beasts would then be exterminated by powerful weapons from a distance. There were many such instances; hence, the number and positions of the bases were all kept top secret.

However, Lu Yin's base had already been revealed. Gildor barely showed himself over the last few days, and it was widely assumed that he was researching where they should relocate their base to.

But before their plan could be put into action, they were struck by another large-scale attack. Countless spatial cracks that were densely packed together appeared in the sky as they extended into the horizon.

Soldiers throughout the entire base were dumbfounded, as the scale of this sneak attack was much greater than the last one.

"Attack! Eliminate the Void Wanderers!" a stern roar shouted out as the entire base began to tremble. Then, an incomparably large mutant beast charged out from the void and crushed the base's command

center with a single stomp, killing everyone inside, including Gildor, and reducing them to mere puddles of flesh and blood.

Lu Yin's pupils constricted; the base had fallen!

At the same time that the command center was flattened, countless mutant beasts descended from the sky, heralding the start to one of the cruelest battles Lu Yin had ever participated in.

Liu Shaoqiu was the first to act as he unleashed the Second Sword. The boundless sword qi covered the entire base and swept upwards, tearing through the void. With a single strike, he had killed almost a hundred Void Wanderers, shocking many.

Chao Zhi then used her Wind of Seasons to sweep through the skies, killing another dozen Void Wanderers.

Lu Yin opened his mouth and emitted visible sound waves that coalesced into lines before exploding in midair, haphazardly blasting the sky without rhyme or reason.

Xue Liuyun, Silver, Lanke, Tasha and the rest all acted as well. Their fierce wave of attacks exceeded the rest of the soldiers' wildest dreams, and it even surpassed the mutant beasts' expectations. This time, they thought that they had prepared enough forces to crush this base through overwhelming numbers, but they had been stopped by these Astral Combat Academy students. In fact, more than half of their Void Wanderers had already been wiped out in an instant.

Lu Yin was just about to act when the ground suddenly quivered again. A massive pressure engulfed the base as a giant hoof encased in metal appeared once more. This time, everyone could see the rest of the beast's appearance, which was that of a giant bull, though many times larger than normal. Its burning copper eyes stared downwards as it laughed insolently. "What great luck, I found some human geniuses! Go die!" It then pressed down with its iron hoof.

Many soldiers in the base turned pale, as only a space-exploring powerhouse could possibly block this attack. They were all doomed.

Liu Shaoqiu and the rest readied themselves to attack. They were all Realmbreakers, though they were still likely outmatched.

In the end, it was Lu Yin who leaped into the sky with an icy cold expression. He had long since wanted to directly face an Explorer, as being able to freely explore space was a fundamental transformation of one's power. It wasn't only an increase in power; rather, it actually focused more on conditioning one's physical body. Once a human broke through to the Explorer realm, their body would change on a fundamental level. Everything, from the cells to the blood vessels, blood, heart, and organs, would be altered so that it was better suited to the vacuum of the grand universe. Lu Yin wanted to measure the gap between himself and one who had undergone these fundamental changes through combat.

If a Limiteer could actually break realms to challenge an Explorer, then they were truly an exceptional genius.

In midair, five-lined battle force exploded out to cover Lu Yin's entire body. Purple lines decorated with dark-gold lines circulated vigorously as a dark-gold radiance illuminated the void, the base, and even the astral beast's enormous eyes.

“A human with five-lined battle force?!” The beast was astonished by the sight of Lu Yin’s battle force.

But at that moment, Lu Yin had viciously unleashed his Cosmic Palm against the iron hoof. The void seemed to freeze for an instant. Then, a strong pulse of energy swept through the void and radiated outwards in a circle, ripping the void to shreds as it swept into the distance. Multiple Void Wanderers that were hidden within the void were instantly reduced to bloody pulps. At the center, nine explosions rang out as nine shockwaves caused the void to fluctuate wildly and a dark color to appear.

The nine-star Cosmic Palm was Lu Yin’s strongest battle technique, and even its physical force was close to the limit of what he could exert—the Nine Stacks, Seventeenfold Shockwave Palm. More importantly, the Cosmic Palm did not burden his body, and he could even use the nine stars to absorb star energy and make up for what he had consumed. Just operating the Cosmic Art’s operation was enough to reveal all the changes in the surrounding star energy. This was his most powerful state.

When the ninth star exploded, Lu Yin was blasted backwards, slamming heavily into the ground. The giant astral beast named Zi Tie was similarly forced back. Its attack had actually been blocked.

Chapter 234: Spiritual Academy

Many looked on with stunned expressions. A Melder had actually repelled an Explorer! This was something that only the Ten Arbiters had ever accomplished throughout the course of human history.

At that moment, even Liu Shaoqiu and the other Astral Combat Academy students were astounded. Although Liu Shaoqiu had also heavily injured an Explorer once, that was only with the Third Sword’s special characteristics. On the other hand, Lu Yin had directly clashed against the Explorer level astral beast with his physical body, and one look was enough to see that the beast had a tough body.

Lu Yin picked himself off of the ground and shook his right arm. Blocking that attack had been very painful but also very satisfying. He now had a clearer understanding of his own defensive capabilities, and it turned out that his body could even rival an Explorer’s. This was his current peak power.

All of the student leaders of Astral Combat Academy’s ten branches could challenge an Explorer with their peak Limiteer power, but the opponent mattered as well. None of them could defeat this Zi Tie, and Lu Yin had a feeling that this astral beast’s defenses could even shake off Liu Shaoqiu’s Thirteen Swords, unless it was something as strong as the Third Sword’s attack.

In the sky, Zi Tie was shocked by what had just happened, as it was not any average Explorer realm astral beast. Regardless, a Melder realm human had actually blocked its attack, causing its giant eyes to widen with excitement. “A top-notch human freak! My luck is too good today! Now, stand still and die!” Its entire body then pressed downwards as it tried to forcefully crush everyone who was still in the base.

Lu Yin clenched both fists, ready to attack again. Suddenly, a fluctuation came out from the void. “Zi Tie, so it’s you again.”

Zi Tie did not even turn its head to acknowledge the Explorer realm human who had just arrived and continued trying to crush the base. As long as it could kill Lu Yin and the other geniuses, its death would be worthwhile. He had never heard of a Melder who could defend against an Explorer; this sort of freak absolutely had to die.

Below, in the base, Liu Shaoqiu and the rest finally reacted. Liu Yin, Xue Liuyun, Chao Zhi, and the others all simultaneously attacked upwards, and Liu Shaoqiu's Third Sword was especially effective as it caused Zi Tie to become dizzy and involuntarily slow down. The Explorer realm human also interfered with the astral beast's descent, and the two powerhouses were soon entangled in battle in the sky.

At the same time, above Planet Conan, a giant, flaming astral beast emerged from the void while a human figure also appeared to confront the beast.

"Soaring Firebeast, are you trying to start a war?" the human figure demanded. He was the guardian of the thirty seven planets on the right side of the border: Hunter Qu Ao.

Opposite the human, star energy vibrated from the Tan Gang Fire Beast's body as a gruff voice responded, "Human, pull back to the Astral River. With the river as a boundary, we won't have to violate one another. Otherwise, this war will never end."

Qu Ao frowned. "The allied human troops have existed on this side of the Astral River for many years. If your people have the strength to chase us away, then please feel free to try."

Once he spoke those words, a fiery blaze filled the area above Planet Conan. A battle between Hunters had started.

A Hunter had a power level of at least 100,000. Their every action caused the void to quake, and since the battle between the two powerhouses was taking place so close to Planet Conan, their fight also affected the planet.

Within the base, Lu Yin and the rest soon received new orders to retreat north towards another base that was located 5,000 kilometers away. They did not hesitate and immediately headed out.

Loud explosions rang out in the skies above as a scorching heat wave oppressed Planet Conan and increased the temperature.

Tasha raised her head with a horrified expression. "There's actually an extremely high-leveled battle taking place up there! The combatants are so powerful that it's actually affecting Planet Conan! It should be a fight between Cruisers or even Hunters."

Lu Yin frowned. Just why did it have to be Planet Conan? He was growing uneasy, as it hadn't even been a day since this base had been exposed, but it had already suffered two large-scale surprise attacks. Even Zi Tie had chosen to attack this base out of all the others, and now, why were the extreme powerhouses battling right outside of Planet Conan? There were so many planets in the human's line of defense, but the astral beasts had specifically chosen Planet Conan. There seemed to be an invisible hand manipulating all of these events.

There had initially been over 50,000 soldiers at the base, but only around 30,000 of them had managed to escape together with Lu Yin. The rest were either scattered to the winds or dead.

Although Liu Shaoqiu and the rest of the students had stopped the large-scale attack from destroying the base, a considerable number of mutant beasts still continued to emerge from the void.

In the distance, there were still more Void Wanderers appearing. This did not seem like a surprise attack, but rather more like a decisive battle that had been planned for a while.

Up in the sky, Zi Tie was still battling it out with the Explorer when a fleet of warships appeared off in the distance. Reinforcements had arrived.

Both heaven and earth had turned into a bloody battlefield as powerhouses battled both on and above the planet. Lu Yin and the rest felt like they were trapped within a furnace and that death could take them at any time.

Dozens of spatial cracks appeared to the north of Lu Yin and the rest of the soldiers. They instantly reacted and managed to kill off more than half of the Void Wanderers, but even more spatial rifts opened up in front of them as more astral beasts spilled out to block their path.

A flying bird cloaked in flames exited the void and hungrily stared at Lu Yin and his group. It then ferociously charged towards them with an excited look, as killing these people would be a huge contribution that it could then exchange to receive resources to strengthen itself. The bird was a student of the Astral Beast Domain's Spiritual Academy. As long as it could obtain the resources that it needed to ascend, it would be able to rival the top-tier powerhouses in the academy. It desperately wanted these contributions.

The Spiritual Academy was the Astral Beast Domain's best academy, and it was basically their version of the Astral Combat Academy. The biggest difference between them was that the Spiritual Academy was a single, unified academy, as opposed to the Astral Combat Academy's ten branches.

All of the Spiritual Academy's students were astral beasts with innate gifts, and they all looked down upon Astral Combat Academy students, as the beast thought that their human counterparts were weak compared to them. This was because the Astral Combat Academy's students would either graduate or be forced onto the battlefield while the Spiritual Academy's students frequently entered the battlefield of their own volition. This was what led to an overall sense of superiority.

"Die, Astral Combat Academy students!" The flaming bird caused the air to shake as it emitted a flurry of star energy and screeched excitedly. It then fiercely flew towards Lu Yin, not caring at all if its fellow astral beasts were caught in the crossfire.

Lu Yin didn't even need to act as Liu Shaoqiu instantly replied by slashing out with the First Sword of the Thirteen Swords. This was the same strike that had instantly wiped out Kuang Wang, who was the current student leader of Astral-5 and Realm Master of the Dao of Heaven. In terms of status, Kuang Wang was comparable to the Spiritual Academy's Academy Lords while this flaming bird was just one of the experts under an Academy Master, Hua Yishou. It was much weaker than an Academy Master itself and couldn't even react before being exterminated by the first sword.

It wasn't just the flaming bird; many of the stronger mutant beasts immediately targeted Lu Yin and the others, but they were all easily eliminated.

The battle lasted for three whole hours, and at the end, there was a row of corpses that extended towards the north. Tens of thousands of soldiers had died, and numerous astral beast corpses littered the ground while a thick stench of blood pervaded the air. Even the skies seemed to have reddened a bit from all the bloodshed. All the spilled blood flowed in rivulets into the yellowed ground as it seeped deep underground through the cracks in the earth.

The scattered astral beast army had fled in all directions.

There were endless wails filling the air.

Lu Yin was forced to kill a suffering soldier. The man only had one side of his body remaining, and he had been pleading with Lu Yin to kill him.

Lu Yin had killed quite a few people during Earth's evolutionary trial, but they had all been people who he felt deserved to die. This soldier was the first respectable person that he had killed as an act of mercy.

The Explorer obstructing Zi Tie was Planet Conan's guardian, Nappa. He had been heavily injured during this battle, but fortunately, he had managed to endure his injuries and repel Zi Tie.

After the bloody battle, Lu Yin and the rest of the soldiers took a warship to the base 5,000 kilometers north of where they were previously stationed.

5,000 kilometers was not very far, and they easily reached it with their current speed. This base was the closest to where their destroyed base had been, and it was also where the reinforcements had come from.

Lu Yin and the rest settled into the camp and waited, as the other arrangements had not been made yet. A base being destroyed was no small matter, and all the soldiers had to report everything that they had seen or heard to their superiors.

In Lu Yin's report, he included his suspicions that the surprise attack this time was actually a targeted attack against Astral Combat Academy students, as that flaming bird had said, "Die, Astral Combat Academy students!" How had it known that they were from the Astral Combat Academy? Why had it specially targeted them? It wasn't just the flaming bird either; the other powerful astral beasts had also targeted the students. This was no simple matter, and Lu Yin even wrote down, 'It is likely that there is a traitor within our midst who is divulging information about the human race's happenings.' But then he thought about it twice and crossed it out; he was not qualified to make such conjectures. If someone wanted to cause problems for Lu Yin, then a single contentious word could cause him to be damned.

He breathed out and rubbed his forehead. He had only been at the frontier battlefield for a few days, but he had already been involved in two large-scale surprise attacks that had prevented him from ever catching his breath.

Gildor, the strict veteran instructor, had also died in this surprise attack. Even though they had not spent that much time together, Lu Yin still respected him. It was rare to find a seasoned soldier who had survived at the warfront for that many years, and each one was a treasure trove of experience for the Human Domain. And yet, Gildor had tragically died without even the time to react.

Lu Yin now understood what the pilot on the warship that had delivered him to the warfront had been talking about; countless elite geniuses died at the warfront, and not just from a lack of strength, but sometimes from simply lacking luck.

In this battle, many of the corpses also belonged to new soldiers. Both Ke Yao and Maggie, who had arrived with Trifa, had died. Maggie had not been able to escape from her fate in the end, as Silver had not been able to save her for a second time.

Lu Yin had only learned about their deaths after the battle. Just one conflict had snuffed out so many lives.

On the other side of the battlefield, the flames on the Tan Gang Fire Beast surged. “Why did so many students from the Spiritual Academy die? How will I explain this?!”

“Are those students from the Astral Combat Academy really that strong? Have the Ghost Monkey come out. I really want to know how an Academy Master will fare against those students.”

...

After a short span of just three days, spatial cracks flooded the sky once more as another large-scale battle commenced.

Lu Yin and the rest walked out and stared at the sky in shock. There was definitely something suspicious going on, and they were now certain that this series of attacks was targeting them. Their identities had somehow been revealed. The Astral Combat Academy was a top-notch institution in the Human Domain, and they were the top thirty two fighters in the Astral Combat Tournament. When these students matured in the future, they would overshadow even Explorers like Nappa. These students could already be considered as great enemies to the Astral Beast Domain. Thus, the astral beasts would naturally rather make some sacrifices and vanquish these youths now, especially Lu Yin, who had ended in the top four, comprehended five-lined battle force as a Melder, and was publicly recognized as a Ten Arbiters candidate.

The alarm rang out, and Nappa immediately appeared to wipe out the Void Wanderers, but he was blocked by Zi Tie yet again. This giant astral beast appeared from the void and blocked Nappa while trying to crush this base as well.

From underground, a giant light beam shot up towards Zi Tie, causing it to retreat slightly. Even though this was a weapon designed to be used against Explorers, Zi Tie’s defense was too strong. Nappa couldn’t do much against the astral beast either. The weapon could only push it aside, but that was enough to give Lu Yin and the rest the space to avoid Zi Tie’s sudden attack, leave the base, and attack the void together.

Crack after crack appeared in the void, but even with so many hands working together to destroy the Void Wanderers, there were just too many of them. They numbered no less than the previous surprise attack, but this time, an even larger Void Wanderer had appeared. It tore through the void and released countless astral beasts into the base.

Chapter 235: Ghost Monkey

Lu Yin and the rest of the soldiers had been thrown into a veritable ocean of astral beasts. This base originally had tens of thousands of soldiers, and their numbers had swelled to almost 80,000 after the addition of the soldiers who had escaped from the destroyed base. However, they were hardly worth a mention when compared to the group of astral beasts swarming them, especially when each individual astral beast was stronger than multiple soldiers and had strong defenses. Without weapons to restrain the astral beasts, the troops would have been quickly routed.

One after another, warships rose into the air as their laser cannons strafed the earth. At this point, they could no longer afford to care about collateral damage; they simply targeted the areas with the densest packed astral beasts.

These warships didn't have any weapons that could threaten an Explorer, but even so, they were able to massacre Limiteers effortlessly. The raw power of the weapons and the resulting explosions killed many human soldiers, but they managed to somewhat hold back the tide of astral beasts.

Lu Yin and the rest had also caused considerable damage to the astral beasts, especially Liu Shaoqiu. His sword was like a meat grinder that continuously tore a bloody path through the crowd of astral beasts with each strike, greatly surprising the others.

Suddenly, a few warships exploded in the sky from an invisible attack that destroyed all of the spacecraft.

In the sky, Zi Tie and Nappa were still battling. Aside from the two Explorers, the strongest on this battlefield had been Lu Yin's group, but now, another Explorer had now appeared: an astral beast that had been hiding in the shadows.

The Astral Beast Realm had an academy known as the Spiritual Academy. It ranked its students based on the amount of territory that they controlled. There were five strong astral beasts that dominated the Spiritual Academy, and one of them was a Ghost Monkey.

Lu Yin and the rest did not know that an astral beast that could rival a Realm Master from the Astral Combat Academy had joined the battlefield until Chao Zhi was heavily injured. Her four-lined battle force was nearly shattered by a single strike, and she almost died when the Ghost Monkey finally revealed itself.

"You're worthy of being called a human elite. You actually survived one of my strikes," the Ghost Monkey said in an eerie tone from the shadows.

Chao Zhi had a cold look on her face as a grey flow of air swept out in all directions from her body, corroding everything in its path. Even Xue Liuyun, who was the closest to her, had to avoid it.

The Ghost Monkey was not fast enough to evade the Wind of Seasons, and its hiding spot was revealed. Chao Zhi's gaze turned frosty and four-lined battle force covered her body again as she struck at the Ghost Monkey with a palm.

The Ghost Monkey's true form was revealed; it was a short monkey with a terrifying face and faintly red fangs. As it watched Chao Zhi attack it, it did not retreat. Instead, it swatted out with a claw.

The palm and claw collided, causing the ground to sink and a shockwave to sweep out in all directions, clearing the surroundings for a hundred meters around them. Chao Zhi and the Ghost Monkey were both blown back at the same time. The difference was that Chao Zhi was repelled with fresh blood dripping from her palm while the Ghost Monkey seemed to borrow the strength of the clash to merge back into the shadows. In this confrontation, Chao Zhi had been at a disadvantage.

Lu Yin noted the brief confrontation from a distance and was shocked at the Ghost Monkey's power, but it ended there, as Liu Shaoqiu had turned his focus towards the short monkey.

While the Ghost Monkey hid in the shadows, it closely evaluated the strength of the human students. It believed that, as long as it could sneakily attack from the shadows, it could wipe them out one by one. It had done the same in the Spiritual Academy as, even though it was the weakest of the five Academy Masters, it was also the hardest to track down due to its innate gift.

But then, the Ghost Monkey suddenly felt its body go numb and it stared into the sky. Its expression changed in an instant as sword qi filled the skies. What is this?

The Second Sword of the Thirteen Swords expanded into a domain and completely disregarded speed and stealth as it sliced through the void. Its attack range could extend endlessly as long as Liu Shaoqiu desired it. He could strike out with an attack that covered the entire battlefield.

Although the Ghost Monkey was hiding in the shadows, it was the most afraid of precisely this sort of large scale attack. Generally, the more scattered an attack was, the weaker its power. However, the Thirteen Swords did not follow this general rule. It seemed to cover an endlessly expanding area with a fearsome sword qi that powered every strike with terrifying sharpness. The Ghost Monkey escaped at extreme speed, but it could not completely avoid the endless sword qi.

The attack encompassed an area over a thousand meters in radius as the void ruptured and the earth was sundered. The sea of astral beasts was reduced to blood. Fortunately, there were no soldiers in the area, as no one could withstand Liu Shaoqiu's attack aside from Lu Yin.

This sword even attracted Zi Tie's attention in the skies. The beast scanned the lower battlefield, and sure enough, it was another human freak. It had to kill them all!

As smoke rose into the air, countless astral beasts looked on in horror at the destroyed land, not daring to approach it for fear of death. In the void, there was still flashes of remnant sword qi that could easily wipe out a Melder.

It was Lu Yin's first time seeing the Second Sword in the real world, and it was even more terrifying than what he had seen in his battle against Liu Shaoqiu within the Lifeseek Realm. If Liu Shaoqiu had completely displayed the Fourth Sword, then the outcome of that battle would have been undecided, even if Lu Yin revealed his five-lined battle force.

There was an explosion as everyone raised their heads to see another giant crack in the sky.

Nappa's pupils shrank. "Another Explorer realm astral beast."

Zi Tie roared excitedly and viciously slammed one hoof into Nappa's abdomen, sending him crashing into the ground while its other hoof smashed towards the spatial crack to help the reinforcing astral beast come out. The two Explorer realm astral beasts emitted a terrifying might as they both glared at Lu Yin's group on the ground below them. A moment later, the two astral beasts charged downwards.

Lu Yin's back was drenched with sweat, and he clenched both fists. It was time to risk it all.

Liu Shaoqiu also had a cold gleam in his eyes and he tightly gripped the hilt of his sword. A vague, indescribably terrifying fluctuation swept out through the battlefield, though the energy was not foreign; it was the Fourth Sword.

Silver continued to smile, but his smile had taken a sinister turn.

Against two Explorer astral beasts, even Lu Yin felt that things were about to turn disastrous.

At this moment, a red arrow pierced through the void and directly soared towards Zi Tie. It yelped in surprise and tried to dodge, but it couldn't evade the arrow as even the void had been frozen. The red arrow directly pierced through Zi Tie's body without any difficulty and continued traveling through the sky without slowing down at all.

This scene shocked everyone. Zi Tie was too strong for even Nappa to fight, but this beast had just been pierced through by an arrow.

Lu Yin was moved. He knew who had arrived due to the red lotus arrow—the Red Lotus Witchbow, Mira.

Lu Yin had joined the Astral Combat Academy and learned of her terror there. Mira was a graduate of Astral-6, and she had fought against Dao Bo in the past, proving that her strength at that time had been at the level of a Realm Master. She had long since broken through to become an Explorer, and her power now could possibly compare to a Cruiser or even surpass that level. This woman was among the Astral Top 100.

A charming figure appeared in the distant heavens and stepped through the sky, barefoot, with white hair cascading down to her heels. Short bangs adorned her forehead, giving her an adorable appearance. She looked exactly the same as before and was dressed in revealing summer clothes that exposed her sparkling skin. A smile could occasionally be seen on her face while her hands held her characteristic red lotus bow as she approached.

Nappa sighed in relief when he saw Mira, and he peacefully lay down on the ground, awaiting rescue.

Zi Tie endured its intense pain, aghast at the new developments. "The Red Lotus Witchbow from the human's Astral Combat Rankings. Retreat!"

The other astral beast was even quicker to retreat; it had torn the void open the moment it had seen Mira.

Mira's lips curled upwards mockingly, making her beautiful face appear even colder. She raised her Red Lotus Witchbow and fired a second arrow. It was even faster than the first arrow and similarly froze the void, trapping both Zi Tie and the other astral beast. They were forced to combine forces to block the second arrow.

"Red Lotus Witchbow, we've lost this battle, but no matter what, we're still Explorers. It's two against one! Don't force us to fight you," Zi Tie bellowed fiercely as blood dripped down from its giant body, scattering onto the ground below. The other astral beast ferociously glared at Mira as well, seeming ready to give its all.

Mira spoke in a contemptuous manner. "Does that mean that we're fighting to death? I like it." She then released her third arrow.

The battle between the three Explorers in the sky drew the attention of many on the battlefield below, and even the astral beasts paused as they gazed upwards.

The Ghost Monkey was panting heavily underground, as its body had been torn apart by the many wounds it had suffered. Its body was powerful enough to rival even four-lined battle force, so even the Fourth Sword had not been enough to kill it.

When the Ghost Monkey raised its head and saw that Zi Tie and the others would not be able to hold out for much longer, its gaze turned sinister as it knew that it was time to leave. However, it could not allow the battle to end like this, with an Academy Master of the Spiritual Academy not being able to kill even a single student of the Astral Combat Academy. That was just too embarrassing! The Ghost Monkey looked upwards again, immediately skipping over Liu Shaoqiu and Chao Zhi as it knew from personal experience that these two would not be easy to defeat. It eventually fixed its gaze on Lu Yin; this person was the furthest away and only had a faint aura, so he should be the weakest.

Lu Yin was calmly observing the fierce battle in the sky when a chill ran down his spine. The Ghost Monkey had emerged from the shadows and thrust its claws at him.

Lu Yin merely turned around and struck out with a casual palm. The Ghost Monkey was stunned as his palm also had four-lined battle force. Still, the Ghost Monkey did not pay it any mind and directly met Lu Yin's counterattack head on. In that instant, it discovered that there were differences within four-lined battle forces. Chao Zhi's battle force had been about the same as the Ghost Monkey's physical strength, but Lu Yin's had an unstoppable feeling to it. Just a palm from him sent the short monkey crashing into the ground. The attack had even carried Nine Stacks. It spat out a mouthful of blood and looked at Lu Yin in horror. What's going on? This person was the most terrifying all along?!

Lu Yin was amused by the monkey's expression. This idiot had almost been killed by Liu Shaoqiu. But instead of trying to escape, it had actually tried to sneak attack Lu Yin. However, this monkey was extremely powerful, and it could actually rival one of the Astral Combat Academy's student leaders.

However, the Ghost Monkey could not be blamed. To many astral beasts, humans could only be differentiated by gender, height, and girth. They couldn't make out any other distinguishing features, and most humans appeared to be more or less the same to them. Humans had a similar difficulty when it came to differentiating between astral beasts.

At this point, the Ghost Monkey had finally guessed Lu Yin's identity as the most powerful student present from the Astral Combat Academy, a freak who had fought his way into the top four of the Astral Combat Tournament.

"Get over here," Lu Yin barked as he made a grabbing motion towards the Ghost Monkey. Only an Explorer could escape from Lu Yin at such a distance. Although Lu Yin did not dare to say that he was invincible beneath the Explorer realm, he was nearly at that point.

The Ghost Monkey stared hatefully at Lu Yin before suddenly smiling. It bared its fangs and revealed a terrifying appearance. "Human, I guess that you're just unlucky."

The monkey then pulled something out of its cosmic ring and fiercely swatted at Lu Yin with it. Lu Yin watched closely, but his pupils suddenly constricted as his mind was struck numb. The item that the monkey had swatted at Lu Yin with was a piece of skin that had some words written on it. Those words were like a heavy attack that hit Lu Yin.

At the same time, outside the human's line of defense in outer space, a pair of eyes opened on a giant meteoroid. They were so deep that it felt like they could swallow even the void. "How could this aura be here?"

Lu Yin wasn't fast enough to defend himself and was struck by the attack, giving the Ghost Monkey the opportunity to grab a Void Wanderer and tear through the void while dragging Lu Yin along, capturing him. The entire process took no more than three seconds. The intense battle continued raging in the skies, and Liu Shaoqiu and the rest were still absorbed in watching the battle. Nobody noticed what had just happened to Lu Yin as no one imagined that the Ghost Monkey, who had been suppressed by Liu Shaoqiu, could actually defeat Lu Yin. And yet, that was exactly how things had ended up unfolding; Lu Yin had been captured by the Ghost Monkey.

When the group finally reacted, all they saw was an empty patch of ground.

Chapter 236: Animal Hides And Progenitor Wushang

Lu Yin only fell unconscious for a moment, and he quickly awakened. He then immediately took action while still in the void. The Ghost Monkey wanted to directly bring the captured Lu Yin to the Astral Beast Domain, but he was suddenly attacked by Lu Yin while still en route. The two were thrown out of the void and crash landed in an abandoned tribal settlement.

They landed heavily on the ground and immediately separated from each other.

The Ghost Monkey was stunned, "How did you wake up so easily? Not even an Explorer could recover that quickly fast."

Lu Yin casually crushed the Void Wanderer. Since humans had no use for such an astral beast, he might as well destroy it and prevent the Ghost Monkey from escaping with it.

The Ghost Monkey's eyes widened even further. "Human, you're asking to die!" He then retrieved the skin from before and thrust it towards Lu Yin once again. Lu Yin's eyes flashed and he retrieved a similar skin and brandished it at the Ghost Monkey. Lu Yin had just recalled that he also had a similar-looking piece of skin that he had once obtained from Pilfer. Also, the piece of skin that Lu Yin had was much bigger than the monkey's.

The Ghost Monkey never expected that Lu Yin would also have a skin, and it shrieked in disbelief. Lu Yin firmly pressed the short monkey into the ground. "Shut up."

"You- how can you have that?! That's impossible! It belongs to our star realm. Why does a human have it?!" the Ghost Monkey wailed.

Lu Yin frowned, snatched the Ghost Monkey's skin, and stored it in his cosmic ring. One could not look at this thing without being affected.

"What is this thing?" Lu Yin asked.

The Ghost Monkey ignored him and kept muttering in disbelief. "Impossible, why does a human have that?"

Lu Yin pressed his foot down onto the Ghost Monkey's chest, causing it to spit out a mouthful of blood. "Speak, what is this?"

The Ghost Monkey mournfully wailed and then glared at Lu Yin. "Human, don't think that you can get any information out of me!"

Lu Yin's eyes flashed with a cold light. "Then you can go and die."

He pressed down with his palm, causing the Ghost Monkey's fur to stand on end. "Human, do you really want to kill me?! No one can tell you about this object's origins if you kill me. Even in the entire Astral Beast Domain, only absolute powerhouses know anything about this object, and you won't be able to get any information from them!"

Lu Yin coldly replied, "Since you won't tell me, then there's no point in keeping you around."

"Wait, I can tell you a little!" the Ghost Monkey cried as it stared at Lu Yin, horrified.

Lu Yin sneered. "How will I know if you tell me the truth?"

"I can swear!" the Ghost Monkey hurriedly promised.

"There's no point, as only a little information is useless to me. And you even said that it's an object of the Astral Beast Domain, and I can't actually go there, right?"

Lu Yin raised his palm again as the overwhelming pressure descended again, causing the Ghost Monkey to scream, "Human! Don't be mistaken! This object is related to Progenitor Wushang. Do you really not want to know what it is?"

Lu Yin hesitated. "Progenitor Wushang? Who's Progenitor Wushang?"

The Ghost Monkey's eyes turned round as he proudly explained, "Progenitor Wushang is my ancestor! It is one of the most terrifying beings in the Astral Beast Domain. It's rumored that if you gather all the beast hides, then you can find Progenitor Wushang and receive its inheritance."

Lu Yin squinted. "If it's your ancestor, then why do you still need to gather the beast hides? Don't you know where your own ancestor is?"

"Our Ghost Monkey clan has too many beasts, and I'm only from a subsidiary branch. It was only by chance that I obtained this small piece," the Ghost Monkey meekly replied.

"How strong is Progenitor Wushang?" Lu Yin was curious.

"Very strong. It can swallow stars and planets, it can tear through the Astral River, and it's even rumored that it has an indestructible body that's become a landmass that other beasts live upon. The legends say that if one obtains Progenitor Wushang's inheritance, then their power level will soar to the heavens and that Realmbreakers, the powerhouses on Skymender's List, and Ten Arbiters alike will all be trash before them."

Lu Yin was amused by the description. "That was a good speech. Very smooth and it had a good flow to it too. It's a pity that I don't believe you and you've said too much. Just die." He then swatted mercilessly at the Ghost Monkey.

"Human-" the Ghost Monkey cried out sharply, but it could not avoid its fate of being slapped to death by Lu Yin.

Lu Yin looked at the Ghost Monkey's corpse and thought to himself, This bastard probably fabricated most of that, but Progenitor Wushang itself must exist, as it would not dare lie about such an obvious thing when facing death. Rather, it must have spouted some random facts to make Progenitor Wushang look more appealing. But the rest of the information must be fake, and since I can't be confident that it was telling the truth, I'll just forget about it.

Lu Yin did not feel that he would be so lucky as to one day go to the Astral Beast Domain and obtain some Progenitor Wushang's inheritance; he was not some darling child of the universe.

He glanced at the Ghost Monkey's corpse again, looked around himself, and then at his gadget. There was no signal, or perhaps the battle outside of Planet Conan had scrambled the surroundings so much that even Lu Yin's gadget could not receive any incoming signals. He couldn't even determine his own location and he wasn't even sure if he was still on Planet Conan.

He contemplated his situation briefly before turning to leave—his first priority was undoubtedly to figure out his location.

As he started walking away, he had a strange feeling that something was not right. He frowned, took out the emperor giant's third eye from his cosmic ring, and shrouded his body with the Cosmic Art. He then turned around to see a shadow squirming right below the ground's surface. "You're really not dead. This must be your real body." He then grabbed at the underground shadow.

The shadow shrieked, "Human! Spare me! It really is related to Progenitor Wushang's inheritance! I can even tell you where his grave is! Don't kill me!"

"You're too crafty. Sorry, but you must die." Lu Yin then prepared to attack.

The shadow contorted when it saw that Lu Yin was about to act. Then, it suddenly jumped onto Lu Yin's palm and extended up his arm. Next, Lu Yin felt his arm turn scorching hot as if he had been burned. Given his current cultivation, it was very difficult to burn him, and this burning sensation had even been caused by someone who he had already defeated. Lu Yin quickly tore off his sleeve only to see a bizarre monkey tattoo on his arm. It had an adorable appearance, but what was it?

"Human, I'm your tamed beast now! You can't kill me," the Ghost Monkey's voice floated into Lu Yin's mind, shocking him.

"Tamed beast? What do you mean?"

"I once killed some cultivators from the Human Domain's Beast Tamers Flowzone and acquired their technique for taming beasts. I just imprinted myself onto your body as a tamed beast, which means that my life is in your control. You can rest assured now. I'll tell you whatever you want to know," the Ghost Monkey explained helplessly.

Lu Yin looked at the new tattoo on his arm in wonder. So this is how it works too? He had always been curious about the Beast Tamers Flowzone's techniques, as he could never picture how Kuang Wang had managed to imprint such a large creature like Cang Long onto his body, but now, he had one too. "The Beast Tamer technique should set the human as the master."

"I didn't have a choice. Since you were about to kill me, I could only try this, and luckily, it succeeded.

“Human, my injuries are too heavy right now, and I need to rest first. I won’t wake up anytime soon, but regardless, my life is in your hands now, and you can kill me whenever you desire.” After the Ghost Monkey said this, he fell silent.

Lu Yin breathed out and felt struck in a dilemma; should he kill or not?

He thought about it some more before ultimately deciding to not act. The more he looked at the adorable, life-like monkey tattoo on his arm, the more he felt like he could accept this turn of events.

However, a cute monkey tattoo was a bit eccentric for a man to have, and Lu Yin could not help but feel slightly disappointed. Kuang Wang had the earth-shattering azure dragon, but Lu Yin had a cute monkey... What kind of crappy power did this monkey even have?! Fortunately, Lu Yin could tame more than one beast. Kuang Wang, for instance, also had a butterfly topgrass. Thus, Lu Yin should also be able to tame more than one beast. He would set aside some time to visit the Beast Tamers Flowzone in the future.

Since the matter with the Ghost Monkey had been resolved, it was now time for Lu Yin to find his way back.

This place was obviously an abandoned tribal village, and if he was still on Planet Conan, then the local civilizations’ progress should be rather backwards and primitive.

He followed the small path out of the village and looked around. The surrounding earth was still desolate and showed obvious signs of battle. There were also signs of burning, which should have been from the cleanup after a battle. This meant that this planet was still under the allied troops’ protection. It might even be Planet Conan, as the Ghost Monkey had not been able to use the Void Wanderer for very long.

At that moment, outside the thirty seven planets to the right of the border, a meteoroid appeared. “The first breath was here, and the second breath appeared there...” Its eyes swept across the thirty seven planets before finally settling on Planet Conan. “The second breath was much richer than the first, so there might be more than one.” Then, the meteoroid firmly rocketed forwards.

Suddenly, a sigh echoed out in space. “Brother Yao, please reconsider this.”

The meteoroid suddenly stopped as an enormous Void Thunderbeast appeared. The beast then forcibly shrank its body into a two-meter tall humanoid male who stared into the distance in shock. “Wen Sansi, I never thought that you’d be here too.”

The void ahead trembled as a young man walked out. He had a gentle smile and was garbed in white clothes, carrying scrolls, and even had a folding fan in his waistband. “Brother Yao, it’s been a while.”

“Indeed. I’m curious as to why the Ten Arbiters have appeared on this frontier battlefield. Have there been any great battles happening here?”

Wen Sansi smiled. “Since there haven't been any great battles, then as a powerhouse on the Skymender List, why are you appearing here? And you even want to force your way into a protected planet?”

"I was just curious. I heard that there's a human student from the Astral Combat Academy who inherited the Thirteen Swords and another who comprehended five-lined battle force as a Melder. Shouldn't we observe such young elites?" Yao Gu asked.

Wen Sansi shook his head and placed his hands behind his back. "If I'm here, then no."

Yao Gu's eyes widened. "It's rumored that the Ten Arbiters have never had any conclusive battles between their members. I'm curious to find if you're stronger than that fire bird."

Wen Sansi smiled again. "Of course he's stronger while I'm weaker. I, Wen Sansi, am just a mere scholar. I don't like to fight."

Yao Gu looked closely at Wen Sansi but did not speak.

Wen Sansi continued to smile at Yao Gu and did not speak up again. The heavens almost seemed to turn to stone from the lack of movement.

Off in the distance, Shui Chuanxiao glanced at his screen as his female deputy joyously shouted out, "Fortunately, the Ten Arbiters arrived in time. Otherwise, we wouldn't have a powerhouse to obstruct Yao Gu."

"Why does Yao Gu want to barge into the thirty seven rightmost planets? Even those students from the Astral Combat Academy shouldn't be worth him doing that," Shui Chuanxiao muttered to himself, puzzled by the recent events.

"Could it really be because of Liu Shaoqiu? Legend has it that Yao Gu was once heavily injured by the Thirteen Swords," the female deputy offered up.

Shui Chuanxiao shook his head. "No, the Skymender List and the Ten Arbiters would not casually start a war. They have a mutual understanding of each other, and past battles stay in the past. Once they start waging war, both star domains will be dragged in. It wouldn't end with just a border skirmish.

"Right, how's Planet Conan doing?" Shui Chuanxiao continued.

The female deputy answered, "Mira killed two Explorer mutant beasts by herself. The battlefield has stabilized, but Lu Yin is missing."

"Lu Yin is missing? What do you mean?"

"It's uncertain, but it appears that he was captured by an astral beast."

Chapter 237: Beast Annihilator

"That's impossible. He wouldn't be captured that easily by any astral beast weaker than an Explorer. He even directly exchanged blows with Zi Tie and is qualified to be a war drummer. What about his gadget? Can his position be tracked?"

"Huge battles have repeatedly taken place on Planet Conan, and there are still undispersed clumps of various unstable energies in the atmosphere. Gadgets are temporarily unusable."

Shui Chuanxiao felt helpless, and he could only look at the screen.

After a while, Yao Gu left without battling Wen Sansi. The female deputy finally relaxed. Yao Gu and Wen Sansi were both technically still members of the younger generation, but their combat power was too terrifying. If they battled, then the entire border defense would be in trouble. If their fight ended up implicating more combatants from the Skymender List or the Ten Arbiters, then it would become even more difficult to protect the border. It was even possible for their defenses to be permanently ruined.

“Go all out to find Lu Yin. Also, remain vigilant against anybody who could be controlled. I must find out the positions of those strange astral beasts.”

“Yes, commander.”

Lu Yin had guessed correctly; he was indeed still on Planet Conan but at a rather considerable distance from his previous position.

The Void Wanderer had originally intended on entering the Astral Beast Domain through a single spatial jump, but it had been interrupted by Lu Yin. Although they had only spent an instant in the void, that already moved them a great distance from their previous position.

Planet Conan was a thousand times larger than Earth, so even a slight deviation in location could mean a difference that greatly exceeded Earth’s diameter.

Lu Yin walked across the desolate ground, unable to find a single trace of green between the yellow sand and the dusty sky.

Occasionally, he ran across some strange astral beasts. He did not know if they were native creatures from Planet Conan or cannon fodder that a Void Wanderer had brought along.

He looked at his gadget, but there was still no signal. He still couldn’t calculate his position.

After an unknown amount of time, Lu Yin noticed a spacecraft slowly moving across the sky. Lu Yin was delighted and about to ascend to meet it, but then, an angry bellow sounded out as a giant astral beast flew out of the ground and bit the spacecraft, splitting it in half. There was an intense explosion and most of the people inside died instantly.

Lu Yin was furious, and raised a palm to strike the astral beast. Although it was huge, it was only at the level of a Limiteer and was easily struck dead by Lu Yin. Unfortunately, the spacecraft had been completely destroyed, and there were no survivors.

It had only been a small patrolling spacecraft with a few people in it, and it was unable to survive any sneak attacks.

Lu Yin did not discover any effective means of communication even after searching for half a day. His luck was especially bad as the spacecraft had been destroyed too thoroughly.

Despite the fact that he could not find any human bases, the appearance of such a spacecraft meant that there was a base not too far away from him, as even the distant regions would be patrolled by the bases. There should also be some more troops arriving soon to investigate this area.

Lu Yin did not plan to leave, and he patiently waited beside the spacecraft’s wreckage.

However, a full day passed by without any change. Lu Yin found it strange. Logically, if this area was truly within the scope of a base's patrols, then he should have run into some soldiers by now, but there had been nothing. He looked at the direction that the ruined spacecraft was facing and remembered that it had seemed to be flying towards the west. He would try his luck.

He did not have to walk very far before the metallic stench of blood hit him. Lu Yin's face changed, and he immediately used Flash to streak through the void. He reappeared hundreds of kilometers away, where he saw an endless blanket of astral beast corpses lying on the ground, as well as dead human soldiers. Most of the bodies had been mutilated beyond recognition.

Lu Yin's expression became even uglier. A battle had just occurred here, and the human soldiers had nearly been wiped out, with the surviving humans having been carried off by the remaining astral beasts for food. The footprints led further west.

Intelligent astral beasts would not eat humans while non-intelligent beasts would only feast on living humans, avoiding the dead. If some humans had really been taken away as food, then they must still be alive.

Lu Yin did not hesitate to continue pursuing the footprints to the west. He was not always a good samaritan, but he could not bear to let his fellow humans be eaten alive by astral beasts if he could help it.

The jumbled set of footprints stretched off far into the west. After this fierce battle between the astral beasts and humans, the beasts were most likely unable to leave because the humans would have destroyed all the Void Wanderers first, leaving the beasts without any way to escape after they arrived. Only some of the stronger astral beasts would carry personal Void Wanderers along with them and be able to escape, while the remaining astral beasts would be forced to roam Planet Conan and continue fighting against the humans.

There were many wandering astral beasts on Planet Conan, and some had even banded together to launch attacks on humans. The entirety of Planet Conan was a battlefield, and the indigenous creatures had all perished already.

The footprints reached all the way to the bottom of a yellow mountain before they vanished. Lu Yin investigated the site some more and confirmed that the astral beasts had moved underground. Right when he was about to head into the tunnel, the yellow mountain before him suddenly swayed. It actually turned around, revealing itself to be a towering astral beast right before Lu Yin's eyes, and there were countless droves of astral beasts that could be seen on it. They all stared at Lu Yin.

Lu Yin's hair stood on end as countless astral beasts stared at him; his entire body trembled.

The enormous, towering astral beast swatted at Lu Yin.

It was extremely large, but it was just a Limiteer. Still, it was not much easier to deal with than Zi Tie. Any of Lu Yin's attacks against the beast would likely have a very limited effect due to its sheer size. No matter how large the scope of Lu Yin's attacks were, it would likely be a bruise to the massive body at worst.

Boom!

The ground shook as the giant beast roared, causing shockwaves to radiate outwards and the yellow earth to buckle. The fine soil flew into the air and merged together to form a giant claw that then grabbed at Lu Yin.

Lu Yin grit his teeth and covered himself with five-lined battle force. The dark-gold color then swept into the skies as he used Flash to appear behind the giant astral beast. He immediately struck out with a palm strike: Nine Stacks, Seventeenfold Shockwave Palm. This was one of his strongest attacks, as the already terrifying Seventeenfold Shockwave Palm was amplified even further by the Nine Stacks. Although this beast was enormous, its defenses were not fantastic. Lu Yin's palm easily pierced through its giant body, but to Lu Yin's surprise, he quickly found out that, bizarrely enough, the beast actually had no blood. It seemed to be completely formed by soil. Hold on. Soil? Lu Yin thought to himself as he glanced at the herd of astral beasts on top of the mountainous beast.

If his guess was correct, then this was no astral beast but rather a mound of dirt that had been shaped and controlled by these astral beasts. He had been frightened by its sight, but it was illogical to think that such a large beast could exist on Planet Conan without being discovered by the human forces.

The giant beast roared again as its enormous body slammed towards Lu Yin.

Lu Yin frowned and used the Cosmic Palm to tear open a path by directly piercing through the giant beast's body. He then used Flash to tear through the void and reappear right before the captured soldiers who were floating in the air.

These soldiers had given up all hope when they were captured, but they sprang back to life when they saw Lu Yin appear.

Lu Yin charged downwards without using any battle techniques. He relied purely on the strength that his five-lined battle force provided to whip up a strong gale behind him, pulverizing countless astral beasts.

The ground rumbled and splintered as Lu Yin's power was just too strong. Unless it was a space-exploring astral beast, the average beast was simply not his opponent.

Just as Lu Yin was about to successfully rescue the group of captured soldiers, a wave of dizziness swept over him and he lost his hearing for an instant. An indescribably loud sound was being emitted from a palm-sized astral beast. At the same time, similarly sized astral beasts appeared in all directions and emitted the same, strange sound.

This series of sound waves was much stronger than Lu Yin's attack, and it also had an extremely penetrative nature. A stream of blood trickled down Lu Yin's lips as his eyes became bloodshot. He was suddenly struck in the back and spat out a mouthful of blood. He retaliated by striking out with both palms, destroying many astral beasts.

Lu Yin crashed to the ground and looked back up in shock. This herd of astral beasts was not simple and was much stronger than the two droves that had previously attacked the bases. Additionally, a strange astral beast that could injure him had also appeared.

He was among the top four in the Astral Combat Tournament and had a good chance to claim the top position. With his five-lined battle force, even the Ten Arbiters might not have necessarily have been

able to stand up to him when they were at the Melder realm, but he had just been injured by this crowd of astral beasts.

Many strange astral beasts that he had not seen before appeared from all directions. There were only a few of them, but they all had strange innate gifts. Additionally, the strange beasts that he had seen before started quivering again, ready to unleash another sound wave at him.

Lu Yin squinted, clenched his fists, and shrouded his body with the Cosmic Art. At that moment, he saw an invisible attack headed towards him, or rather, an invisible astral beast. Its body was small, but it was what had launched the strike that had heavily injured him.

Thump!

Lu Yin squarely struck the invisible astral beast with a fist. The ground shattered, and the surrounding astral beasts simultaneously pulled back. Lu Yin took a single step back while the invisible astral beast took seven steps back and stared at Lu Yin in shock. It had not expected Lu Yin to actually see it, and probably did not expect Lu Yin to block its attack either.

What kind of trick was this? Lu Yin was astounded that this invisible creature had actually taken a full force, five-lined battle force blow while another strange creature could release a dizzying sound wave. The coordination between these two astral beasts had actually led to him being injured; why did Planet Conan have such powerful beasts roaming around on it? A sneak attack from these two could even take an Explorer by surprise!

Since his body was injured, Lu Yin immediately retrieved a Melder ring armor and put it on while also swallowing some medicine. The invisible creature suddenly acted, clearly not wanting to give Lu Yin an opportunity to treat himself.

Lu Yin remained in his spot, and when the invisible creature's claw entered the range of his Cosmic Art, Lu Yin was able to clearly see all of its actions and easily dodge the attack. He then grabbed the creature's right claw with his right hand while his left hand grappled its body. He activated the Cosmic Palm, causing stars to revolve above his right palm while he pushed down, sending the invisible astral beast deep underground as it took the full brunt of Cosmic Palm.

A nine-star Cosmic Palm was not something that just anyone could withstand, and Lu Yin had even coated that attack with five-lined battle force. Regardless of how strong the invisible astral beast's defenses were, its abdomen had still been directly penetrated by the palm. The palm-sized creature growled, causing the dizzying sound waves to reappear in all directions. Lu Yin endured a splitting headache as he slapped the creature's head again, shattering its skull and driving it into the body of the massive beast formed out of soil.

There were countless astral beasts surrounding him outside the dirt beast, and he was once again injured. He no longer had any hope of saving the soldiers outside, as they had been killed during his battle with this horde of beasts. The astral beast's methods had been even more ruthless than he had imagined.

He hid within the giant beast's dirt body and restrained his aura, preparing to charge out into the horde. But then, the beast's body suddenly melted away as the soil collapsed to the ground.

Lu Yin squinted, and he was just about to dash out when the sky was torn apart by a formless attack. He instantly paused as more sound waves filled the skies one after another. As soon as he charged out, he would be struck by those waves, and he was unsure if he could actually escape. This was not an attack that targeted his spiritual force; these sound waves targeted his physical body and his brain.

What should he do? Charge out or not?

At this time, his hand happened upon a hard object that had been revealed when the soil beast collapsed. It was a large shell that seemed to have been left behind after some creature molted. Lu Yin's eyes gleamed, and he decided to hide within the shell. He then restrained his aura once again. At that moment, the soil completely fell apart as smoke billowed in all directions. Lu Yin popped out, hurled the shell towards the distance, and charged in the opposite direction.

The visible sound waves blasted the void apart and instantly shattered the shell while Lu Yin used Flash to hide within a living astral beast. More accurately, he hid between the scales of an astral beast, though the creature gave off an unbearable stench.

Chapter 238: Sheng Ao

Even after blasting the shell that Lu Yin tossed out as bait to smithereens, the palm-sized astral beasts still did not give up. They continued bombarding the general area with sound waves until everything was reduced to dust.

Lu Yin endured the extremely foul stench of the astral beast he was hiding by as he stared at the palm-sized astral beasts. Although they were small, their sonic attacks were even more powerful than Liu Yin's strikes. It had to be said that their innate gift was very strong, allowing them to survive in battle against the humans until today.

But these beasts were a bit too strange. Nothing this powerful had appeared during the sneak attacks on the bases, and yet, they had appeared here. There was definitely something strange going on.

The more powerful astral beasts were no less intelligent than humans. During the many days he had spent at the base, Lu Yin had heard on multiple occasions that the astral beasts were also sent on missions, like the human troops. By this point, he felt that this group of astral beasts were definitely not simple; had they been in the middle of a mission?

He could not be blamed for thinking this, as this group of astral beasts had trapped even him. There were no Explorer realm astral beasts in this group, either, which was definitely rare. Additionally, this group was strong enough to wipe out a base in an instant if they attacked, but they seemed to be intentionally avoiding the bases. They were most likely either trying to team up with other groups to attack a specific area, or they had some special mission.

Lu Yin could have escaped after he dodged those palm-sized astral beasts' sound waves, but after thinking things through, he decided to stay. If these beasts really were on some kind of special mission, then he might be able to earn some contributions if he stayed.

Although he was just a student, the reason why he had come to the warfront was still to learn through experience. If he could earn some contributions, then he would definitely not give up, especially not if all he had to pay was enduring a loathsome stench.

Before long, the group of astral beasts started to move westwards again. The large group did not run on the ground; rather, they manipulated the soil to carry them along, as if it were a vehicle carrying them. This method also meant that they left no footprints behind.

They were indeed very smart. Lu Yin's eyes gleamed when he saw this. The beasts had clearly realized that he had tracked them down by following their footprints; thus, they had switched to this mode of transportation specifically to avoid being followed in the future.

Half a day later, the group of astral beasts stopped moving. The astral beast that Lu Yin was hiding in, along with all the others of the same type, moved towards the center of the group. The horde of beasts methodically separated in a practiced motion to form a defensive layout. Lu Yin's eyes flashed when he saw that there was actually a human in the center of the formation, though it was unknown if he was alive as he was just laying there. Beside him was a strange-looking, earthworm-like astral beast with twisting threads that undulated in a dancing motion around its body. Under Lu Yin's observant gaze, one of the threads inserted itself into the person's ear.

Lu Yin's eyes narrowed as his scalp went numb.

After a moment, the thread completely vanished into the person's brain. The person lying on the ground then slowly opened his eyes and stiffly stood up. He calmly walked out of the crowd of astral beasts, and not a single beast made any move to stop him. After he walked out, his eyes gradually regained their clarity, and a smile appeared on his face. Then, he flew away.

Lu Yin was dazed. What had just happened? Was the person that he had seen just now under the astral beasts' control? That shouldn't be the case. How could an astral beast have such a strange innate gift?

After that person left, the astral beast group returned to its previous state with the earthworm-like astral beast protected in the center. Fortunately, the creature that Lu Yin was hidden within was not too far from the center, and he could clearly make out the earthworm-like astral beast.

They did not move very far before the group suddenly changed directions when the top of the earthworm beast's head emitted a faint light.

Lu Yin continued to follow the group in this manner as they roamed across Planet Conan.

At the same time, Shui Chuanxiao was dealing with another headache. "Commander, another warship has been destroyed. Over 2,500 soldiers were killed on that spacecraft," En Ya, his female deputy, reported solemnly.

Shui Chuanxiao's eyes grew frosty. "We can't wait any longer. The number of controlled people is increasing with every day that passes. Any longer and my spacecraft will also run the risk of being destroyed."

En Ya hesitated. "Are we really going to use that? There aren't even twenty people in the entire frontier allied troops who are qualified to use it, and it'll be a huge loss if an accident occurs to any one of them."

"Pass down my command and have them all assemble. They'll start from the hundred planets guarding the center and sweep out. They will thoroughly explore each planet. Request help from the Erudite Flowzone as well."

En Ya acknowledged the command.

“Right, aren’t the students from the Astral Combat Academy here as well? There should be quite a few of them who can help out, so let them participate too,” Shui Chuanxiao suddenly said as an afterthought.

En Ya was immediately put in a difficult position. “This mission is a bit too difficult for them, sir. Even if the students can find a drove of astral beasts protecting the Sheng Ao, they might not be able to escape with their power. Last time, we even discovered that there were the two Guais in a drove. When those two beasts fight together, even an Explorer needs to be careful. It’s too dangerous for a mere student.”

Shui Chuanxiao shook his head. “I know, but there’s no choice. Go, the safety of the frontier is the most important priority. Carry out your orders.”

En Ya nodded helplessly and turned to leave.

Not long after, Liu Shaoqiu, Silver, Xue Liuyun, and Liu Yin received new orders and were shipped off to Planet Cangyuan, which was one of the hundred planets in the center of the defense line.

The four were shocked by this development as they were just students. However, they were indeed very powerful. There were other powerhouses among the soldiers who could match the strength of these elite students, but they had relied on time and experience to slowly build up their power. And why were these students carrying out this important mission? What about Chao Zhi, Tasha, and Lanke? In terms of just combat strength, Chao Zhi was definitely no weaker than the selected students—the only difference separating the four from the rest was that they had all comprehended a domain.

Shui Chuanxiao’s mission for them was simple. He assembled all of the soldiers who could use a domain and had them infiltrate a drove of astral beasts to find the species that was called Sheng Ao; they were the ones that could control humans.

There were too many astral beasts on the protected planets for the soldiers to eliminate every single one of them. The only option was to send skilled people to infiltrate each group to find out the Sheng Ao’s weakness. With that, they could then plan a reasonable strategy.

This mission was quite dangerous, and the astral beasts were not foolish, either. Every single Sheng Ao was protected by strong powerhouses.

Shui Chuanxiao and the rest naturally did not know that Lu Yin was the closest person to a Sheng Ao at this time. He had even found this thing’s weakness, or rather, its natural tendencies.

Every living thing had its own natural tendencies that became its strengths and weaknesses. For example, humans had an inherent ability to adapt to any complicated environment and could use tools. Astral beasts similarly had their own tendencies, which even determined whether they lived in groups or in solitary. Lu Yin guessed that this earthworm-shaped astral beast that could control humans lived by itself, to the extent that it did not even want to meet other members of its own species. Every time its head glowed, the astral beast drove would change directions. Even if the horde only changed directions three times over multiple days, it was still enough for Lu Yin to make a calculated guess.

It might be changing directions to avoid something that it loathed, a human base, a similar race, or maybe something else entirely. Lu Yin could deduce no other reason for its glowing head.

It was the most likely that it could either sense human bases or other members of the same species.

Lu Yin decided to continue observing the strange, earthworm-like beast, as he had grown accustomed to the stench over these few days. Even if he did not use his Invisible Aura Technique, he might not be exposed at this point as he had also started to stink.

There were over a hundred planets that composed the Erudite Flowzone's border, and they were divided into three groups: left, center, and right. The left and right each held thirty seven planets while there were a hundred planets protecting the center. Planet Cangyuan was the largest planet as well as the one closest to Shui Chuanxiao.

Currently, the soldiers had discovered thousands of humans who were being controlled. Almost every planet along the entire warfront had discovered at least one person being manipulated, which added up to quite a substantial number. Shui Chuanxiao was thus forced to make a decisive move, and he had assembled all of the domain users under his command to carry out this mission.

A domain was extremely difficult to comprehend, and even a top-notch institution like the Astral Combat Academy could not produce many of these experts, let alone the rest of the universe; the probability was just too small. Throughout the Erudite Flowzone's entire frontier allied troops, there were around twenty domain experts under the Explorer realm. This was already a rather sizable number.

On Planet Cangyuan, within a burning forest, Liu Shaoqiu hid inside a tree that had been hollowed out as he watched a giant drove of astral beasts rush past him. He suddenly moved and hid inside one just like Lu Yin was doing. He then frowned as the smell was too horrible.

On another planet, Xue Liuyun similarly encountered a drove and hid within it.

For domain experts, infiltrating a drove of astral beasts was not very hard as their domain could change their odor and completely integrate them into their environment. Only super-intelligent astral beasts would notice them, and any other would simply be oblivious to their presence.

Zhuo Daynight had once used this ability to sit on the back of an ant in the Umbral Butterfly Weave without ever being noticed.

Lu Yin was still searching for a group of astral beasts to infiltrate while Silver stepped across countless floating corpses as the herd trembled and rushed to escape into the distance.

"What a headache. Lu Yin suddenly went missing. So, is he really that person's descendant? Or was his Zishan bloodline a facade from the start?" Silver muttered to himself as he stepped past the rivers of blood and headed into the distance.

Lu Yin remained hidden for ten days on Planet Conan, and the herd of beasts that he was hidden within had changed direction five times. Every time, it was triggered when the top of that earthworm-looking creature's head glowed. There were two times when the herd had remained stationary until the radiance on its head gradually dimmed down. This confirmed to Lu Yin that the astral beast herd was changing directions not when it encountered a human base but rather when they ran into another creature of the same species, since a base could not possibly move on its own.

Just as Lu Yin was considering whether he should continue hiding, beams of light blasted the ground. The drove of astral beasts had been discovered by some soldiers.

The enormous sound waves converged and shot towards the sky where it collided with the light beams. The resulting after shocks distorted the void.

From the sky, multiple warships incessantly bombarded the group of astral beasts with their energy weapons.

Lu Yin's eyes flashed, and he instantly appeared directly behind the earthworm-like creature before casually striking it. The earthworm-like creature immediately died since its defenses were pitifully weak; however, his actions agitated the palm-sized astral beasts who abandoned their anti-aerial assault to focus their attacks on Lu Yin.

Lu Yin had already obliterated the earthworm creature's corpse and found the reason for its glowing head. It was a round ball that was probably the creature's brain.

Countless sound waves continued to bombard the area while Lu Yin sneered disdainfully. After observing them for so many days, he had long since seen through the sound waves. He easily used Flash to continuously dodge them. The all-encompassing sound waves could destroy a portion of the astral beasts, but they could not harm him at all. This was the power of his Cosmic Art. Given enough time, no matter how strong his opponent was, Lu Yin would eventually fully analyze their techniques and come up with an appropriate countermeasure.

The warships in the sky continued to bombard the ground, but they purposefully avoided Lu Yin's location.

Not long after, Lu Yin used Flash and a Cosmic Palm to slaughter the remaining palm-sized astral beasts. He then flew up to meet the warships.

A person walked out of a spacecraft and grimly confronted Lu Yin. "Who are you?"

"I'm Astral Combat Academy's Lu Yin."

That person was stunned. "You're Lu Yin? Didn't you go missing?"

Lu Yin smiled. "I'm back."

The soldier looked suspiciously at Lu Yin and then at the ground, hesitating about something.

Lu Yin was suspicious, but he did not speak and only watched on silently.

Not long after, that person spoke, "Did you kill the Sheng Ao?"

Lu Yin was puzzled. "What's a Sheng Ao?"

"An astral beast that can control humans." He then stared closely at Lu Yin, clearly suspicious of whether Lu Yin had been compromised.

Chapter 239: Decisive Battle

Lu Yin nodded after he heard the captain's explanation. "So that toy's called a Sheng Ao? That's right, I killed it."

The soldier did not completely believe Lu Yin since the people who had fallen under its control would do anything to gain the troops' trust. He could not ascertain if Lu Yin was speaking the truth, but he also could not take the responsibility of killing him because of Lu Yin's status. "Get on. I'll take you to see Lord Qu Ao."

The guardian of the right thirty seven planets was none other than Qu Ao, a Hunter. Lu Yin recalled his battle in space against the Tan Gang firebeast. Their battle had affected the entire Planet Conan, and the signal still had not been restored even now.

Lu Yin got on the warship and many of the soldiers transferred to another spacecraft. This was a precaution being taken in case Lu Yin had been compromised.

Lu Yin did not pay it any mind, and he calmly stood in the corridor as he watched the ground grow more distant. As it turned out, he had indeed still been on Planet Conan.

While travelling, no one disturbed Lu Yin. He was in no hurry, but less than an hour after they left, the spacecraft docked onto a giant warship that held Qu Ao.

On the other end of the humans' border, in the dark void, a tripartite of black, white, and red flames intertwined as they burned in outer space. They were even more dazzling than the stars, and within the tricolored fire, there was a giant beast; it was Soaring Firebeast, the commander of the Astral Beast Domain's forces that were clashing with the humans at the border.

A group of powerful giant astral beasts circled around the flame beast, their occasional roars distorting the void.

Suddenly, the void was torn apart, causing all of the giant astral beasts to turn vigilant.

Yao Gu emerged from the void and silently stood in front of Soaring Firebeast. "Emperor, may I have a word with you?"

The three flames covering Soaring Firebeast's body surged as it replied, "It is my Wilderness Beast Alliance's honor to receive a powerhouse on the Skymender List."

Yao Gu's eyes narrowed. "No, not the Wild Beast Alliance. This time, I want to speak to Soaring Firebeast."

"Yao Gu, it was the alliance's agreement that initially allowed you to come to my frontier. What do you want now?" Soaring Firebeast was dissatisfied with Yao Gu's response.

"I don't want anything. I came just to give Soaring Firebeast some good luck." After saying this, Yao Gu's mouth continued to move, but no voice came out. Instead, it directly entered Soaring Firebeast's ear.

After a while, the three fires extinguished themselves, revealing the Soaring Firebeast's giant body.

"What did you say? You're actually willing to help my Blazewhiz clan move up in the Heavenly Beast List?"

“This all depends on your sincerity. I don’t know how far you are willing to go in exchange for this Yao Gu’s promise.”

The void fell silent, but shortly after, the emperor’s loud voice reverberated out once more. “We haven’t had a decisive battle against the human allied troops for a while. Now’s a good time as any.”

In the darkness of outer space, Lu Yin met with Qu Ao on the giant warship.

Somehow, everyone in the Erudite Flowzone seemed to have similar characteristics; they all had a scholarly demeanor and a very gentle mien. Qu Ao was the guardian of the right thirty seven planets, and it astonished Lu Yin that he could maintain this calm of a temperament despite overseeing such a bloody battlefield.

“You’re Lu Yin?” Qu Ao’s tone was gentle yet firm.

Lu Yin respectfully replied, “Planet Conan soldier Lu Yin reports to the guardian.”

Qu Ao nodded in satisfaction and studied Lu Yin. Like many, he had thought that the students of the Astral Combat Academy would have an arrogant attitude since they typically had powerful backgrounds. Even Lu Yin was a prince back in his home empire, even if that empire was just a fringe weave in the Outerverse. It was not a given that the students would quickly adapt to military life, but Lu Yin’s performance was very satisfactory.

From the previous two base attacks, Qu Ao had already seen the Astral Combat Academy’s battlefield performance and knew that they were strong fighters. This was especially true for Lu Yin, who had repelled the Explorer realm astral beast, Zi Tie; it was truly a marvellous feat.

“Tell me about your experiences over this period,” Qu Ao said.

Lu Yin recounted what he had gone through at the Human Domain’s warfront from start to end, but he specifically left out the part about the Ghost Monkey, Progenitor Wushang, and the inheritance. He focused mostly on the time he spent hiding within the astral beast drove, and especially on the two unique astral beast species that had given him a great amount of difficulty.

Qu Ao’s face turned heavier the more he listened to Lu Yin’s story. When Lu Yin finished speaking, he and he studied Lu Yin’s face carefully. “That invisible astral beast is called a Yin Guai and those sound-based astral beasts are called Sheng Guai. Together, they are termed as the Astral Beast Domain’s two Guais. Their coordination can mow over many powerhouses within the same realm. The two hardly ever appear together, but here, their appearance was to protect the Sheng Ao.” At this point, Qu Ao stared at Lu Yin intently. “Give me a reason to believe that you are not controlled by a Sheng Ao. Otherwise, we have no choice but to isolate you.”

Lu Yin spread his hand and revealed the round ball that he had retrieved from the Sheng Ao’s head. “Have you seen this before, guardian?”

Qu Ao retrieved the sphere, studied it a little, and then shook his head. “Where did you get it?”

“It’s the object in the top of the Sheng Ao’s head. I discovered that every time this thing lights up, the Sheng Ao changes directions and avoids that area. While I was hiding in the astral beast drove, they

were forced to change directions five times because of this phenomenon. My guess is that it's related to sensing other Sheng Aos," Lu Yin explained with a serious tone.

Qu Ao was shocked. "Are you saying that this thing reacts when it nears other Sheng Aos?"

Lu Yin nodded. "That's just my guess. The specifics will have to be tested and verified."

"Conduct the test," said a voice from behind Lu Yin. It was from a screen that showed the image of an imposing man. It was the commander of the Human Domain warfront's allied troops, Shui Chuanxiao.

Lu Yin turned and immediately bowed. "Planet Conan soldier Lu Yin pays respects to the commander."

Shui Chuanxiao nodded. "If this theory of yours is true, then you'll have made a great contribution." With that, the screen directly turned off.

At the other end of the room, Qu Ao immediately ordered someone to take the sphere onto a warship and fly towards Planet Conan to then search it area by area.

Lu Yin had hidden amongst the astral beast drove for many days and had witnessed it change directions five times, which indicated that there were quite a few Sheng Aos on Planet Conan.

"The Sheng Ao is a very strange creature that has only appeared in recent years. The people that it manipulates are perfectly aware of themselves, have clear memories, and act no differently than before. Even the people themselves do not know that they are being controlled, but all of their actions are being influenced by the Sheng Ao," Qu Ao solemnly said, seeming as an explanation to Lu Yin, but also possibly to remind himself. Lu Yin did not interrupt.

"Since the Sheng Ao has appeared, the death rate has increased by a third because of manipulated humans, and a great deal of damage has been caused to our facilities as well," Qu Ao said before looking at Lu Yin and then suddenly switching topics. "How would you evaluate Qu Feng's strength?"

Lu Yin was caught off guard and perfunctorily replied, "Very strong."

Qu Ao laughed. "Strong? He couldn't even enter the top sixteen in the tournament and is still too far too weak compared to Han Chong."

"Is Qu Feng a member of your clan's younger generation?" Lu Yin asked.

"Yes, he's a descendent of the Qu family."

The room fell silent.

Lu Yin had felt that Qu Ao was being rather friendly, just like Han Chong. He had also been quite friendly to Lu Yin during the Astral Combat Tournament. Could it have to do with his clan name? The Erudite Flowzone reportedly had the highest amount of clans with primeval surnames, but they had all hidden themselves. Could the Qu clan be one of those clans as well?

"Lu Yin, what about your family?" Qu Ao suddenly asked, still gazing calmly at outer space.

Lu Yin's eyes flashed. Although Qu Ao wasn't directly facing him, he felt that he was being carefully observed. "I have no family. I'm an orphan."

"You were born with the bloodline of the Great Yu Empire's King Zishan?"

"Yes," Lu Yin answered with a nod.

"Why the family name Lu?" Qu Ao asked as he suddenly turned back around. Lu Yin's brain rumbled. His mental state was disturbed, and his body suddenly turned limp. In that instant, Lu Yin felt like he had returned to Driftcharge Planet and was reciting the Stonewall Scriptures. That same overbearing pressure had reappeared: the might of a Hunter. If this had occurred before his experiences on Driftcharge Planet, then Lu Yin would have lost all of his reasoning ability and become muddle-headed, but after reciting the Stonewall Scriptures, his mind was able to hold onto a trace of clarity.

"I don't know. I just feel that I should be called Lu," Lu Yin painfully bent at his waist as he involuntarily answered.

Qu Ao frowned but did not speak as he continued to study Lu Yin.

Lu Yin vigorously shook his head, panting heavily. He then looked at Qu Ao in a daze. "Guardian, what about you?"

Qu Ao raised his hand to halt the conversation. "Forget about what happened just now and forget about your reply."

Lu Yin nodded and continued breathing heavily. If Qu Ao had tried to force him any further, then he would have truly fainted; his pressure surpassed even Liu Shaoqiu's Third Sword. And he had been subjected to this pressure just because his family name was Lu.

Actually, even Lu Yin himself did not understand why he had the surname "Lu." When he was first rescued by his family, everyone had told him that this was his name, that he should be called Lu Yin. He had never felt any rejection towards the name either. This surname, "Lu," that he carried had given him and his family much trouble, but he had never regretted having this name.

Not long after, a message was delivered, confirming that the experiment had been a success. The sphere that had been retrieved from a dead Sheng Ao still lit up in the presence of other Sheng AOs, and the warship had been successful in eradicating another horde of astral beasts and obtaining another sphere.

Qu Ao was delighted by the results and immediately ordered an Explorer to personally hunt down the Sheng AOs with the spheres.

The Sheng AOs and their guardian astral beasts were not Explorers, which was why they had to hide on the various planets. This had originally been the source of a huge headache for the humans, but now, Lu Yin's discovery had nullified these astral beasts' concealing ability, which was a great contribution for the warfront.

This border zone was not just an area or territory but rather a warfront that concerned the rise and fall of the entire human race. Any contributions made at the warfront would be recorded in the annals of history.

"Good job, Lu Yin," Qu Ao praised as he patted Lu Yin's shoulder.

Lu Yin exhaled lightly. "It was all luck, good luck."

Qu Ao smiled. "Sometimes, luck is more important than strength on the battlefield. It seems that you're the bringer of good fortune."

Not far away from them, a screen turned on, showing Shui Chuanxiao gazing gratefully at Lu Yin. Before the commander could speak, however, the spacecraft jerked violently, causing the connection to dissipate. A succession of explosions tore through the spacecraft's metal hull as its structure fell apart. A terrifying shockwave swept through the ship, distorting the void and making everyone feel as if the entire universe were falling apart.

Qu Ao's face instantly changed. "Not good! It's Yao Gu!" Then, the clear sound of a voice reading some esoteric text caused Lu Yin's entire body to go numb. For an instant, he felt as if the heavens were collapsing, and he could not even hear Qu Ao's shouts. There was a rumbling sound in Lu Yin's ears and a massive crack appeared in the warship.

In the vastness of outer space, Wen Sansi's figure appeared. "Brother Yao Gu, you should reconsider your actions."

"Wen Sansi, this will be the decisive battle! Let's see if you can stop me," Yao Gu shouted as the void exploded again. From the depths of space, the shadows of a dozen enormous beasts emerged. They were all space-exploring astral beasts.

Lu Yin was stunned. Decisive battle?

Qu Ao barked, "Land the spacecraft on Planet Conan. The Explorers will battle in the heavens. The war has begun!" He disappeared immediately after giving those orders.

The spacecraft shook and charged straight for Planet Conan.

Chapter 240: War Drummer

Lu Yin froze in place as he watched the great battle take place in the splendor of outer space. It was on another level entirely, and he was unable to make anything out clearly.

The Erudite Flowzone wasn't just fighting in outer space; its entire defensive perimeter was undergoing a comprehensive preparation for the upcoming decisive battle. Numerous Void Wanderers appeared next to each planet and opened up multiple holes in the void, unleashing countless astral beasts against the human forces.

Many warships were destroyed in the first moments of the battle, but at the same time, countless beams of light bombarded the hordes of astral beasts. In that brief instance, an uncountable number of souls departed on both sides.

Shui Chuanxiao's face was extremely ugly; he just could not understand why the normally stable Soaring Firebeast would suddenly initiate a decisive battle.

The tricolored flames descended upon the battlefield. En Ya was shocked and dumbly said, "Commander, it's the Soaring Firebeast!"

Shui Chuanxiao snorted and then stepped out into the sky. "Soaring Firebeast, why the sudden push for a decisive battle?"

"This is a border war. Do I need a reason?" Soaring Firebeast's loud voice resonated through the region.

Shui Chuanxiao's eyes narrowed, "Then prepare to drown."

"That's up to you."

The next second, the entire void combusted.

Lu Yin's excitement over making some contributions from his actions hadn't even faded yet, but a major battle had already started.

Qu Ao's warship arrived in the sky directly above Planet Conan's command center. This was where the most intense battle on Planet Conan was taking place.

Astral beasts filled the skies while countless spatial cracks extended into the horizon as beams of light swept out in answer to the snarls of the astral beasts.

Lu Yin stepped out of the warship, and an astral beast immediately burrowed out from underground to bite at him. He casually swatted the Melder realm beast dead and looked out to see the entire battlefield drenched with smoke and a mist of blood. Countless strange innate gifts and battle techniques dazzled the scenery as bloodlust filled the eyes of the human soldiers and astral beasts alike.

On this battlefield, there was no arguing over fairness, only massacre. Lu Yin quickly joined the fray, as his strength was second only to Explorers who were all battling in outer space; he was practically invincible on this battlefield.

Countless astral beasts were slapped dead by Lu Yin, and he did not need to use his five-lined battle force or his battle techniques. Just his raw, unadulterated physical strength was sufficient to dominate the battlefield. There were no powerhouses amongst the astral beasts, and the ones present simply could not stop Lu Yin.

All of the planets along the border were embroiled in this decisive battle. The command centers and bases were quickly destroyed one after another, as there were just too many astral beasts compared to humans soldiers, and they all had strange attacking styles as well. Over the countless years, the humans had lost track of the different types of astral beasts as they were constantly evolving.

On Planet Cangyuan, within a wilting and burning forest, Liu Shaoqiu beheaded a Yin Guai with a sword even as a large piece of flesh was torn out of his left arm. A moment later, multiple palm-sized Sheng Guais screeched, unleashing their sound wave attacks. Liu Shaoqiu's eyes widened as he sliced out with the Third Sword. The attack was formless, but all the Sheng Guais were knocked unconscious by that strike while Liu Shaoqiu was struck by their sound waves, suffering heavy injuries.

Even Lu Yin found it hard to bear the Sheng Guais' sonic attacks, let alone Liu Shaoqiu. He had only faced half the numbers that Lu Yin had faced, but he had still been heavily injured by them.

Without the two Guais, this group of astral beasts was no longer a match for Liu Shaoqiu.

After finishing them off, Liu Shaoqiu quickly retrieved the sphere from the top of the Sheng Ao's head. He had just received the information about how this sphere detected other Sheng Aos and how it had been discovered by Lu Yin.

Although Liu Shaoqiu had lost to Lu Yin during the Astral Combat Tournament, he was unreconciled with his loss. Lu Yin was immune to the Third Sword, but that was just a matter of constitution. Also, Liu Shaoqiu had not been able to display the Fourth Sword. It had been like fighting a battle with his limbs bound, and he still felt sullen about it. His goal at the warfront had been to surpass Lu Yin, but Lu Yin had once again managed to take the lead.

He gripped the sphere as his gaze firmed up. Since he refused to accept his loss, this vague competition had to continue. Also, he had an agreement with Lu Yin to challenge the Top 100 Rankings together.

Some distance away from Liu Shaoqiu, there was a muddy and turbulent ocean composed of a strange liquid that could corrode all living beings. Silver slowly walked along the coastline. He raised his head to gaze at the sky as he basked in the rising temperature. He never thought that he would actually encounter such a rare environment as a decisive warfront battle. This was not a wasted trip. Lu Yin was also fine; it seemed that providence was on his side.

Xue Liuyun and Liu Yin were also on Planet Cangyuan, as they were also experts who had comprehended a domain.

Chao Zhi and the others were still back on Planet Conan, fighting for their lives against droves of astral beasts on some base.

Dong!

A deep, reverberating sound washed over the planet, as if a tsunami had enveloped the skies. This was the sound of a war drum whose sound resounded throughout the entire planet. Another loud resounding boom came out shortly from the neighboring planet as the beating war drums on each planet started sounding out in sync, forming a line of pulsating planets.

On the battlefields, all of the human soldiers heard the beats of the war drums, and their morale soared. An invisible strength seeped into the soldiers' bones while the astral beasts wailed in anguish in reply. The louder the drumbeats, the greater the harm to them.

At Planet Conan's command center, when the first war drums began to beat, Lu Yin felt as if he could see the bloodlust of his distant ancestors as an invisible strength flowed into him. This was a human inheritance that ceaselessly aroused the spirits of humans through the beating war drums. His battle force covered his body, and he rose up before pressing down with a Nine Stacks, Seventeenfold Shockwave Palm. A portion of the battlefield collapsed as a giant palm imprint crushed many of the beasts.

Roar!

Several angry howls sounded out on the battlefield as several strange beasts leaped at Lu Yin. Each one was a Limiteer, and they all possessed extreme speed. Some had powerful attacks and others tough defenses; all in all, five beasts combined forces to face off against Lu Yin.

A coldness bloomed in Lu Yin's eyes. His fighting spirit had been ignited by the beating war drums. He unleashed five consecutive Cosmic Palms that obliterated all five beasts running at him, scattering their fresh blood onto the ground to the shock of countless onlookers.

At this point, the command center was suddenly split open as an enormous beast emerged from the void. Lu Yin had never seen such a fearsome beast before, but a mental cry came from the Ghost Monkey tattoo on his right arm. "That's a Void Thunderbeast! Run!"

Lu Yin was surprised. "You're awake?"

"Stop spouting nonsense and escape! That's a Void Thunderbeast! Any mature Void Thunderbeast is at least at the Explorer realm. This one's already very close to maturity, so don't fight it," the Ghost Monkey desperately urged.

But it was already too late, as that Void Thunderbeast was barreling straight at Lu Yin after destroying the command center. It was still a great distance away when it clawed at him, but its attack seemed to pass through the void to appear directly in front of Lu Yin.

Lu Yin's expression changed; such a strong attack was definitely no weaker than a full strength blow from one of the Astral Combat Academy's student leaders.

Bang!

Powerful shockwaves undulated in all directions as everything within a thousand meters of Lu Yin was crushed, and all living things were blown away. This created an empty and desolate arena where Lu Yin confronted the Void Thunderbeast as the void collapsed all around them.

"Why is there a Void Thunderbeast here? There aren't even 10,000 of these top tier astral beasts in the entire Astral Beast Domain, but one just had to appear here. Could this be related to Yao Gu?" the Ghost Monkey murmured strangely.

Lu Yin's heart jolted. "What did you say? Yao Gu?"

"Yeah, Yao Gu. He's on our Star Domain's Skymender List and is a super powerhouse of the younger generation who is able to rival you human's Ten Arbiters."

Lu Yin's gaze shifted as he thought to himself, Yao Gu, Yao Gu. He then recalled the time he had rolled Pilfer and obtained a black Mavis Bank card with the name Yao Gu carved on it. Could it be the same beast?

The Void Thunderbeast snarled fiercely. It seemed that it had locked onto Lu Yin as its prey as its enormous body suddenly vanished, shuttling directly through the void to attack him again.

The Ghost Monkey panickedly shrieked, "Why has it targeted you?! Hurry up and run! There's no use trying to fight it! You won't be able to kill it even if you win, and if you lose, you're dead. There's no reason to even try to fight this thing."

Lu Yin frowned. Could this Void Thunderbeast be targeting him because of that bank card? But he had no time to look into this now. As he watched the Void Thunderbeast claw its way over again, Lu Yin

indignantly covered his body with five-lined battle force, distorting the void. He then activated his Cosmic Palm and stars appeared above his palm before exploding, the resulting vibrations causing the void to tremble. The Void Thunderbeast howled in grief; its claws had been directly snapped off by that Cosmic Palm.

Lu Yin leapt up and appeared on top of the Void Thunderbeast. He then slammed another hand down as he tried to kill the beast.

“Human, I’ll remember you. You carry our clan’s aura,” the beast snarled before piercing through the void by spitting out a clap of thunder. Its entire body then vanished.

Lu Yin’s palm met nothing, crushing only the ground.

“What’s going on?” Lu Yin was shocked. How could that beast vanish with merely a thought?

“That’s the ability of a Void Thunderbeast, ranked third on the Heavenly Beast Rankings. Don’t say that I didn’t warn you. A Limiteer realm Void Thunderbeast is difficult for even a human Hunter to capture,” the Ghost Monkey said with an envious tone.

Lu Yin wanted to ask some more questions about Yao Gu, but then he saw the command center’s outer wall collapse as a tall platform appeared. Above the platform, he could see one side of a war drum along with two giant war hammers, one black and the other grey.

“Planet Conan’s war drummer, Lu Yin,” a loud voice reverberated throughout the battlefield.

Lu Yin was stunned; he was the war drummer for Planet Conan?

“Lu Yin, follow your orders.”

Lu Yin did not hesitate and used Flash to appear next to the war drum. He could feel the iron blood and the steel willpower of his ancestors as he gripped the black war hammer with one hand. It was heavy and just gripping it caused an unusual energy to seep into his brain. It felt similar to when he faced Liu Shaoqiu’s Third Sword or Qu Ao’s voice. It was an energy that could rip apart spiritual force.

Dong dong dong dong...

As the war drumbeats resonated across the various protected planets of the Human Domain’s border, they merged together to form an extended sound wave that swept across the enormous stretch of space. Not only did the sound influence the astral beasts fighting on the planets, but also those in outer space.

Out in space, not far from Planet Conan, Yao Gu and Wen Sansi were facing each other. The sky was torn to shreds around them, and a set of peculiar words had formed a chain that seemed to imprison Yao Gu to one area. Yao Gu waved out with a hand, causing an extremely dark black spatial crack to extend outwards, break apart the chain of words, and then directly descend upon Wen Sansi.

Wen Sansi sighed. “What’s the point?” A moment later, the dark spatial crack vanished.

Yao Gu frowned as he remarked, “You’re even more detestable than that undying bird.”

Wen Sansi smiled. "Brother Yao Gu, please reconsider your actions. This decisive battle is not beneficial for either of us."

"It's of no matter, as this can also be considered as training the army. If I can defeat one of the Ten Arbiters today, then I wonder how much that would influence your Human Domain?" Yao Gu then raised his head and began to transform. He forcefully undid his current humanoid shape and returned to his original form of a Void Thunderbeast. He then raised his head and snarled fiercely.

Wen Sansi sighed again and his previously soft gaze became imposing, "The Wen family has continued on, from generation to generation since the ancient times. Let me show you my Wen family's battle technique that has inherited the strength of the ancient scholars' character. I'll bury you in the heavens. Literary Prison."

"Dream on! Even the almighty figures of your Human Domain don't dare to claim that they'll bury me," Yao Gu howled as a formless wave spread out, directly shattering all of Wen Sansi's word chains. It distorted space, and its enormous power even altered the atmosphere of the protected planets.