

The Mechanic 281

Chapter 281: The Limitations of Being a Main Character

The two hosts carefully analyzed the main storyline for the audience and followed it with the episode's main topic—Han Xiao. As the main character on Planet Aquamarine, Han Xiao's character was frequently talked about on the forums, and other planets' players were also able to get to know him from the show.

Han Xiao raised his eyebrow at this. It was not the first time that his name had appeared on Galaxy Times. It was a given, considering how much he had worked to raise his popularity among the players.

With Han Xiao revealing his own identity and many more plot points behind the scene, Galaxy Times was able to come up with their version of Planet Aquamarine's main storyline. The players mainly agreed with what they said as well, as their explanation was pretty logical.

From the players' perspective, Han Xiao had an essential role in the [Six Nations and Germinal] storyline. Now that the story had already been set in stone, his recent achievements emphasized his importance in the main storyline, allowing more players to become interested in him.

"I am very famous on Planet Aquamarine, but my popularity is limited with the players from other planets. Getting reported on by Galaxy Times due to my recent actions could be counted as a kind of advertisement," Han Xiao muttered.

The female host continued the segment. "According to the above, Black Phantom played a main role in the [Six Nations and Germinal] storyline. Based on the information gathered by the players, we can make bold assumptions that every single main storyline will have a key character like Han Xiao, otherwise known as the planet's main character. We could even say that each planet's main storyline was started by someone like Han Xiao..."

Han Xiao shook his head a few times when he heard that.

In truth, the main character of the [Six Nations and Germinal] storyline was the Germinal leader... But, ahem, that was not important.

The male host picked up when the female host stopped. "Logically, all NPCs are capable of starting events on their own, and the stronger and more experienced NPCs will be able to add diverse storylines into a planet's story.

"So, this also means that main storyline characters are limited by the map they're based in. In Black Phantom's case, he is currently a hot topic in Planet Aquamarine's main story, but does this mean that he will remain an important NPC in the future? Most likely not. His area of activity is limited to the beginner planet that he's on, and once space travel is unlocked in future versions, once important NPCs such as him will just become fodder.

"On the other hand, those NPCs that have ties with galactic organizations or entities will have the highest potential to affect future plot development. Another beginner planet, Ice Winter Planet, was under the control of the Hell Demons, a powerful galactic entity, and is more likely to have NPCs who

will develop into the later stages of Galaxy. Planets such as Planet Aquamarine and Planet Longtune with underdeveloped civilizations have less of a prospect...”

The show covered all sorts of topics, and some of the audience agreed while others argued against it. Once the hosts were done analyzing the situation on Planet Aquamarine, they moved onto interviewing the pro players. Han Xiao was not interested in this and stopped watching.

He had thought that the show was going to keep on praising him, but it turned out that they only turned around to backstab him in the end. However, the hosts did have a point. It was like how LV 1 players would get bullied by the bosses in the novice villages, but once the players leveled up, those bosses would become nothing but small fries. Han Xiao was also well aware the fact that Planet Aquamarine was not an impressive beginner planet.

But that did not mean that he was going to just do nothing.

Once he thought about his plan, he smirked and said, “We’ll see about that...”

...

Bang!

The alchemy room’s door was first twisted before being blown off its hinges and smashing into all the tools and equipment on the table. Emerald Grass, who had her back to the door, was shocked and turned around to see what had happened. All she saw was a figure by the door with blazing red hair who was walking toward her with enmity.

“What do you want?” Emerald Grass was alarmed and pointed at the intruder. Vines started to grow out of the surrounding crates and danced in the air like venomous snakes.

Hila was surrounded by a dark red energy, and with eyes also blazing with a crimson light, she said in a cold voice, “Give it.”

Emerald grass frowned and walked to the side as she revealed a row of test tubes on a table, each filled with some sort of bright red liquid. She shook her head and asked, “Do you mean these potions? These are all developed from your sister’s DNA. Do you want to try? They have pretty amazing effects.”

Hila, without even hesitating, raised her hand and shot out her red energy toward the test tubes. Emerald Grass cursed silently and hurriedly moved her plants to block Hila’s attack to protect the potions.

Bang!

The dark red energy waves cut through the vines like hot knife through butter, and the clean cuts sprayed green juice all over the place. Emerald Grass barely dodged the attacks, and the walls around her were all blasted right through.

“Lunatic!” Emerald Grass gritted her teeth and tried her best to block Hila’s attacks. The red energy waves clashed with the plants again and again, causing explosions to reverberate throughout the room and debris to fly all over the place.

The guards outside were frightened, and they did not know who to help.

“Quick, inform Lord Black Phantom about this!” The guard captain immediately made a decision and turned around. But before he could get very far, a black shadow had appeared at the end of the road and sped over. It was Han Xiao.

Han Xiao was always monitoring the alchemy room, and the moment he saw the fight begin, he rushed over. “Stop!”

Emerald Grass’s forehead was covered in sweat. Her powers were not as strong as Hila’s when it came to direct confrontations, and she was afraid that she would sustain injuries the moment she stopped using her powers. “I will stop if she stops.”

Hila’s expression remained unchanged as she had already steeled herself to kill Emerald Grass.

Han Xiao frowned, and faint blue light started to gather under his feet. He lightly stepped, causing this energy to spread through the floor, causing a mini earthquake that split open the ground.

Buzz!

Eight metal gun barrels popped out of the ground, and one could hear sounds of gears locking into place. They quickly turned into mini turrets and were pointed straight at the two combatants.

Trap-type Mini Mobile Turret. A new creation. They were placed in all the important areas in the shelter and could only be activated by Han Xiao.

“I think you may be forgetting who owns this place,” Han Xiao said in a low voice.

Hila gritted her teeth but backed off in the end, albeit with a murderous expression still on her face. Emerald Grass finally relaxed and let out a breath as she massaged her temple. She had just been attacked in the mind by Hila’s shockwaves and was suffering from some painful headaches.

“You didn’t keep up your promise of protecting my sister.” Hila turned her head and stared right into Han Xiao’s eyes.

Han Xiao sighed helplessly. “You’re overreacting.”

Emerald Grass held up one of the test tubes. “Humph. I made these using the DNA I got from Aurora’s hair strands. I was just recycling. I didn’t even hurt your sisters. What’re you so mad about?”

“You can’t!” Hila said in a cold voice. To her, Emerald Grass’s actions were too similar to Germinal’s, and it made her remember some painful memories from the past.

Neither wanted to back off, and Han Xiao’s head was starting to hurt. Conflict with allies was not easy to resolve.

At this moment, Aurora strolled over in her wheelchair, with the bear cub swinging back and forth on her legs.

Aurora looked much better than she had done a month ago. Her once shriveled hair had become soft and smooth; her once bony body had started to take on some weight, and she was emitting a positive and shiny aura. Her power that had been suppressed for so long was finally released, and it allowed her to look like a normal person again within a month.

“Sis, why are you fighting with the doctor?” Aurora asked in a worried tone.

Emerald Grass stared at Hila and then gave a thorough explanation of what had happened.

Aurora was shocked. She blinked a few times, then said, “It’s just some hair. I don’t really mind if it can help Uncle Han.”

Before, there was only her sister who treated her well. But now, with Han Xiao caring for her too, she was happy to contribute in any way she could. This way, she would feel better as she was somewhat paying back Han Xiao’s favor.

Han Xiao did not really have an opinion about this. He knew that Emerald Grass was conducting experiments, but since she only used some hair, he had just turned a blind eye to it. Hila had definitely overreacted a bit this time.

Aurora gave of a bright smile and said, “Sis, you don’t have to worry. I’m not that fragile.”

Hila remained silent for a while before she turned around and started to walk away. “Okay.”

After this whole fiasco, Han Xiao let the guards take care of the cleanup. Emerald Grass walked up to him and had an odd smile on her face. “I didn’t know there were this many turrets near the alchemy room. You’re keeping a watch over me, aren’t you?”

Han Xiao gave her a glance.

“Hehe. Don’t worry. I’m not a fool. After all, I’m a tool that you obtained. Tools aren’t supposed to have a say in anything.” Emerald Grass twirled around with her hair as she said that with a faint smile.

“Oh.” Han Xiao turned and left after only saying a word.

Emerald Grass’s expression froze. *That’s it?*

What kind of reaction was that? He was not angry, nor was he trying to give himself an excuse. He did not even try to threaten her or anything.

Am I that unimportant?

...

The curtains of the night were drawing to a close.

After a whole day of manufacturing tools, Han Xiao moved the materials into his secret base. On the way back, he saw a figure standing on the balcony of the building next door. The gentle moonlight shone on the right-side of Hila’s body, and he could see her staring blankly into the night sky. It seemed like she had been standing there for a while.

After thinking for a moment, Han Xiao lightly leapt onto the balcony.

Hila heard the movement and asked emotionlessly without turning her head, “What’re you doing up here?”

“Just looking around. Why are still up this late in the night?”

“Humph!” Hila did not reply.

Han Xiao then took a seat to the side and shook his head. “You were a bit too extreme today. I don’t think you were that hotheaded in the past.”

Hila frowned. “What’s that got to do with you?”

“What’s it got to do with me?” Han Xiao touched his chin and muttered, “I don’t think you said that back when I saved you and your sister, did you?”

Hila’s face froze. After remaining silent for a while longer, she finally let out a sigh and said slowly, “I’m just a bit lost.”

Chapter 282: The Fall of the Germinal Organization

“Feeling lost?” Han Xiao put a cigarette in his mouth and took out his lighter. “Well that’s easy to solve. Just take your sister back to the Germinal Organization, and I guarantee that you’ll never feel bored again.”

Hila glared at him and stayed quiet for a second. She then said to herself, “I wasn’t able to protect my sister, and I made her endure so much suffering. It’s all my fault. To protect her, I kept on training myself. Even though the battle carved a bloody past in my history, I will never regret what I did. The more lives I killed with my own hand, the safer I felt. It is the only way I could prove to myself that I was protecting my sister and wash away the remorse I have.”

“Back in the Germinal Organization, we rarely saw each other. I knew that she wanted to go to the outside world, which is why I always prepared stories for her and shared my experience from the world outside. Now that she has a new life, is making many new friends, and has even started to take care of a pet, she won’t need my stories anymore.”

Han Xiao could not light the cigarette in his mouth, so he brought out his gun and shot a few bullets up into the sky and used the hot gun barrel to light the cigarette. He inhaled before replying, “That bear was supposed to be my pet...”

“Saving her from the misery had always been my wish. Now that I have fulfilled it...” Hila ignored Han Xiao’s comment and continued. “She doesn’t need me to protect her anymore.”

Hila opened up her palm, and a dark red aura flowed through her fingers. Hila stared at her hands and said, “Back in the days, all I wanted to do was spend every minute training my power to crush the Germinal Organization by myself. Now, my sister and I are safe, so strength and power don’t matter to me anymore. I can spend all the time in the world with my sister, and this is my ultimate mate wish.”

Hila then closed her hands and formed a fist, crushing the red light in her hand. She closed her eyes. “But the life I always craved only brings emptiness in my heart. I’m so lost and don’t know what to do. I hate this feeling.”

“After living a dangerous life for years, letting your guard down may be uncomfortable; this is the classic symptom that soldiers face as they leave the battlefield,” Han Xiao answered. “Of course I believe that there’s another reason. I think that violence is in your blood, and every single cell in your body craves the taste of blood. Living a peaceful life may be a drug that slowly chips away your motivation for living.”

Hila had a weird expression and said, “Are you trying to get me to do bad things?”

“What else? Do you want me to comfort you?” Han Xiao shook his head. “I don’t need to tell you those cheesy and fluffy lines, and you are not a kind of person that needs consolation. Your sister is your sister, and you are you. You don’t need to give up your true personality for your sister, and she also does not want you to change yourself. Stop finding excuses. I can see that battles and violence are what you truly desire, and the hunger for power is what drives you to move forward. The world is much larger than you think. Even though I can beat ten of you, in the eyes of the universe, there are people that are still stronger than me.”

“What makes you say that you can beat ten of me?” Hila disagreed.

Han Xiao suddenly released a murderous intent in his eyes. Hila stepped back and unknowingly used her power. She was cautious as the dark red light drifted around her body.

“Maybe one day, I will take away your sister, just like what the Germinal Organization did. At that point, if you are still not strong enough to fight me... Haha. That’s why you need to get stronger, or else you will regret it.”

Han Xiao withdrew his murderous intent with a straight face, but Hila still could not calm down.

For a moment, her instincts told her that Han Xiao was not kidding. He was dead serious!

As if she saw the wolf’s teeth behind the sheep mask, a chill travelled through her spine.

“I can create some robots to help you train if you want, or you can learn from Emerald Glass and practice with some other Espers. Well, if there’s nothing else, I’m going back to sleep. I’m leaving my cigarette here.”

Han Xiao jumped down from the rooftop and headed back to his place.

After Han Xiao’s shadow faded away, Hila finally relaxed and let out a long sigh. Staring at the slowly burning cigarette, she picked it up and inhaled.

She closed her eyes and released the smoke from her mouth, enjoying the taste from the tobacco.

A long time passed before she opened her eyes. Her worries and anxiety suddenly disappeared, and all that was left was a cold, lonely feeling.

“He really is a monster...” Hila said to herself and laughed. “But so am I.”

...

Han Xiao spend all his time creating machines and training Frenzied Sword and the other three. He harvested the players’ experience, and the experience on the interface rose steadily. Every day was exciting and fulfilling, and time quickly passed by.

On 7th December 688 in the Galaxy calendar, the frontline finally sent back important news on the war.

The Germinal Organization had lost all control except the area around the headquarters. The other bases had all been destroyed.

Han Xiao received the notice, and Bennett invited him to meet up in Sanctuary One.

“The war against the Germinal Organization is finally coming to an end. The cards are reshuffled, and the Dark Net also needs to start looking at the new era,” Bennett said over a phone call.

After waiting for quite some time, the end of the war was finally in sight. The Six Nations were steady, and without any difficulty, they pushed the Germinal Organization to the brink of destruction. Han Xiao arranged all the work in Sanctuary Three and headed to Sanctuary One.

After a while, a helicopter landed on the roof of Sanctuary One. Bennett, who was waiting on the roof, laughed. “This is the first time you’ve arrived before anyone else. This isn’t like you.”

Han Xiao turned back to the chopper and said, “Take off now. Waste all the fuel in this thing before we come back.”

Bennett was dumbfounded and quickly grabbed Han Xiao off the plane. He then said, “The board meeting will take place after the war has officially ended. It will probably happen in the next few days.”

“How many days?”

“I’m still uncertain. The situation now is a bit complicated.” Bennett lowered his voice. “It’s hard for the situation to move forward.”

Han Xiao’s eyes flickered.

After they headed to the meeting room, Han Xiao asked, “So, what’s wrong?”

Bennett took out the intel and explained, “In summary, we already cut off all the routes from the headquarters to the outside world. The Six Nations have completely trapped the Germinal Organization. However, the troops of the Six Nations are still far away from the area around the headquarters, and they have no intention of attacking.”

“Well since they already destroyed all the other bases, isn’t it simple to just bombard the headquarters and end the war?” Han Xiao replied.

“Well, it is possible. After losing all the side bases, the Germinal Organization should not have enough anti-missile supplies and equipment to hold off the Six Nations. Even if their headquarters are hidden underground, it would still collapse under the explosion. But the reason the Six Nations didn’t do so was because of another complicated issue.”

Bennett took out another document.

“Because of your intel, most of the nuclear warheads have been disabled, and the rest of the nuclear warheads have been carried back to the headquarters. Because of the limited supplies, they could not wipe out the entire army of the Six Nations. However, there are quite a number of nuclear warheads,

and there would be devastating consequences to the climate of this planet if they went off. From research conducted by various meteorologists, if the nuclear warheads exploded at the same time, in the next five to fifteen years, the radiation will drastically worsen the climate of the world, and Andrea will be the highest radioactive place on the entire planet. It will turn into a wasteland where no living beings can survive. Under moral considerations, the Six Nations must migrate the entire population of Andrea to another land..."

"Second, during Germinal organization's retreat, they caught a lot of wanderers as hostage to prevent the Six Nations from bombarding the headquarters..." Bennett sighed. "That's why there's division among the Six Nations.

"Raylen and Theseus suggested ignoring the consequences and the lives of the hostages and directly attacking the headquarters. Then they can finally get rid of their mortal enemy once and for all. Stardragon has yet to respond. Maple wanted to force the Germinal Organization to surrender, and Hesla suggested attacking the headquarters with ground troops and trying to save the hostages. As for Ordina... they used various excuses to oppose all kinds of attacks toward the Germinal Organization."

Han Xiao was surprised. "I understand all the concerns of the other nations, but what is Ordina trying to do? They want to back off after all the fighting?"

Bennett knocked on the table and replied, "It is the last year of the term for Ordina's leader. Their political sphere has a lot of parties, so there are a lot of competitors for his position. If they can drag the war until the next year's election, they can use the reason of national security and war to automatically get elected for the next term."

Han Xiao did not know what to say. "That's a ballsy move... So, which side is the Six Nations leaning toward?"

"They want to try to make the enemy surrender. The Six Nations have their anti-missile defense system all the time, and that if the headquarters fires even one missile, they will attack and bombard the base. However, this is the worst outcome they can have. So, the Six Nations have sent a last message to the base, hoping that they will surrender and release the hostages. Then they will spare the lives of the Germinal Organization."

Bennett then shook his head. "But until now, the Germinal Organization still hasn't responded."

Chapter 283: Disagreement

The headquarters were as dense as a black mountain range covered in dead silence. The ground was full of equipment left by the soldiers, and the pungent smell of gas and smoke filled the city. In the buildings were the hiding soldiers. The atmosphere was dead and lifeless, and all of the soldiers stared out the windows with eyes that looked lost.

Even though they could not see the army of the Six Nations on the horizon, everyone knew that countless missiles were aiming right at them. The headquarters could turn into the sea of fire at any given second.

No one knew where their fate would lead them.

Everything would depend on the final judgement based on the Germinal Organization. Maybe there was a slim chance of surrendering.

In the end, not everyone embraced the idea of sacrificing for their country.

In the underground command room of the headquarters, the screen displayed the situation right now. The single blue dot represented the lonely headquarters, while the red field, which represented the Six Nations, covered the entire continent. There was nowhere for them to run.

The leader, who wore a mask, stood right in front of the screen with his hands behind his back. The senior officials quietly exchanged eye contact, but no one spoke. The room was dead silent.

“What do you plan to do?” a senior official asked after a while.

The leader shut his eyes. While everyone was worrying about the next step, the leader replied with a hoarse voice, “Launch all the nuclear missiles.”

Everyone was stunned by the words. A bald senior official who had a considerable amount of power shouted, “The Six Nations have already lock us down, and there’s no way we can bring them down by launching the rocks. This is suicide!”

“So what? Do you want to beg for mercy in front of the Six Nations?” The leader’s expression did not change. “Don’t forgot the vision of the Germinal Organization. There can be no defeat. Death is the only way.”

All the senior officials had great hatred toward the Six Nations. However, in the face of death, not everyone could stand their ground in their belief. Moreover, from the situation, being suicidal would not achieve anything. There was a chance that the Six Nations would break their promise and kill them after they surrendered, but there was still a slim of hope that they could survive.

“I disagree,” the bald senior official yelled as he stepped forward.

The leader turned around and glared at him and the officials behind. “Is there anyone who agrees with him?”

Some officials look right back at the leader, and some lowered their heads, but all of them replied with silence.

Facing the line of life and death, the leader and the officials had a disagreement, as if there was a huge cliff that separated them.

“What if I insist?” the leader said calmly.

“Launching the nuclear weapons requires two keys, the system authorization, and your fingerprint and iris,” the bald man replied. “You have the authorization, but you only have a key, while the vice leader has the other key, and he is on our side.”

The leader looked around and asked: “So, where is he?”

“Of course he is not here. We won’t give you any chance.”

The leader shook his head. “Looks like you made your decisions long ago.”

“Don’t be reckless. We still have the chance to bring the uprising again as a nation, so we should not simply sacrifice our lives...” The bald official tried to persuade the leader, but he suddenly stopped with his eyes wide open. As he was talking, the leader had taken out two keys that were needed to launch the rocket, and one of them was supposed to be with the vice leader.

“How... how did you...”

“Oh my god! Put it down now!”

“Why is the key with you?”

“Where’s the vice leader?”

No one could believe what had just happened, and the room turned into chaos.

The leader held onto the keys without saying anything.

“Return the key right now. We won’t let you do whatever you want.” The bald man tried to suppress the fear on his face. His voice shook slightly as he made a hand sign behind his back.

The leader shook his head and looked at the crowd. “Meggal, you secretly had conversation with Maple. Dorios, you made some compromise with the Oridina. Newt, Raylen promised to provide protection...”

The leader mentioned most of the people in the room, and seeing everyone’s shocked expression, he slowly said, “The consequences of surrendering for you, of course, will be different from the normal soldiers. So, don’t act like you are full of righteousness. Do whatever you want.”

The officials’ expressions changed, and they felt the fear of the leader rise in their bones.

Even though the leader had always been intimidating, at least, the officials could still guess what the leader was thinking. However, ever since they started losing the war, it had become harder to grasp what the leader was thinking. To be exact, it was right after Zero escaped the encirclement that the leader changed.

As if he was a lake without any bottom, suffering loses after loses, the leader had remained calm like a still pond. Nothing could make him rage anymore.

The door opened, and a dozen executive officers surrounded the senior officials.

These executive officers were all part of their army. After the war started, there were countless injuries and casualties for the executive officers, but the officials had all had the brains to protect their own interest and power. The main ideal of the Germinal Organization that gathered the people was hatred, not loyalty toward a certain person.

The officials did not say anything. The bald official gave the signal, and the executive officers moved forward and prepared their attacks toward the leader

Covered in colorful beams, the leader sighed.

“Guess I’ll send you all to see the vice leader.”

...

In a land far away from the headquarters was the base of the Six Nations. Thousands of armored troops awaited their command, and jets were hovering above the ground. The sound of engines cut through the sky, and the shockwave vibrated the tents and equipment on the ground.

The missile vehicles were on standby, and multiple satellites and radars closely observed any sign of the missiles in the headquarters and movements in the sky. As soon as they saw anything that was flying into the sky, they could instantly take it down. Then they would resort to violence and use everything they had to turn the headquarters into a wasteland.

In the battle command center, all the representing military officials were antsy.

"There's only seven hours, thirty-two minutes, and eleven seconds before the time limit, and they still haven't responded," the representative of Ordina said. "I think that we should extend the time for the Germinal Organization to think carefully and not do something stupid."

No one replied.

Raylen officer said with a cold expression, "We have already contacted four of the senior officials in the Germinal Organization. They were still trying to convince the leader."

The other representatives nodded with agreement. They all did something similar. When they are pushed back against the wall, quite a number of the Germinal Organization's senior officers were willing to surrender in exchange for safety.

The obvious bargain that the Six Nations wanted was to make the Germinal Organization surrender and save the hostages from danger.

"It's already been more than an hour and twenty minutes since the last contact. They haven't reported back to us since then."

"Don't worry. We still have time."

The officials from different nations were chitchatting with each other while they waited for the response. Giving a choice for the Germinal Organization meant that they would have to wait for the result.

An officer from Hesla suddenly asked, "So in the end, who is the leader of Germinal Organization? According to the intelligence from Dark Net, the leader came from the Gollum, the country that had fallen. The former identity of the Germinal Organization was Mimok, but we searched through all the files and still couldn't find the exact identity of the leader."

Bennett had given the information that Hannes found to the Six Nations, thinking that they could find more details given their power. However, the search was still met with a dead end. The leader was like a ghost without a past, and the files that stacked as high as mountain did not include his name. The only information that they had was what Hannes had found.

"Didn't Raylen conquer Gollum? Do you have any intel?" Stardragon's official asked.

Raylen's official shook his head. "We even searched for files on the list of civilians in Gollum back when it still existed, and none of them matched with the leader. We also sent some people to visit Gollum's original territory, and they didn't find anything. I wonder if the intel from the Dark Net is true..."

Chapter 284: The Finale (1)

"Huuu..."

Heavy breath filled the room like a broken bellow, and the stickiness of blood and spit crawled in his throat.

The mask covered in blood fell to the floor. Leaning on the side of a table, the leader barely opened his eyes and saw the destroyed room after the fight while the floor was full of corpses. The leader was the only one left standing in the room while all the executive officers had all fallen under his fists. The senior officials' frightened expression remained on their face as if they had stopped breathing.

The leader spat out bloody mucus and took a deep breath. The dense smell of stinky blood irritated his nose, and he could not help but cough his lungs out for another two minutes.

The intense battle had provoked his hidden injury from the ambush, when he was heavily injured by Han Xiao. He had not had time to recover, and soon, he became unable to quickly resolve it.

Every time that he felt the subtle pain, he was reminded of Han Xiao. Until now, the leader could only feel hatred in his heart. At times when the anger faded away, he could feel nothing but emptiness.

The leader stood in front of the central control panel and selected the option to launch the nuclear bomb. He took off his gloves, scanned his fingerprints and eyes, and authorized the launch. After the two keys were in the keyhole, both of them turned just needed to be turned, then the nuclear bomb will be launched. On the last step, the hands full of scars held on the keys, but they could not turn them.

The leader leaned on the chair and looked up at the ceiling. His eyes were not focused on anything as if he was daydreaming. No one had any idea what he was thinking.

Dududu!

The window popped out on the corner of the screen, and surprisingly, it was a call from Han Xiao.

The leader pressed the 'accept' button without any hesitation. The screen then showed Han Xiao's face.

Seeing the corpses on the floor, Han Xiao raised his eyebrow. He wanted to call to see the situation on the side of the Germinal Organization. He also wanted to see the leader one last time, but he already understood the situation after witnessing the scene. He shook his head and said, "Looks like you have made your decision."

The leader's eyes leaked his disappointment.

"I still can't believe that I lost to you, you... insignificant bug. Mistakes after mistakes, my life's work has been ruined by you... Now what do you want? To again gloat about what you have done? I'm here—

enjoy yourself. My life, the end of Germinal Organization, will all be an important part of your history. You are the winner, so you have the power to look down on the loser you defeated.”

“I told you, the galaxy is unfathomable. This planet is just a small speck of dust, and no one will spare a thought on what’s happened here.” Han Xiao shook his head. Even though he was watching the fall of his enemy, Han Xiao was calm and collected. In the end, he was still a gentleman. He slowly said, “I just think that, after doing so much in your life, you still haven’t had a chance to express your feelings.”

“Do you want to me confess to you, my mortal enemy?” The leader’s face looked even uglier. He leaned on the chair and relaxed his body. “That seems interesting.”

Han Xiao shrugged and directly cut to what he wanted. “What’s with Destiny’s Child?”

The leader laughed out loud and stopped after a while, shaking his head. “Destiny’s Child is nothing but a pity man. He can see the future, change the fate of people, yet he cannot decide his own life and death. He was destined to be used by others. You also have the ability to predict the future, so maybe the fate of Destiny’s Child will be yours.”

Han Xiao did not correct that statement. “Talk about yourself. It seems that you are from Gollum, am I correct?”

The leader’s expression changed and replied, “Looks like you have already found out... That’s correct. I was once a citizen of Gollum. Back then, I was a young man with passion and rage. After the event of Mimok, I joined the rebel organization. I rioted, protested, demonstrated—all I wanted was to save my country from the rotten government.

“But suddenly, the war started. Raylen invaded the country, and my country shattered into pieces under internal parasites and external attacks...”

The leader’s tone suddenly got angry. “Did you hear that? People called us parasites! What did I do wrong? Was protesting a mistake? No! All we wanted was to take back the rights that we once had and make our country a better place!

“We were so close to victory, and the path of light was right in front of us. Yet, the war destroyed everything. After the fall of Gollum, all my friends were executed. All of us were viewed as a defect in the society and eliminating us was the best way. The remaining citizens of Gollum were enslaved and tortured. Only a few were able to escape, and I was one of them.

“I was no legend. I’m just a normal kid who was lost until I saw the border of Gollum, which was locked by Rayland. Seeing the burning flag of Gollum and the rise of Raylen’s flag, I was awoken, and I realized my mission I have to carry out.

“Gollum was not perfect. There was darkness and weakness, but... it was still my country. The only thing I could do was...”

“Take revenge for my nation!”

The leader exhaled, and his eyes drift off the screen. His memories slowly showed up in his mind.

“But in the wave of time, a normal young man was nobody, and his life was as fragile as a bug. To travel through the battlefield, I dragged my exhausted body and transferred from one refugee camp to another. I was treated like a dog, and I lived a life without any respect.

“However, my blood was boiling, and I kept telling myself that no matter what danger I faced, I must live on. It was hatred that kept my heart pumping, that made my legs move forward... In the end, after I succeed in passing through the battlefield, I did not stop to look for shelter but turned to the wilderness.

“I knew that without power, I could not seek revenge. That’s why I lived in the wilderness and battled with the beasts. I turned myself into unbreakable steel.”

At this point, the leader pointed to the scars on his face and hand. “A hundred and seventy-six scars was the price I paid for my power.”

Han Xiao raised his eyebrows. “So, you really are just a normal human?”

“Why can’t I be a normal man?” the leader asked back.

After some thought, Han Xiao nodded and hinted that the leader could continue his story.

The leader then said, “In the wilderness, I kept on thinking, and when I headed back to the battlefield, I heard that the Mimok Organization still existed. How ironic, the tool that was created to bring terror upon the world was the only thing that represented the purest of Gollum. Then a plan formed in my mind as I assassinated the leader of Mimok and changed the name to Germinal Organization. I hid and slowly developed the organization, and it was since then I wore the mask.

“The war created a lot of opportunities. Countless people lost their home and had nowhere to stay. Then I decided on the vision of the Germinal Organization and gave them the hope that we could create a new world. Vision thrives in people who supports an ideology. It wasn’t me who used the refugees with no countries to go back to, but it was they who voluntarily gave their lives to me. This is hate, and they did not care as long as they could achieve their goal after they sacrificed their lives.

“Since my desire matched the public’s desire, I got a lot of helpful hands. And the Germinal Organization that fed on the aftermath of battle quickly grew from a seed into a towering tree.”

The voice of the leader was filled with hate. After the dream that the leader had nurtured was destroyed by another man, other than angry, his feelings were confused.

“Then... you showed up.

“You... cut down the tree.”

Chapter 285: The Finale (2)

“Compared to the pollution you caused in the past... and will cause in the future, I’d feel it’s more environmentally friendly to cut down this tree of yours,” Han Xiao said mockingly.

In his previous life, no player could dig out the origin of the leader—it was truly hard to find the true identity of an ordinary missing person in this age of war. After Han Xiao heard the leader’s description, he had a clearer understanding of him.

The leader was a firm patriot, one of the few Gollum citizens that escaped Raylen’s invasion. He hid in the dark, purposely fighting at the edge of death to look for breakthroughs and the power to revenge, one of the superhumans that started ordinary and reached the peak of the planet, ambitious and extreme.

Now that he had met a dead end, he decided that he would rather die than compromise; it was clear that the hatred was already deeply buried in his bones.

The experience of a planet main character is indeed really interesting and legendary. Every main character has a history that can be dug out, Han Xiao thought with mixed feelings.

When he was still very weak, the leader had been like a mountain, and he had needed to act with caution and become stronger. Finally, he had gained the power to face him head-on and defeated the Germinal Organization.

The Germinal Organization was the main antagonist of Planet Aquamarine in Version 1.0. Han Xiao had also participated in this storyline during his previous life as a player. Now that he had a different identity, his impact was much higher, and it was a totally different experience. Although Han Xiao looked very calm, it did not mean that he did not enjoy the victory—there was still a sense of accomplishment in his heart.

The leader shook his head and said, “I never thought that an escaped test subject would become my greatest enemy. When you stole the secrets and broke through my ambush, I already knew that the Germinal Organization would undoubtedly lose. I never give up, but there was nothing I could do; it was barely even a struggle before death.”

Because he had predicted this long ago, no matter how bad the situation was for them, he was not surprised. Seeing the organization that he had built slowly slide into the abyss, he was actually still calm.

“To me, defeat means death. The Six Nations want to see me surrender so that they can take all the knowledge that the Germinal Organization has gained throughout the years. I won’t let them get anything.”

Han Xiao raised his brows. “About that, I heard you captured quite a few hostages. If you activate the explosion, all of them will definitely die, and the nuclear blast will affect the climate, worsening the environment of the entire planet, endangering the everyone’s future in this planet. Are you sure you want to do this?”

The leader kept silent. The sound of breathing was the only thing coming out from the speakers. Han Xiao was not in a hurry; he watched the screen calmly.

After a while, the leader spoke in a low voice.

“You’re going to persuade me to surrender?”

Han Xiao shrugged and said, "I'm not planning to, because you don't seem like someone that can be persuaded, but the guys opposite me want me to..."

He was in a meeting room of Sanctuary One at the moment, holding his laptop and sitting on the sofa. Bennett sat opposite him and listened to the entire conversation. He kept using hand signs to tell Han Xiao to persuade the leader. Both sides suffering was the last thing Bennett wanted to see.

Han Xiao felt that Bennett was daydreaming. To have him, the very person that caused their defeat, do the persuasion, was that not completely adding fuel to the fire? Even if the leader had planned to surrender originally, he might change his mind instantly after seeing Han Xiao's face. Luckily, the leader had always been very firm, or he would have been quite worried... Wait a minute, that logic felt somewhat weird.

Bennett kept giving him signs. Han Xiao had no choice but to give it a try, or Bennett would nag him like a mother again.

"I'd rather bring everyone with me," the leader said maliciously. "This world shall know pain!"

Han Xiao's mouth opened wide, a classic reference stuck in his throat.

Pain, is that you? [1. Pain is a character in a Japanese manga/anime series, one of his signature lines is "This world shall know pain."]

The leader sneered. "I hate this world—why should I care for it? Even if the Six Nations won, don't even dream of not paying anything! The Six Nations are killers, too, only reaching their position today after destroying countless nations. They stood on the ruins and praised their actions. The winner is always on the side of justice, and these blood debts will all be buried in history. No one will know, no one will find out, and no one will fight for justice of the old era. These governments that have luckily survived have enjoyed themselves for too long, and it's time for them to pay a little interest!"

The leader did not care about what the world would become after he died; he would rather betray others than to be betrayed. Even a normal person might feel this way, not to mention the malicious, ambitious leader.

Han Xiao did not comment. The results of a nuclear attack would have a minimal effect on him, as he would sooner or later leave Planet Aquamarine. Furthermore. The next version was Mutation Disaster. A larger disaster was coming, and in comparison, this climate disaster would be nothing.

The Germinal Organization had survived in his previous life, and there had been a potential risk of them coming back again. Now the Germinal Organization had been annihilated at once, but it brought a last lasting negative impact. As for which one was better, Han Xiao did not really know, but the latter would definitely clear his [Fall of the Germinal] mission.

To other people of Planet Aquamarine that did not know this, the result of the latter was horrifying. The climate was deeply connected to their lives, and no one would wish for an environment deterioration.

Sitting opposite, Bennett was anxious. He wished he could just fly to the Germinal Organization headquarters and kill the leader before he could press the button.

Han Xiao looked at the clock and said slowly, "There's still quite some time till the deadline that the Six Nations gave. Aren't you going to wait any longer?"

"I prefer to decide my time of death myself." The leader's eyes became firm. He reached out his hand, held onto the nuclear launch keys, and started turning slowly.

A suffocating pressure came out of the screen, and the leader's movement seemed to be lasting forever. Bennett hands clawed at the sofa's armrests and tore the leather open.

Every degree he turned, one second was taken away from the countdown clock of countless lives.

The second hand gradually pointed toward the final result.

Han Xiao looked at the leader's face calmly and suddenly asked, "I never got your name."

"My name?" The leader lifted the corner of his lips and gave a ferocious smile. "Not important."

"You're right, so... goodbye then." Han Xiao sighed and waved his hand.

The keys turned one hundred and eighty degrees.

The sound of a quake came out of the screen—that was the sound of missiles rising into the sky.

The leader retracted his hands and sat on the chair like a statue. At that moment, his tone did not have any hatred, regret, or sadness of almost facing his death; there was not any intense emotion. Like old neighbors passing each other, he nodded at Han Xiao.

"Goodbye."

...

"Warning! Warning! Fast-moving objects are rising from the Germinal Organization headquarters!"

All of the waiting military officers in the Six Nations combat conference stood up in shock; this was the worst-case scenario. Although the people present were mentally prepared, when this moment arrived, they still found it hard to accept.

A nuclear blast killing hostages, resulting in pollution, burning the Germinal Organization headquarters to the ground, countless classified technology lost forever... It could not be considered a win for any party.

"Activate anti navigation?" the assistant said shivering.

All the officers had no choice. Without hesitation, their responses were the same. "Activate immediately!"

In the Germinal Organization headquarters, the ground and the buildings were trembling slightly. The hiding Germinal Organization soldiers looked up to the sky through the windows and saw the missiles rise one after another.

An atmosphere of silence and death spread among the people. Everyone knew the leader's decision and what was going to happen next.

Tears, despair, madness, twitching, trembling, screaming, growling, indifference...

The countless emotions and responses right before death.

In the sky far away, a dense number of black objects approached rapidly—some clashed with the rising missiles, and some landed in the headquarters.

Hum—

The first sound was a high-pitch explosion undetectable to the human ear. Most of the people in the Six Nations camp faraway covered their ears, but blood was still flowing out.

A fire pillar, tens of kilometers in diameter, shot up the sky. The group of bases disintegrated in an instant. Black dust was spat out from the blinding firelight, gradually rising and turning into a condensed black mushroom.

In the Six Nation camp far away, the people who looked out could only see white. The light had temporarily blinded most of the people, and even the superhumans had to close their eyes. No one could stay natural in the face of this kind of power; everyone felt small and insignificant, like they had become sand that was going to be blown away by the next wind. Unable to control their own fate, they started to shiver uncontrollably.

Even in further areas, the fire could be seen to soar through the clouds above the Germinal Organization on the horizon, and the clouds formed a circle in the sky.

Right after, the firelight shone a second time, emitting a yellow spherical shockwave mixed with dust and ash. Everywhere it passed, the ground cracked, and the buildings shattered into pieces. Countless bent pieces of metal easily flew for miles like feathers, falling onto the wilderness like rain.

The shockwave finally arrived at the camp. Like the breath of the god of wind, tents were blown away, spinning like dandelion seeds; heavy vehicles rolled like balls; for the people there, a few broken bones was just a light injury. The onlooking players were shocked and excited—they recorded the moment and did not want to miss out anything.

With the expanding shockwave came the second explosion, and the frequency could be caught by human ear this time, almost breaking people's eardrums.

Boom!

The sound was like the sky was falling apart!

Deafening!

The camps behind started to stand their ground and commanded the troops to retreat quickly.

The continuous firelight was the only thing left on the wilderness. The image was like a punishment from the gods, and the tumbling mushroom cloud kept changing its shape like the smile of a devil.

The leader, with his unfulfilled belief and the organization that he had created, turned into a bright firework that lit up the entire sky.

The Germinal Organization had ended.

The nuclear explosion that burned the headquarters to the ground marked the end of the Planet Aquamarine war.

...

The highest ranked officials of the Six Nations hosted an emergency meeting. The enemy had been defeated, but the upcoming impact was not optimistic.

“In accordance to the scale of the explosion, the climate bureau created a calculus model. The first batch of radiation dust will enter the atmospheric cycle in the next three to six hours. Within the next month, the land of Andrea will enter a nuclear winter that will last for at least half a year. During that time, the land will not be suitable for any lifeform. Flora and fauna will die in droves, and the land will become a complete death zone. The radiation will reach the sea area near Andrea, which might cause the marine food chain to collapse. Some sea creatures might also go through unknown mutations.

“High-density radiation and pollution will enter the sea cycle, then spread to the entire world through the form of rain. This process will take about 300 to 500 days to complete. By then, the entire planet’s climate will start to deteriorate. As the affected area is much larger, the deterioration is not as severe as it will be in Andrea, but it still will heavily damage the atmosphere and have a negative impact in every way. This impact might last as long as more than ten years. In this time, the entire planet’s technology is estimated to be unable to advance and might even recede.”

The high ranked officials of the Six Nation all had serious expressions. This was not just about a nation—it was about the entire world, the entire race.

An anti-war official slammed the table and said wrathfully, “Look! Look what you did! Our troops suffered huge losses. Not only do we not get any benefits after winning, it even led to this result. We never should have started the expedition and the war in the first place! We should have let the Germinal Organization hide in Andrea and stopped after we destroyed their sub bases!”

Back then, when the expedition was decided, some politicians had been anti-war, because once the war started, the resources and authority would heavily slant to the military. Of course, some high ranked officials would not be happy about it. However, majority ruled, and their voice was ignored. Now that they had justified excuses, they decided to stand up for themselves after what had already happened.

“We are already at this point; don’t say any more useless things.”

The bitter fruit of war had to be borne by the entire world; it affected a lot of innocents. In order to get rid of this enemy, they had paid such a big price. Some high ranked officials started to ask themselves if this was all worth it.

The answer was yes.

At least in the eyes of the high ranked officials, such a strong enemy posed more of a threat than what they called a planet-scale climate disaster. After they got rid of that, only then could they feel safe and have the condition to grow steadily. The high ranked officials of the nations all thought that. Everyone had to face the climate disaster threat, everyone had to deal with it, so they were still on the same starting line, and it was fair for everyone.

At least the result could still be saved.

“Should we lock down the news and not share it with the civilians?”

“Too many people already know about it. There’s no a need for that. Announce it officially.”

“The people will definitely protest and blame us for causing this.”

“Not important, the war has ended. What we need to face now is the disaster that will come after that. Let everyone know we’re on the same boat, and they should let go of the past and not dwell on what was wrong or who was right. We have to work together to get through this.”

“Then, what about...”

The high ranked officials of the nations discussed one suggestion after another.

...

With a furious expression, Bennett walked back and forth in the room, mumbling to himself. Han Xiao sat on the sofa with his legs crossed. He looked up the blue sky outside the window and shook his head.

The leader had turned to ash with the headquarters.

The Germinal Organization could be considered as the first big BOSS that he had faced, and this big main storyline on Planet Aquamarine had been destroyed by him. He started to like this feeling a little.

No matter how legendary the leader’s past was, he had been Han Xiao’s enemy. Han Xiao very rarely showed mercy to his enemies. Victory meant victory, and there was no need for the winner to fake regret and remorse.

With a deep breath, Han Xiao got excited. He opened the interface and browsed the notifications that had shown up.

You have received Planet Legendary Points—[Germinal Organization Slayer]!

Grade A Main Storyline Mission [Fall of the Germinal] Completed!

Grade: Unbelievable

You have received mission reward for [Unbelievable] grade

Calculating reward...

Calculating reward...

Please wait patiently...

Chapter 286: Dungeon Creation

Han Xiao’s eyes sparkled. In the past, the highest mission grading that he had received was [Excellent], and [Unbelievable] was better than [Excellent].

For normal players, the normal mission process should be like this—Infiltrate one sub base after another to uncover the location of the other bases through the stolen information. As the Germinal Organization became more cautious, the player would face stronger enemies, and the mission would become increasingly cumbersome. Every time the player got the intelligence about the next base, they would face the choice of destroying the base themselves or borrowing power from the Six Nations. The former would reward higher process.

Han Xiao had skipped the most cumbersome part of collecting intelligence and instantly given out all the Germinal Organization bases' locations. The difference in efficiency was like the difference between using a sickle and a tractor.

[Fall of the Germinal] was a grade A main storyline mission, and even Han Xiao had spent more than one year to complete it with his prior knowledge. Han Xiao was satisfied with the result that he had almost completed the final target of the entire large main storyline by himself. He was anticipating the reward.

[Planet Legendary Points (Planet Aquamarine): Germinal Organization Slayer]

The Germinal Organization, planet-sized large organization, the enemy of the Six Nations for many years, its power is like a majestic mountain. You are just a tiny traitor, but you gradually uprooted the Germinal Organization and buried it. The Germinal Organization became your stepping stone, and your actions will be passed on and admired by countless people. Your name will be written in the books of history on this planet.

New legendary points. This was a reward that he had expected. His single mission EXP reward quota increased by another five percent, and his daily quota increased by a hundred percent.

Very soon, the other reward showed on the interface.

[Fall of the Germinal]

Personal Destruction Percentage: 48.72%

Grade: [Unbelievable]

You have received:

4,870,000 EXP

+2 Potential Points

+4 Free Attribute Points

+800 Relationship Points with all Six Nations

His personal destruction percentage was close to half, which meant that in the operation of destroying the Germinal Organization, Han Xiao almost did as much as the entire military forces of the Six Nations. After all, Six Nations' many operations had been carried out with the support of the intelligence he provided. One could say that his intelligence had controlled the entire war.

Using the hostility of the Six Nations toward Germinal Organization, he just had to give the Six Nations a knife, and they would attack. Even if the Six Nations knew that Han Xiao intended to use them, they were willing to be used. The end result was that both Han Xiao and the Six Nations achieved their own goal.

You have received reward for [Unbelievable] grade:

Bonus 120% EXP (5,830,000)

Random Reward * 1

Special Item * 5

In accordance with my mission evaluation, the hidden percentage for receiving something good as the random reward should be quite high.

The random reward could be an item, ability, or something else; it only had a chance of appearing when the mission grade evaluation was very high.

Leaving the random reward aside, he first looked at what were the five special items.

You have received [Character Summon Card: Germinal Organization Leader]!

You have received [Character Summon Card: Destiny's Child]!

You have received [Character Summon Card: Aurora]!

You have received [Character Summon Card: Hila]!

You have received [Medal of Honor—Germinal Organization Slayer (A)]!

Han Xiao was stunned. This was the first time that he had received this many character summon cards at once. The use of the character summon card was to give the user the ability of the character summoned temporarily. It was a consumption item, and if used well, it could change the situation in an instant. He had only received two before.

The leader, Destiny's Child, Aurora, and Hila—all of the abilities of these four people are quite good, and all of them can be used more than four times, very durable.

[Character Summon Card: Germinal Organization Leader—Armor Penetrating Consecutive Attacks]

For 8 seconds, all attack will be considered armor penetrating critical hits, reducing the defense of targets hit by 24%.

Duration: 5 minutes

Usages: 0/12

[Character Summon Card: Destiny's Child—Foresight]

Predict an 'opportunity' in the future. Can indicate to be a mission, an item, action of a certain person... etc.

Usages: 0/5

[Character Summon Card: Aurora—Life Return]

Restore back to full status instantly.

Usages: 0/6

[Character Summon Card: Hila—Whisper of the Dead]

Deals psychic damage three times to the enemy. The damage is based on the user's INT or MYS (can be indicated). Decrease all statuses of the target by 15%.

Duration: 3 hours

Usages: 0/8

Only the effect of Destiny's Child was not very clear. The rest were all simple, straight forward, and practical.

Predict an 'opportunity'... this is quite ambiguous. Could it be predicting opportunities of completing a mission or getting a certain item?

Han Xiao had a flash of insight, he was thinking of leaving Planet Aquamarine, but all the methods that he could think of were not very reliable. He could just nice try the effect of the Destiny's Child card.

Without any further hesitation, Han Xiao used it, with thoughts of going into the galaxy in his mind.

His vision suddenly blurred, and like fog, it was all white. Unaware of how much time had passed, a tint of black appeared in the middle of his vision, then it became an eerie image. The background seemed to be a wasteland, and a flame fell from the sky, creating a circular crater, giving out black smoke and electrical sparkle.

Some unknown information flashed in his mind.

"The location is... The time is..."

The image suddenly stopped, as if everything was just an illusion.

Han Xiao regained his focus. The information was in his mind, and his expression changed a little. *It really did predict an opportunity to head out into the galaxy. This opportunity was originally already one method I had thought of but didn't know when it would happen. This card broke through the fog of fate and predicted a location and time estimate.*

The effect of this card was very surprising, and he now had more confidence in leaving Planet Aquamarine.

He looked at the last item, [Medal of Honor—Germinal Organization Slayer (A)]. When completing a high difficulty main storyline mission with a high evaluation grade, one would receive this type of medal. Its effect provided a three-percent boost to all attributes, and after collecting three, it could be exchanged into a special achievement medal, providing a twelve-percent boost to all attributes. He had farmed it in his previous life before. Knowing its effect was very good, he equipped it on the spot.

After he arranged the special items, he started to select random the reward.

Randomizing...

Your reward time this time is... an Item.

Please select one from the three items below:

Race Change Card: Change into a random race

Mission Completion Card * 3: Consider one mission to be completed and receive the reward based on the lowest grade

Esper Ability Potential Enhancing Fluid: Increase the potential of Esper ability.

This is good! Han Xiao's eyes glimmered. [Esper Ability Potential Enhancing Fluid] was extremely rare. Espers were willing to use everything they had to buy this thing because there were only two ways to increase one's Esper ability potential. One was through rare experiments and drugs in game, and the other was Esper Ability Potential Enhancing Fluid. The other two items were not suitable for Han Xiao, so he chose the Esper Ability Potential Enhancing Fluid and left in on the interface without collecting it.

Esper Ability Potential Enhancing Fluid, it has a very huge potential value regardless of whether I sell it to players or others. I need to keep stock up on the good items like this; it will definitely be of great use in the future.

The reward this time was colossal. He had earned 10,000,000 EXP in one shot, and although it did not look a lot, that was because Han Xiao's standard was too high. If a player received 10,000,000 EXP in one shot, it would be an outrageous amount in Version 1.0.

There were also Potential Points, Free Attribute Points, and rather useful items—Han Xiao was quite satisfied. The most valuable ones were those items.

However, Han Xiao kept feeling like there should be more rewards. Thus, thinking that, he opened the NPC panel. Suddenly, he noticed a new option under the quota.

Dungeon Creation: [Six Nations and Germinal Organization]

“What’s this?” Han Xiao was confused. This new function did not even have any notification. He tried to use this function, and the notification showed up.

Please select a part of the main storyline to create a Dungeon Crystal.

Create a Dungeon Crystal! Han Xiao’s expression changed into surprise.

After some testing, he became familiar with the use of this function. To put it simply, it could turn parts of his experience in the Germinal Organization main storyline into a dungeon. Then he could create the dungeon crystal and use that as a reward for the missions that he gave out. It increased the variety of rewards for his missions.

Han Xiao guessed that the reason this new function appeared should be because he had completed a high difficulty large main storyline with a very high grade, which meant that he had done something legendary. Due to that, he could turn the things that he had done into dungeons.

Some missions from some NPCs might reward Dungeon Crystals, such as Dion, whom he had met before. Now he could do so as well, and because of the interface, he could control the creation of Dungeon Crystals! He realized that the Dungeon Crystals could only be rewarded as part of a mission reward. It could not be turned into an item and sold in his shop, which fitted the method of players acquiring Dungeon Crystals.

Compared to other rewards, this function was the biggest reward, strengthening his functions as an ‘NPC’ and becoming more attractive to the players!

Han Xiao was astonished.

Dungeons can only be created from legendary experiences, such as largely changing the main storyline of a planet or even larger areas. There might be many more functions to the NPC panel—I just have to acquire them.

With the NPC panel, it meant that there were more benefits to taking part in the main storyline.

If he could possess the Dungeon Creation Right to many huge events, the players would be unbelievably interested in him.

This was the biggest pleasant surprise!

Chapter 287: Stable Period in Planet Aquamarine

After Han Xiao finished arranging the rewards, Bennett, who was walking back and forth, sat down, too. "A war of this scale will not happen again any time soon, but when the Six Nations recover, they might start to clear out other organizations to strengthen their dominance. Now that the Germinal Organization has been defeated, Dark Net is one of the biggest organizations left, so they will come for us sooner or later."

Han Xiao put away his excitement and put on a pondering face. "Before having authority, anyone would think themselves a good person. The Six Nations still need to deal with the upcoming disasters brought by the nuclear blast, and they won't have time for other things for a short period. Talking about the disaster, your sanctuary plan can now be put to use."

"I'd rather it never be..." Bennett sighed. "After the war, more wanderers will look for protection, so I plan to speed the plan up, build sanctuaries in Western Continent and Northern Continent as well. The refugees of Andrea need to be migrated, so I will send people to fetch them. The Six Nations are very willing to throw this matter to us."

There were two large main storylines on Planet Aquamarine—one of them was the Germinal Organization, which he already destroyed, and this was the main storyline of conflict. The other was the construction of sanctuaries. Compared to the Germinal Organization war, the sanctuary main storyline would not be so intense. The whole of Planet Aquamarine would become stable period next. There would most likely not be any more large conflicts in Version 1.0. Han Xiao's strength was at the peak of the planet, and he was responsible for the end of the Germinal Organization. Therefore, he basically did not have any enemies and could steadily grow.

The Germinal Organization main storyline was supposed to be a large event that would happen throughout the Version 1.0, but now, it had ended in the early stages. Players that preferred the chaos, of course, would not like this peace, but this was a good thing for Han Xiao since he had just received the dungeon creation right for the Germinal Organization main storyline. He could divide the war into dungeons and fulfill the players' everlasting desire for battle. More players would be attracted to him, and his position would continue to grow.

The Germinal Organization is dead, and I have no enemies in Planet Aquamarine anymore. I can now prepare for the galaxy peacefully. The opportunity to leave Planet Aquamarine is around the pro league, in about one year. This period will be very peaceful, so I need to get more EXP while I can as there will not be many players in the galaxy for me to interact with.

The enemy was gone, and Han Xiao suddenly felt like he was finally relieved.

Version 1.0 would last for about three and a half years. He could totally wait for more than a year. The Six Nations were enjoying the victory at the moment, not knowing that a disaster would soon arrive. The nuclear blast might strengthen the power of the Mutation Disaster, and if so, Han Xiao could only mourn for them.

In the next few days, Han Xiao joined the Dark Net high-rank meetings to discuss the future.

Most of the time, he was just watching and hardly gave any suggestions, but everyone in the meeting took him very seriously. As the strongest person in the Dark Net, the mastermind behind the fall of

Germinal Organization, Han Xiao's name and position were above all others. With his achievements, Han Xiao would receive the same treatment anywhere he went.

In the player forums, the ending of this large main storyline attracted a lot of attention. It was the first time for the players to take part in something of such a large scale, so they were very excited. There were some players who saw the nuclear explosion with their own eyes and uploaded the recording. And the cause of all this, Han Xiao, had his share of the attention, too. The players made guesses on Han Xiao's experiences and increased Han Xiao's fame once again.

With the end of the war, Germinal Organization players lost their organization and had a chance to choose again. They left Andrea together with the refugees and could choose which continent to go to. Without any prior agreement, almost seventy percent of the ex-Germinal Organization players chose to go to the Southern Continent.

"Black Phantom, we are coming!"

The ex-Germinal Organization player almost cried tears of joy, after having a tough time for so long, they finally saw the light. Who could understand how bitter they felt when they saw the other players show off the benefits from Han Xiao?

Why not all ex-Germinal Organization players?

Of the other thirty percent, most of them had participated in the Germinal Organization headquarters mission, so their relationship points with Han Xiao were less than -10.

*Piece of sh*t Germinal Organization, give me back my future!*

...

The plane landed in Sanctuary Three. Just as Han Xiao alighted from the plane, Huang Yu approached him like he had something to say.

"What is it?" Han Xiao noticed Huang Yu's hesitation.

Huang Yu cleared his throat and said, "Your excellency, your family member is here to visit you."

My family? Han Xiao was stunned for a while, then he realized it was the Alumera family.

With some thinking, after the war ended, he was someone outside Alumera but a member of Alumera, and he was also the person with the highest position in the entire planet. Of course, Alumera would be curious of his standpoint, and they wanted to rely on him by using this relationship that they had.

Han Xiao raised his eyebrows and said, "Tell him to come and see me."

Ten minutes later, Xiao Quan followed Huang Yu into the guest hall. He was the messenger sent by Alumera to visit Han Xiao and one of Xiao Jin's foster children. Technically, he was Han Xiao's body's brother—they were so-called 'family'.

Xiao Quan was excellent compared to the other foster kids, and he had been chosen as the messenger this time because he knew how to read the situation. When Han Xiao's true identity was exposed, many brothers and sisters in the family could not believe it. Some had even been furious upon realizing that

Han Xiao became their elder. However, Xiao Quan did not dare to have that kind of emotion—he was very aware of the current situation. They could not look at ‘Han Xiao’ the way they used to, and seeing how furious his siblings were, Xiao Quan only felt they did not know what death was.

Black Phantom alone was far superior to the entire Alumera, and he did not dare show any disrespect.

Xiao Quan used his eloquence to chat with Huang Yu, wanting to get hints from Huang Yu about Han Xiao’s standpoint but was completely unable to. As Huang Yu did not care much about him, Xiao Quan became even more nervous.

“We’re here, go in.”

The door of the guest hall opened, and Xiao Quan saw Han Xiao sitting on the sofa with crossed legs right away, staring at him faintly. Xiao Quan could not help but hold his breath.

“Xia—Han Xiao, it’s been a long time.” Xiao Quan braced himself and greeted him, wanting to ease the atmosphere.

“Call me Han Xiao,” Han Xiao said coldly.

That was not a good sign, Xiao Quan was terrified but had to follow.

“Only you?” Han Xiao raised his brows and said, “What does Alumera want me for?”

Xiao Quan found the words carefully and said, “Han Xiao, Father has always been thinking of you. He has been wanting to see you and hopes you can return. As for all the unhappiness before, he can explain.”

Han Xiao kept silent and stared at Xiao Quan unwaveringly. Xiao Quan felt the pressure from Han Xiao’s eyes and looked down, beads of sweat rolling down his forehead.

“He wants me to go over there?” Han Xiao stood up and walked up to Xiao Quan with wide strides as if he was going to strike. Xiao Quan was completely suppressed by the aura. Thinking of the things that Han Xiao had done, a sense of horror filled his heart. He stepped back and bumped into the chair, lost his balance, and fell to the ground. He hastily wanted to stand up, but a shadow suddenly shrouded him. Han Xiao looked down on him with his hands in his pocket. Han Xiao’s eyes were like needles that made Xiao Quan tremble. He half kneeled on the ground, looked up horrified, and did not dare to move.

“You guys can’t seem to understand the situation. If Xiao Jin wants to see me, he’d better get over here himself,” Han Xiao said coldly as he suddenly reached out his hands toward Xiao Quan.

I’m done for... he wants to kill me! Xiao Quan’s face was completely terrified, his brain went blank.

Suddenly, he felt a force on his shoulder from a hand, pulling him up.

Xiao Quan was pulled up, and Han Xiao patted his shoulder lightly like he was brushing off dust for him. “Tell them what I said the exact way I said it.”

Huang Yu, who waited by the side, opened the door, pointed with his arms, and said expressionlessly, “This way please.”

Xiao Quan regained his focus. He did not dare stay any longer and left like he was running away.

Han Xiao sat back on the sofa and pondered. *Alumera visited because they want my help using the 'family' relationship, but I just have the right thing I need them to do. If I can get Alumera to move to Sanctuary Three, the NPC resources here will be even greater...*

...

On the other side, after Xiao Quan left, he reported the situation to Xiao Jin while shivering.

"H—he wants you to come here yourself."

Xiao Jin's expression kept changing, and he let out a long sigh. "Prepare to pay the price..."

Back then Han Xiao wore a mask, they did not know his real identity. There had still been space to negotiate. Now that his real identity was exposed, it meant that every problem between them was placed on the table and had to be solved, and Alumera was the weaker one, so they had to keep stepping back.

Xiao Jin looked at Xiao Hai, who was beside him, and said in a low voice, "Prepare to apologize and make up yourself!"

Xiao Jin then slammed the door on the way out, leaving Xiao Hai alone in the room with a terrified face.

Chapter 288: The New Round of Business (1)

After getting rid of the Alumera messenger, Han Xiao went to look for Frenzied Sword and the others. He was going to test the dungeon creation function.

Han Xiao went to the building next door, and none of them were home. Han Xiao scratched his head. He took out his laptop, ran a program and searched through the images of all the hidden surveillance cameras in the sanctuary to find a match for these four faces. Not long after, the locations of these four were found. Maple Moon was learning new fusion recipes with Emerald Grass. Green smoke was billowing out of the drugs. A few honest players stood to the side, probably there to test the drug.

Hao Tian was in the arena doing a Challenge. As a pro player, he had very high expectations for himself, and he never stopped honing his skills.

Frenzied Sword was getting beaten rapidly by Hila like a sandbag. Hila had taken Han Xiao's advance and found an Inhuman to train and develop her power. Aurora sat in her wheelchair and watched while hugging Bear Cub, and Bun-hit-dog was recording excitedly. Bun-hit-dog was closer to Frenzied Sword. He felt very happy, seeing that Frenzied Sword was getting beaten brutally... true friendship.

Han Xiao headed to Hila's house and called the others on the way.

Just as he entered the yard, a black shadow flew away above his head. It was Frenzied Sword, and without thinking, Han Xiao pulled him down from the sky.

Hila stopped her training, her floating red hair dropping down and going back to curly hair that extended to her waist, and the red light in her eyes faded away. Han Xiao looked at Frenzied Sword, who looked

miserable, then nodded in his heart. The Hila now resembled who she was in his previous life much more.

Bear Cub struggled to stand on Aurora's lap, fell onto the ground, and then ran to Han Xiao. The cub climbed up his leg, hugging on Han Xiao's neck and swung like a backpack. Bear Cub was very well taken care of, and its weight had almost doubled.

Han Xiao raised his hand and slapped Bear Cub away, then looked at the combat information on the interface. Bear Cub was LV 18, four levels higher than when he had brought it back.

Sharp Claw Ice Bear species, rather good growth potential.

Hila felt complicated. She was full of hatred toward Germinal Organization, but she had never thought that such a big organization would ever be destroyed completely. Her hatred and grudges disappeared with that ground shaking explosion. She remembered when she had first met Han Xiao—who knew that weak, pale-faced test subject would have such legendary achievements after just one year?

Seeing her expression was abnormal, Han Xiao took out his laptop, opened a few photos, and passed it to Hila. The photos were the ruins of the Germinal Organization headquarters after the nuclear explosion, captured by Six Nations' drones. It was black and scorched earth.

"After an explosion like this, they're most likely all dead. Even if there is anyone left, it will only be those of insignificance, so don't have to worry about Germinal Organization coming back unless they are tired of being alive." Han Xiao paused before saying. "You were once a member of the Germinal Organization, so you are on Six Nations' wanted list too, but you are on my side now, so Six Nations won't be against you anymore."

Hila frowned. "I never agreed to be your subordinate."

Aurora raised her hand and said, "I want to be."

Hila reached out her hands bitterly and messed Aurora's hair. Aurora's golden hair had grown longer, reaching her ears.

They chatted for a while till Hao Tian and Maple Moon arrived. Usually, Han Xiao would only summon them if something good was going to happen, so they were looking forward to it.

Han Xiao used the dungeon creation function. After some contemplation, he selected the Dark Crow Valley operation. To create dungeon crystals, this was suitable for the standard of the players at the moment.

LV30 Dungeon Crystal—[Dark Crow Valley Operation]

Introduction: Dark Crow Valley is one of the Germinal Organization's bases in the Southern Continent, destroyed by Stardragon and Hesla. This will be your test.

Dungeon Type: Backward Time Travel Dungeon

Player Completion Count: 0

Highest Dungeon Completion Rate: None

Record Holders: None

“Dungeon Crystal?” The four of them exchanged looks.

The average level of the player at the moment was 30, so they were starting to come into contact with dungeons. There had already been 11 fixed dungeons found on Planet Aquamarine, which meant that these dungeon crystals could be earned multiple times from a character by repeating the mission. They mostly came from the various organizations, and they were all small five-man dungeon.

New dungeons meant new opportunities—the four of them completed the mission and received the reward. A white rhombus crystal appeared in their hands, and they could enter the dungeon by shattering it.

“This is a five men dungeon, so we need one more person,” Frenzied Sword immediately said. “Let’s see if we can at least complete it with ‘Normal’ grade.

Because of Han Xiao, they always stuck together, so they were very familiar with each other.

Hao Tian nodded. “Okay, I’ll ask Rebels Shall Rule from Team one of Sky Territory.”

Nobody had any objections. The four of them came to the square, and after waiting for a while, Rebels Shall Rule ran there full of joy. God Hao Tian was his idol, so he was very happy that he could just be with his idol.

The five of them formed a team.

“Let’s enter the dungeon and take a look.”

Frenzied Sword shattered the crystal. Fog gushed out, covered the five of them, and disappeared from the crowded square.

...

Their vision blurred, and when it recovered, the surroundings had become a forest. It was night, and it was difficult to even see their own hands.

Backward Time Travel Dungeon let the players participate in an event that had happened before by duplicating that event.

The notification showed on their interfaces

You are soldiers of the Dark Crow Valley Base. Hesla and Stardragon troops are going to invade. Your mission is to protect the Dark Crow Valley Base as best you can.

Dungeon Start Countdown: 10 minutes

Dungeon Goal: Survive until the end of the event. Reward: 15,000 EXP

Optional Mission I: Kill five Stardragon or Hesla agents. Reward: 30,000 EXP

Optional Mission II: Protect the real intel in the base from leaking. Reward: 45,000 EXP

Optional Mission III: Pan Kuang and Ji Jie survive. Reward: 70,000 EXP

Optional Mission IV: Defeat Stardragon and Hesla alliance. Reward: 110,000 EXP

Dungeon Failure Conditions: Annihilation.

“Such high rewards!” Rebels Shall Rule was shocked. As a very important member of the guild, he had seen a lot and knew a lot. The LV30 dungeons that the players had seen at the moment usually only had two to three missions, and the total reward was 70,000 to 80,000 EXP. Yet, there were five missions in this dungeon with so many rewards!

Rebels Shall Rule then thought about it, and his face turned serious. “However, the higher the reward, the more difficult it will be.”

The other four exchanged looks in confusion.

Is that so?

Never felt any part of the missions from Black Phantom were difficult...

“We are different,” Bun-hit-dog said with a heavy heart. He did not have the heart to correct Rebels Shall Rule.

Frenzied Sword looked at the notification and said with surprise, “The dungeon will only start in ten minutes, but we can already move freely. What does this mean?”

This the first time that they had met a dungeon with a countdown, so they were a little lost.

Actually, the countdown would only appear in more difficult dungeons. The players would enter the event sometime before it happened so that they could do some preparation. The time for the start of the mission was the night when Hesla agents were going to steal the intelligence, so the players had the opportunity to prevent that. If they successfully did and changed the beginning of the story, the difficulty of the entire dungeon would drop from ‘Hell’ to ‘Difficult’. However, the interface did not notify them about this; the players had to explore this themselves.

In the future, when Han Xiao opened this dungeon, after the players in the sanctuary got tortured by it a few hundred times, only then would they find the correct way to start the dungeon.

Of course, at the moment, the five of them were unaware of the importance of those ten minutes; they started the dungeon as usual. However, this was their first time in this dungeon. This type of dungeon was different from those that were just about killing monsters; it was more realistic and more difficult. The five of them had fun in agony, going around and around like headless chickens. They could only follow the job given by the base and patrol.

One day passed this way. During their patrol on the second night, Bun-hit-dog suddenly received a headshot.

Your teammate [Bun-hit-dog] has died.

“What?” The rest four of them were horrified. They looked in all directions immediately, but the forest was dense. The night was dark, and they had no idea where the enemy was.

Bang!

This time, it was Hao Tian who took a headshot. The rest of the three felt like the enemy was everywhere, and they were understandably anxious.

Hao Tian’s voice appeared in the team channel. He said very seriously, “The interface said I received a lethal attack. The person that killed me was Black Phantom!”

They were dazed. It turned out this was a dungeon with Han Xiao in it! And as the enemy!

They were very discouraged.

Han Xiao’s dungeon creation function was to cut out an event that would be generated into a mission. The characters in the dungeon were all mirror images, replaying events exactly as they had happened. It had nothing to do with the original person, and they had a certain amount of dungeon enhancement.

After three consecutive shots, all three of them died. Their visions blurred again, and they were back in the square. They had spent one day in the dungeon, but only ten minutes had passed in the outside world; the flow of time in the dungeon was different.

Dungeon [Dark Crow Valley Operation] Failed.

Dungeon Cooldown: 3 hours

The five of them all smiled bitterly.

This was way too difficult. They did not even know how they died.

...

On the other side, Han Xiao saw the return of the five of them from his surveillance image, confirmed the dungeon crystal to be effective, and started pondering.

“Dungeon crystals can only be distributed through mission rewards and can’t be sold for money. Its use to me is to gather more players and give them more benefit, so the players will be more willing to do things for me. Also, the players will know about my experience through the dungeon, which will in turn

increase my position. These are all rather indirect benefits... I can't sell the dungeon crystals, so there's no direct benefit."

Han Xiao suddenly paused. He slapped his head and laughed. "I'm thinking about this the wrong way. There's no need to sell them..."

Chapter 289: The New Round of Business (2)

The next day, Han Xiao officially started to distribute dungeon missions. The players in the sanctuary were pleasantly surprised.

"Never thought Black Phantom would have dungeon missions as well. Why didn't they appear before?"

"The Germinal Organization main storyline only ended recently. Maybe it's to let those of us who didn't participate in it take part through the form of a dungeon, and Han Xiao is the one to give access to those dungeons."

"That's pretty good if that's the case."

The players in the sanctuary had not taken part in the war main storyline. There were definitely some regrets. Now that Han Xiao had released a dungeon that was related to the completed main storyline, it was undoubtedly a chance to make fulfill those regrets.

The players swarmed in, but Han Xiao did not give it out for free this time.

He set a mission with one dungeon crystal as the reward. It required something called 'Contribution Points'. After accepting this mission, purchasing anything from Han Xiao would increase the contribution points.

Since dungeon crystals could not be sold or generate direct benefits, he just had to change his method. He could randomly set the mission requirement, so he made the dungeon crystal into something like a bonus reward to encourage the players to buy things from him, which would, in turn, increase his sales.

The players that were already planning to spend would be even more willing to spend after seeing they could complete the dungeon mission on the way. The players who wanted to complete the dungeon mission would come and buy from him, then realize that the things he sold were all bargains, and they would fall into the trap, forming a cycle.

This was a promotion method!

The effect was very clear. The first time Han Xiao tried it, his sales for that day increased by thirty percent! The results were very great.

The most obvious impact was that Han Xiao's surrounding area became more crowded than subways, such that he could hardly move.

After getting the dungeon crystal, the players called their friends and created teams to enter the dungeon. Their experience of the process was basically—enter joyfully, die, then come out stunned and confused.

The winning goal was to survive till the end. At the start, everyone died before they could reach the end. Two days later, someone finally completed the dungeon, but the completion rate was pathetic. They completed zero optional missions and completed the dungeon with the lowest completion rate.

The four optional missions were the ones with the highest rewards. They spent money at Han Xiao's to receive the dungeon crystal, but they only got the lowest dungeon reward. It was a loss, and the players were frustrated.

The difference in difficulty between the optional missions and the completion goal was huge.

"Is this dungeon even playable?"

"Black Phantom killed me for the eighth time. My heart is exhausted..."

The players could not help but complain, share the dungeon's intelligence and recording, and hope someone could come up with something.

"After dying so many times, I can conclude... if you listen to the base's order, you'll die."

"How do we even complete the optional missions? Is this really an LV30 dungeon?"

A high skill player arranged the intelligence and analyzed the dungeon storyline from the five optional missions.

"The outline of the path should be like this. First night into the dungeon, Hesla agents cause the leak of the base's fake intelligence. The second night, Black Phantom starts to act by sniping patrols, infiltrates the base with unknown methods, then steals the real intelligence. This night is the key to completing mission two. Then the base enters alert, discovering Black Phantom's location. The pursuit then starts, resulting in failure. Right after that, a large number of Hesla troops arrive, and the head-on battle starts. There's a chance to complete mission one here. Then, everyone gets surrounded and defends the base, and in the end, the base explodes. Staying alive till this point will be considered completing the dungeon."

Tables and recordings were listed there, showing the things to take note of in every step of the dungeon storyline, then it went on to the next topic.

"Obviously, in this case, there is no chance to complete the rest of the two optional missions. From my daring guess, there might be two paths to this dungeon, one of them is the one we experienced, and the other is the hidden storyline that will relate to the last two optional missions and has yet to be triggered by anyone.

"In order to defeat the enemy and make them retreat, I feel it has to be approached from the intelligence. After investigating, I noticed a new opportunity—there are ten minutes to prepare before the dungeon officially starts. This is actually the time before the Hesla agents start to act. If this can be prevented and the intelligence doesn't leak, the dungeon storyline might be different. However, this is a very tough battle—no one had succeeded yet.

"Lastly, a reminder to all players, do not have any contact with Black Phantom! Once you meet him, it's most likely death."

The players were very passionate about dungeons. There were all sorts of analysis posts in the forums. Han Xiao did not know what the dungeon was actually like. Although he had chosen the event, the mission had been generated automatically, but he just had to see the shared videos on the forums to know what the players experienced.

The players are actually on Dark Crow Valley Base's side. Is it because the dungeon will be too easy if they are on my side?

Han Xiao was speechless. Suddenly, he had a flash of insight.

That's a good thing, too. High difficulty dungeons have richer reward, and only then will the players be passionate about it for a longer time. It's based on me, so no one knows about the key points to this part of the storyline more than me. I could use this advantage and make some very specifically targeted machinery and sell to the players to help them complete the mission.

The more the players benefitted from the dungeon, the more he would benefit. His intention was not to have the dungeon discourage all the players. Also, he would make money once again from selling targeted machinery to help the players.

This is a business opportunity!

Han Xiao was a doer. He produced a large batch of targeted machinery the next day. There were a specially-made helmet that protected against ranged sniping and a device that increased the movement speed in the forest. As soon as these were released, the tortured players immediately liked them, and the products were sold out instantly.

When there is demand, there will be market potential.

Han Xiao was very clear about that principle. He grabbed onto all business opportunities and created a new business chain. Han Xiao was too lazy to even count the money he earned—he only knew it was a lot of money.

As Aquamarine Dollars was not a general currency in the galaxy, he kept splurging and converting his money into machinery, material, and rare resources, yet not only did he not have less money because of that, his money continuously increased.

When Han Xiao had still been a player, he had spent every cent with caution. Now, he had more money than he could spend. Even the Fabian Company's warehouses were bought out by him and needed to be restocked.

It so troubling to have so much money... Han Xiao was troubled for real. He was not planning to bring a ton of Aquamarine Dollars into the galaxy and use it as toilet paper.

...

With new machinery, it was finally easier for the players to complete the dungeon. The new machinery that he built became standard equipment for the dungeon in the mind of the players. Compared to the rich reward in the dungeon, the cost was acceptable, so the players felt it was worth it.

At least one person had to have the equipment in a five men team—it was almost a necessity.

The money stacked up, and Han Xiao earned another bucket of gold. The difficulty level of the dungeon also decreased from NetEase to Tencent ¹. Although Tencent always received a lot of complaints, they were still quite kind compared to NetEase.

The difference between the two could be illustrated by:

Tencent: “You can’t enjoy the game if you have no money.”

NetEase: “You can’t enjoy the game.”

The long-term benefits of becoming an NPC in charge of a dungeon are great. I will not have to worry about attracting players as long as I’m present. This is a Version 1.0 main storyline, so dungeons below LV60 can last me for a very long time. I will temporarily only create Dark Crow Valley dungeon, and once the average level increases, I will make new dungeons. This way, the players’ needs can always be satisfied, and it can last for a long term.

Also, with more dungeons being distributed, the players will know more about my experience, which is very helpful in making a deeper impression in the hearts of the players. I have to let the players know that other than being handsome, I have countless more strengths.

Han Xiao took the players very seriously as it was unavoidable to interact with players if he wanted to grow quickly, and the players were a group of lawless people. Thus, he did not want to stand against them. Although he was very far ahead of the players, once the players grew stronger, they would still be able to cause some trouble when they appeared in groups. The Great Mechanic Han had to admit this; he was never too full of himself.

[Dark Crow Valley Operation] dungeon created a wave in the sanctuary. The sanctuary’s functions were already getting richer with time, and the appearance of the dungeon caused it to improve drastically. In the hearts of the players, the position of the main city was already having its fundamentals.

Chapter 290: Sucker

Hundreds of resource boxes were stacked neatly in the warehouse. Inside were the countless parts and materials that Han Xiao had hoarded.

This was his secret base below Sanctuary Three. During the construction of the sanctuary, Han Xiao had secretly expanded the base. It was now his hidden stronghold, and every route had authorization identification equipped with guarding machine guns. There were also surveillance cameras in every entrance and countless spider detectors lurking in the dark. The security was very tight.

Han Xiao had a total of three warehouses—one for materials and parts, another for machinery backlog that he built for EXP and to sell to players, and the last was the important warehouse, storing the equipment he was using, including the new mechanical suit, Amphiptere.

All the items in his warehouses were part of his preparation for his interstellar travel.

The recent dungeon function had earned him a lot of profit once again. Money was pouring in, but he had no idea how much he would have when he left the planet. However, the very positive situation did not make him too excited. He saw some problems too.

The money that he earned came from players, and where did the players get their money?

Of course, their money came from other NPCs by doing missions.

Technically, what the players were doing was gathering the fortune of the NPCs everywhere and giving it all to Han Xiao as a form of expenditure, forming a torrent of money. The money was moving and formed an assembly line. He could be considered the destination of this assembly line. Therefore, if the players wanted to earn money, they had to work for other NPCs, and to increase the average spending and purchasing power of the players, he had to increase the number of NPCs in the sanctuary.

There was also another problem. The players would not stay in the main city forever—they would definitely go to other places to do missions and experience the storyline. To have these players return in the future, other than to have the various events, the main city had to be made more accessible.

Han Xiao planned to lay out a new transportation network in the sanctuary, building railway tracks and scheduling regular flights. This required a very high budget, and the Dark Net could not fund it temporarily. Bennett was currently developing new sanctuaries, and they did not have extra money.

These two problems had the same solution.

Find a sucker who was willing to pay the money and provide manpower.

The phone rang. Huang Yu's voice appeared after it was picked up. "The visiting group of the Alumera family has arrived at the sanctuary entrance. Shall we let them in?"

A meaningful smile appeared on Han Xiao's face as he played with the bullet shells.

"Yes, of course, we need to let them in."

...

A convoy parked outside the sanctuary entrance. Xiao Jin had personally brought people to visit. The people who came were mostly members of the Xiao Faction. With Xiao Jin as the leader, there were a few nephews and children. Other than the Xiao Faction, the Home Faction and Red Island Faction also sent their messengers along, mostly to express their standpoint.

They waited at the entrance for quite some time, but Xiao Jin did not show any sign of impatience. He knew very clearly that he was the weak party, and he was here to plead.

After a very long time, they were finally let in. He looked around on the way and observed the facilities in the sanctuary, nodding. Following Huang Yu to the guest hall, he raised his head and immediately saw Han Xiao sitting on the master seat, sizing them up with a mocking expression.

Without the mask, this face in the eyes of these Xiao Faction people was the missing Han Xiao, but they could not see through Han Xiao at all. It was like he was totally a different person. His eyes were as if he was looking at a group of strangers. Xiao Jin did not dare to call him son; he cleared his throat and said in a low voice, "Black Phantom."

Han Xiao looked at them without any expression and did not reply. He simply sat with his back against the chair, played with the bullet in his hand, and stared at them.

Xiao Jin understood his intention. He looked at Xiao Hai and the rest of the youngsters behind him and gave them a sign by tilting his head. These Xiao Faction youngsters caused a commotion, but after a few seconds of hesitation and procrastination, they unwillingly greeted him.

“Stepfather.”

“Oh, you’re here,” Han Xiao said coldly. Han Xiao knew that Xiao Jin definitely expected this awkward relationship issue to happen before they came, and these youngsters were definitely mentally prepared. All this hesitation were acted just for him. Xiao Jin wanted him to go back to being ‘Xiao Jin’s son’ and strengthen their relationship. However, this was completely useless to him, since he was not the real ‘Han Xiao’.

Han Xiao was not moved. “What are you visiting me for?”

Seeing the situation, Xiao Jin coughed and said, “I can explain what happened in the past. Your elder brother wants to apologize to you personally.”

Xiao Hai took a deep breath, put on a very apologetic expression, and quickly revised the script in his heart one more time. He had already come up with his apology on the way there.

He would cry and grovel, and he would show his regret and self-hatred for what he had done. Then, there would be a high chance to get Han Xiao’s forgiveness.

As long as their relationship was restored, Alumera would be able to rely on this strong force. No matter how unwilling Xiao Hai was, he had to brace himself and put on the act.

Xiao Hai was about to take a step forward and start to speak.

Bang!

Everyone was shocked. They followed the sound and looked over. A bullet crater still giving out smoke appeared under Xiao Hai’s foot. If he had taken that step forward, the bullet would have hit the back of his foot.

Xiao Hai could not take the step and froze in place.

The empty bullet shell fell to the floor. A dark blue electromagnetic force covered his finger, and black smoke came out of the tip of his fingernail. The flick of his hand had acted as a firing pin, detonating the base and shooting out a bullet with his bare hands. Even Han Xiao himself felt it was cool and awesome.

Its power was limited, but it was enough to scare people.

“I don’t need an apology, get down to business,” Han Xiao said coldly.

Xiao Jin’s expression changed slightly. It was clear that Han Xiao did not want to talk about emotions and only wanted to talk about their deal, which disrupted his plan. Without a choice, he could only ask Xiao Hai to step back.

Xiao Hai clenched his teeth tightly. He had already planned to apologize, but he was not even given a chance to read his script; Han Xiao did not even look at him.

Xiao Jin focused his mind and said in a low voice, "The Germinal Organization is gone, and the Six Nations will be the only large organization from now on. Due to climate deterioration, many wanderers will choose to leave their colonies and join the Six Nations. Once the Six Nations finish resting and recovering, sooner or later, they will clear out us scattered warlords, even if we were once Six Nations' partners..."

"Unless you can find someone to protect you." Han Xiao rubbed his chins.

Xiao Jin nodded. He wanted to plan for the future, to rely on Han Xiao and the Dark Net.

Han Xiao changed the topic and said, "It's time to pay back what you owe. Don't you have any idea how you got to where you are today?"

Xiao Jin was speechless, he wanted to play the emotion card, but Han Xiao just wanted to talk business, just like back then when he was only known as Black Phantom.

"... What do you want to see?"

"Money, manpower, and to move your people into the sanctuary. It's not easy to chase the debt if you're so far away."

The expressions of the visitors shifted slightly.

This would mean they had to give up what they had built. They looked at Xiao Jin and waited for his decision.

Xiao Jin kept silent for a while and decided to compromise. "Okay."

His eyes were looking at the future. The war had brought chaos, but it had also brought order. There would be fewer and fewer wanderers. Once the Six Nations had the time, the idea of warlords and colonies would disappear. Compared to waiting, it was better to look for a way out and change the business model of the family.

Dark Net's sanctuary was considered a colony as well, but different from them warlords, the Six Nations allowed the existence of sanctuaries. Xiao Jin pondered and felt this might be an opportunity, so he agreed.

After getting the others to leave, Han Xiao and Xiao Jin were the only ones left. They discussed the details of the deal, and Xiao Jin kept compromising. The end result was Alumera would be funding the building of transportation network and slowly migrate their people from all their strongholds into the sanctuary, including the refugees and wanderer under their rule, to increase the population of the sanctuary.

Alumera was the sucker that Han Xiao was looking for. Han Xiao had absolutely no intention of inheriting the thoughts of the original owner of his body, but this could be a chip to use Alumera; these people were not noble themselves anyway.

"Heard your Southern Continent division is still troubling Lu Cheng... he's my friend."

Xiao Jin sighed. "I know what to do."

Other than Alumera, Han Xiao also planned to pull in Lu Cheng. He was not going to let Alumera be the only one to grow. The Dark Net would support his operations.

Thinking about that, he remembered that there were still some blueprints that he had yet to receive from Old Man Lu.