

W. Secret 821

Chapter 821: Agreement

“What? You want to go into the Atlan Dimension?”

Augustus and Ceci were shocked. Even though they had gone into war with the Atlan civilization, they never had once thought of going into the Atlan Dimension.

That was because everyone knew that the Atlan Dimension was a peculiar place that could isolate the powers of the natural order. Even if an ultimate existence was to enter, their powers would be no more than a powerful Lord.

An ultimate existence without the power of the natural order would be vulnerable to even a dimension-level warship. In addition, it was the Atlan civilization’s old nest, who knew what terrifying powers it held in it.

Merlin shook his head, and said with a firm expression, “If we don’t enter the Atlan civilization, we’ll never know the extent of the powers of the Atlan civilization. Even if we manage to defeat them and seal the Atlan Dimension, there’s still a chance of them reopening the seal. Don’t forget, they’re already capable of building the void-level warship. This is our biggest threat. I have to go in!”

Indeed, Merlin’s line of thought was clear. The Atlan civilization was their greatest threat, and unless they possessed a thorough understanding of the Atlan civilization, destroy or even control it, the Spell Caster civilization would never rest in peace.

If they do not do that, then the Spell Caster civilization would have to consider migrating but while the Void Zone may be vast, there were little spaces that would be able to accommodate a civilization as large as the Spell Caster civilization. If they were to migrate, there would be chances clashing with the other civilizations, which was also not ideal. Since moving was not an option, then they would have to find a way to destroy the Atlan civilization.

“Not to mention that I’m not an ultimate existence. I have the Slothful beast, and it’s a gigantic, natural-born beast that has no power of the natural order whatsoever. Even the void-level warship doesn’t pose a threat against it so my safety is guaranteed. Also, I have the black

cat Didimoss accompanying me. I'm sure the two Arcane Wizards know very well its powers and that no other force besides the ultimate existences holds a candle to it. Plus, my Mind Power has improved again, and I can even control Lords. It's the perfect time to enter the Atlan civilization."

Merlin had thought even further. The void-level warship had just been destroyed, and the Atlan civilization would not be able to build another one in a short period, so it was a relatively safer time.

This was the best time to enter the Atlan civilization to maximize the outcome!

Both Augustus and Ceci turned silent. As Ultimate Arcane Wizards, of course, they knew that regardless of how easy Merlin had made it sound, in reality, the situation harbored great dangers.

If the void-level warship was built ahead of time, then there would probably be more than one void-level warship. While it may be difficult to kill the Slothful Beast, they could still ambush or use other tactics to get rid of Merlin. After all, Merlin was not a true Greatest Lord as of yet, and he could not compete against a void-level warship which was able to kill ultimate existences.

Moreover, the Atlan civilization occupied such a wide dimension, a dimension that was left behind by the Vestigial Tribe even, who knew what terrifying powers it had? There could have been many reasons why it could not be moved into the Void Zone but things would get dangerous the minute they entered the Atlan Dimension.

Nonetheless, even if it was known to be dangerous, Augustus and Ceci knew that it was just as Merlin had said – this may be their best shot. As long as the Atlan civilization remained undestroyed or uncontrolled, then there would always be constituted risks to the Spell Caster civilization.

"Glory Lord, do we inform Chronos, the Avian Monarch, and the others about this?"

After a long moment, Augustus lifted his head. He knew that Merlin could not be stopped as he had made up his mind to enter the Atlan Dimension.

“Of course. The period while I’m inside the Atlan civilization will be the most crucial moment for everyone else because without the Slothful Beast, the burden will fall on all of you to defend against the God Alliance’s attack.”

Merlin’s expression also turned serious. He had intended to enter the Atlan civilization to search for a way to deal with them but what if the Spell Caster civilization was not able to withstand the attack of the God Alliance and fell apart, leading to the Spell Caster civilization’s demise? Then what use would it be even if he found a way to deal with the Atlan civilization?

“Alright, we’ll discuss it with them at once.”

With that, the three flew back to the dimension.

...

The atmosphere was thick with tension inside a newly built palace in the dimension. A heavy expression was plastered on the faces of the Avian Monarch, Chronos, Roman, and the Mother Tree, the four ultimate existences invited by the Spell Caster civilization as their eyes constantly swept over Merlin’s body.

“Wizard Merlin, do you intend to enter the Atlan Dimension?”

Titan Giant Chronos was the first to ask.

“With our powers now, it’s not a problem for us even if we were to defend against the God Alliance’s attack. Why the need to risk entering the Atlan Dimension?”

That was not only Chronos’ opinion alone but also the thoughts of the other ultimate existences as well. With the Mother Tree, Roman, and Merlin’s Slothful Beast, even if the ultimate existences of the God Alliance had the advantage in numbers, it was impossible for them to destroy the Spell Caster civilization.

“It may not be a problem now but what if the Atlan civilization built even more void-level warships?”

Merlin's words had Chronos and the others momentarily waver. Indeed, they may be able to resist the God Alliance for now but what if the Atlan civilization had two, three or even more void-level warships, would they still be able to hold the fort then?

Even Chronos, who was a Titan Giant of the Giant Tribe had begun to realize that he may have miscalculated the severity of the war. He had thought that with so many ultimate existences, going up against the Atlan civilization would have been an easy task. Never would he had expected it to be so dangerous, and they were only still at the early stages of defense.

"If Wizard Merlin were to enter the Atlan civilization, then, if the God Alliance strikes again, will we be able to resist?"

Chronos asked in a low voice. That was the most important thing; without the Slothful Beast, the pressure on them would be intensified.

"That's why I've asked everyone to gather here to discuss."

Merlin glanced over at the Mother Tree and Roman. He knew it was ultimately up to these two to determine whether they would be able to withstand the siege.

Roman was seemingly unaffected as he smilingly said, "I can set up some gravitational fields on some of the Spell Caster civilization's dimensions. This way, aside from the ultimate existences, no one else would be able to invade, not even the Atlan civilization's all-powerful warship."

Merlin nodded in approval. The gravitational fields would certainly give them a strategic advantage, and he still had a Maxim avatar that would remain in the Spell Caster civilization. As such, even if the Atlan civilization were to invade, they would only be able to send in puppets. They would not even be able to dispatch the warship. The puppets would not last long, faced against the gravitational fields either way, and no amount of them would change the situation.

The Mother Tree was silent for a long time before he finally nodded as well. "I can re-establish the defensive force field but I need a significant number of dimensions. As long as there are enough dimensions, even the God Alliance would have a hard time to invade."

To that, Augustus instantly responded, “A thousand dimensions. I’ll be in charge of moving the Spell Casters in those dimensions to other dimensions. Prepare a thousand dimensions, even if they are all destroyed, then so be it!”

Another thousand dimensions. This was the sacrifice made by the Spell Caster civilization for the sake of victory of the war. One should know that some civilizations such as the Golden Light Tribe were still struggling to acquire a second dimension. A thousand dimensions were more than enough for some young, burgeoning civilizations to establish the foundations for development.

“A thousand dimensions along with Sir Roman’s stealth flying ship ghosting in and out, had already made the God Alliance suffer a good deal previously. Therefore, even if the God Alliance were to attack again, it would be impossible for them to get ahead in a short amount of time. What’s more, seeing as they’ve had a tough lesson previously, they wouldn’t recklessly attack unless they were sure of their chances.”

Merlin had roughly caught onto the minds of the God Alliance and the people of the Atlan civilization. The only certain way for them to have a chance at winning was for them to wait until the Atlan civilization had rebuilt a sufficient number of void-level warships. It was highly likely that this would be a period of temporary calm, and there would be no significant dangers.

“Does anyone else still have any issues? You may raise them now, and we, the Spell Caster civilization, will do our best to satisfy all of them!”

Merlin was currently in a high-standing position of status. To a certain extent, he was even able to replace the position of the late Arcane Wizard Setoh not only because he was the inaugurator of the Mind Power Masters but also because he had with him the Slothful Beast. His powers were already on par with any of the ultimate existences.

Augustus and Ceci, too, had come to regard Merlin as the third Arcane Wizard.

Merlin knew that during his time of absence, he must make arrangements for all future matters, to satisfy all the ultimate existences’ requests so that they would devote themselves to protecting the Spell Caster civilization. Otherwise, with any of them gone, then it would surely be a fatal blow to the Spell Caster civilization’s overall defenses.

“Hehe, Wizard Merlin, I have a small request. When you enter the Atlan Dimension, try to gather some intel on their technology. They’ve developed and mastered their means of

technology from the things left behind by the Vestigial Tribe, and I'm very interested in those. Of course, if you can manage to get your hands on intel about the void-level warship, that would be even better."

Roman was only interested in things related to the Vestigial Tribe. The only things that kept him so dedicated were, apart from the ancestral land of the Giant Tribe, the similarities between the Atlan civilization and the Vestigial Tribe. He had expected to acquire some of the items left behind by the Vestigial Tribe after they had defeated the Atlan civilization.

Merlin gave a small smile. "That's easy. I once controlled an empire-level warship in the Atlan Dimension. There's some data information inside that I believe will be of interest to Sir Roman, I can give them to you now."

Then, Merlin ordered the Matrix to copy the information related to Atlan civilization in the empire-level warship and handed them over directly to Roman.

Roman was proficient in some of the Vestigial Tribe's techniques, and could interpret the knowledge and information inside.

"Haha, not bad, Wizard Merlin. Don't you worry, I'll do all I can to make sure that the Spell Caster civilization isn't destroyed by the God Alliance."

Elated after receiving the information, Roman immediately promised.

"If there's information on the void-level warship, we want it too!"

There was a glint in the Avian Monarch's eyes. After all, he was still the ultimate existence of the Avian Tribe, and he needed to consider the interests of the Avian Tribe. If they were indeed able to get their hands on information on the void-level warship or other related information for that matter, then they would also want a share of it.

"That's not a problem. I'll do my best to acquire them in the Atlan Dimension."

Merlin had practically promised everything, and the ultimate existences were most pleased. These ultimate existences had initially come together because of shared interests. It was natural that they would need to be bound together by mutual benefits.

“Alright, then it’s settled. I’ll try my best to enter the Atlan Dimension discreetly.”

Merlin knew that if the news about his entrance was leaked, then it would probably lead to unnecessary troubles. Therefore, he had opted not to inform any of the ultimate existences in the Spell Caster civilization, and quietly slipped into the Atlan Dimension alone.

This may be an impossible task for others but for Merlin who was able to control minds, sneaking inside the Atlan Dimension soundlessly was not a difficult task.

Chapter 822: Anticipation

In the icy darkness of the Void Zone, the continuous war had wrecked countless dimensions. Nonetheless, to the immense Void Zone, this was merely a drop in the ocean, not affecting it at all.

“Swoosh.”

A black-robed figure flew in the Void Zone silently. Although he was slow, he still maintained his pace. On his shoulder was a peculiar pitch-black cat.

“Merlin, will we run into danger during this trip to the Atlan Dimension?”

The black cat Didimoss asked softly.

“If we’re careful, there’s not a huge risk. However, since we’re going deep into the Atlan civilization, we’re sure to run into some danger. Didimoss, your swallowing ability is formidable. On some level, you’re even catching up to the Slothful Beast, so you don’t have to worry.”

Merlin glanced at Didimoss. This fat cat had an astonishing capability but his courage had shrunk.

The black cat Didimoss shook his head. “I’m not worried. Currently, I’ve reached a bottleneck. It seems like no matter how I swallow, my strength can’t increase anymore. I can’t even

contend against ultimate existences. How can I compare to the Slothful Beast? In truth, sometimes I quite envy that huge fellow, the Slothful Beast. It has low intelligence so even if you're controlling it, it won't have any trouble."

The black cat Didimoss faced a bottleneck as well. He was a mystical creature which had reversed the natural order, gradually transforming from a spirit into a living being. In the boundless Void Zone, this was very rare. Moreover, a life form like this had terrifying potential. No one could even predict the level this life form would finally attain.

"Bottleneck? Didimoss, what do you know?"

Merlin felt that there was something off with the black cat Didimoss throughout this journey. The black cat Didimoss was unlike the Slothful Beast. He had high intelligence, no different from ordinary people.

Moreover, he had come out of the Glorious Land together with Merlin, and their affections ran deep.

"Merlin, the last time when you weren't around, I implored Arcane Wizard Setoh to search for Master. After a long search, he still couldn't be found. Someone who can't be found by Arcane Wizard Setoh is most likely dead. I'm a spirit of the stone carved by Master himself but even Master has died..."

The black cat Didimoss' tone revealed a trace of sorrow. It turned out he had been searching for the Great Wizard Fidel. After all, back then, Great Wizard Fidel had created the Runic Magic Circle that gave birth to the consciousness of the black cat Didimoss.

The Great Wizard Fidel had created the black cat Didimoss by himself. However, not even the Great Wizard Fidel would have thought that Didimoss would have such a destiny. Through this destiny, the spirit of the stone he created in passing had transformed into a life form which had reversed the natural order.

It was just that the black cat Didimoss could no longer find the Great Wizard Fidel. Back then, the Great Wizard Fidel was very impressive in the Glorious Land, establishing the Dark Magic Region by himself, becoming a peak existence in the Glorious Land through his Runic Magic Circles.

Nonetheless, he was still just a Great Wizard. Between Great Wizards and Legends, there was an essential gap. If one could not surmount that, one was nothing much in the glorious Spell Caster civilization of the immense Void Zone. Perhaps he had died during his travels.

One example was the recent war with the God Alliance. The Mother Tree had controlled four hundred dimensions which were annihilated in one day. There were still millions of Spell Casters in those dimensions. Of course, there were no Legends but the number of Great Wizards must have been immeasurable. All of them died in an instant. In such a war of the vast Void Zone, Great Wizards were very puny.

“Didimoss, what are you hiding from me?”

Merlin felt that the black cat Didimoss was acting fishy. Other than being invigorated after recently waking up, Didimoss at other times would be rather lazy, even dispirited.

After a long moment, the black cat Didimoss said hesitantly, “When I woke up, Augustus came to me and told me that as a creature that reverses the natural order, the biggest challenge is to withstand the pressure of the Void Zone’s power of the natural order! The current me is still a long way from that stage but one day, I’ll reach that point. Anyone who reverses the natural order, who fantasizes about progressing further, becoming on par with ultimate existences or even stronger, would have to face the natural order of the entire Void Zone! However, although one would be powerful after crossing that point, Augustus said that according to legend, no one who reverses the natural order could survive past that point...”

It turned out that the black cat Didimoss was thinking of his future. It was true that life forms that reversed the natural order were wondrous but at the same time, they bore a tremendous pressure. Their growth was not all smooth sailing, and was even a dead end!

“There’s still one such dead end?”

Merlin frowned. He truly did not understand creatures that had reversed the natural order but Augustus should not be wrong. Otherwise, no matter how rare they were in the Void Zone, it was impossible that none of the foreign civilizations had any life forms that reversed the natural order.

The only explanation was that most of them had died due to the natural order. It made sense upon consideration. Life forms that had reversed the natural order would go against it, naturally, being punished and suppressed by the natural order.

“The black cat Didimoss who reverses the natural order due to coincidental circumstances already faces this dead end. If my Illusory World is successful in the future, won’t materializing illusions as reality be even scarier? Do I have no hope of success?”

Merlin immediately realized that he was facing the same situation as Didimoss. Moreover, at that point, the power of the natural order he confronted would be even greater. After all, he was creating a brand new world, an entirely new natural order.

“Hehe, Merlin, you’re different from Didimoss. If you can gain enlightenment and materialize the Illusory World, you might not be in any danger.”

Suddenly, Titus’ voice rang out.

“Titus, are you awake?”

Ever since Merlin’s Mind Heart had merged with the Illusory World, Titus had later fallen completely silent besides saying a few words in the beginning. It was as if he was calculating the Illusory World’s future development.

Now, it looked like Titus was finally awake.

“I’ve been awake for the past few days. You’re going to the Atlan Dimension. How can I not wake up? That’s a truly wondrous dimension, a wondrous civilization...”

Although Titus was in the Illusory World, Merlin did not restrain him. Therefore, Titus could observe everything outside through Merlin’s Mind Heart, similar to the illusion bead.

“Oh right, Titus. You said earlier that if I materialize reality from illusions, there won’t be any danger. How so?”

Currently, materializing the Illusory World did not seem so far-off to Merlin. According to Titus, his Illusory World might be perfected, reaching a high level of accomplishment.

Once the Illusory World was highly accomplished, in the following period, Merlin could start on materializing the Illusory World. This was something Merlin had to face.

“This is what I calculated recently. I’ve thought about the possible risk you might face, which is the natural order’s power! The Void Zone is a type of natural order. It’s like an instrument of precise operation. The occasional errors won’t affect it. It simply had to rectify those errors slowly. Just like Didimoss who reverses the natural order. His dead end is the natural order’s rectification of a previous error.

“However, you’re different, Merlin. Your Illusory World, once it starts to materialize, will be comparable to another natural order. The natural order of the Void Zone would obstruct you frantically. Of course, your Illusory World would erupt with even more formidable strength. If the Illusory World shatters, you’ll die as well. If you succeed, the Void Zone will be powerless against you. It’s just like two countries waging war. If you’ve really reached that point, you’ll be on equal footing with the Void Zone.”

Through Titus’ detailed explanation, Merlin vaguely understood the matter. A creature that had reversed the natural order like the black cat Didimoss, although having done so by coincidence, would never be like Aruba, growing to a point where they could threaten the Void Zone, let alone shatter the natural order.

This was because their strength was too minuscule. In other words, the black cat Didimoss was formed by a part of the Void Zone’s natural order, just that there had been some error.

Nonetheless, Merlin was different. It was as if he was stocking up his strength now, a nation that was stealthily expanding. Once there was a conflict, which was when the Illusory World was materialized, it would be too late for the Void Zone to try stopping him. At that point, it depended on who was mightier.

Thus, if he had reached that stage, Merlin was not in much danger, having at least the capability to retaliate.

Upon learning of the black cat Didimoss’ worry, Merlin consoled him. “Didimoss, you don’t have to worry. Has it been that long since you’ve reversed the natural order to become a living creature? Even if it’s a dead end, it’s still far into the future. Who knows, there might be a turning point.”

“Turning point?”

The black cat Didimoss did not know what turning point could there be. Still, Merlin believed this. If his Illusory World could be materialized, would he still worry about being unable to protect the black cat Didimoss?

Even if Merlin could not materialize the Illusory World as reality, that was no concern. This time, they were heading to the Atlan Dimension. Merlin had great ambitions, harboring the intention to thoroughly resolve the Atlan civilization.

If there came a day when the black cat Didimoss could not avoid his dead end, he could enter the Atlan Dimension. In there, he would not detect any power of the natural order. Even if the Void Zone's natural order was formidable, so what?

Merlin suddenly had a feeling that back when the Vestigial Tribe took over the Void Zone, were they doing what Merlin was doing now to escape the natural order's restraints? It was just that they had used a different method.

All at once, Merlin was filled with anticipation toward this mission of entering the Atlan Dimension.

Chapter 823: A Universe of Stars?

"Look quickly. That's the Atlan Dimension, right?"

After Merlin's counsel, the black cat Didimoss no longer worried over his dead end, especially after Merlin pointed out that when they had controlled the Atlan Dimension in the future, the black cat Didimoss could still hide inside the Atlan Dimension if he faced a dead end.

Therefore, Didimoss was now more interested in the Atlan Dimension. During this trip to the Atlan Dimension, he would spare no effort in helping Merlin control the Atlan Dimension.

Although it would be difficult, the black cat Didimoss did not fear much other than the void-level warship.

"Tight security? As long as there's no ultimate existence, there's no problem."

Merlin noticed the rows of countless warships at the entrance of the Atlan Dimension including a few dimension-level warships. Nonetheless, to him, even the heaviest guard would be useless if there were no ultimate existences unless this was completely guarded by puppets. In that case, his Mind Control would not be of any use.

However, in terms of ultimate existences, who among those Eight Lord Gods would be willing to guard the Atlan Dimension? It was impossible, so this was Merlin's opportunity.

Merlin's gaze swept across these warships. He realized that most of the warships had entered the Void Zone from the Atlan Dimension. Conversely, the Void Zone's warships seldom returned to the Atlan Dimension.

Merlin did not panic. He knew that he was now on a secret mission and must never panic. Otherwise, if he was discovered, the Atlan civilization would likely prepare relevant countermeasures. This might even induce the God Alliance's attack against the Spell Caster civilization.

After all, if they found out that the Slothful Beast was not around, who knew if the God Alliance would try attacking again. To ensure that the Atlan civilization remained in the dark, Merlin's every step must be careful and calculated.

Thus, Merlin waited outside the Atlan Dimension for no less than a few months. He conscientiously observed the warships that entered and exited the Atlan Dimension.

Finally, he saw a few empire-level warships returning to the Atlan Dimension. He had generally figured out a pattern. These empire-level warships were surely transporting some resources unique to the Void Zone, delivering them to the Atlan Dimension.

"Merlin, it's been so long. When are we heading into the Atlan Dimension?"

The black cat Didimoss was asking this for the third time. Having hidden here for a few months without making a single move, the black cat Didimoss had gotten impatient long ago.

Merlin smiled. His eyes fixed onto the empire-level warships in front, which were still a distance away from the Atlan Dimension.

“Alright, these are the ones. They’ll surely return to the Atlan Dimension. Didimoss, let’s go!”

Merlin had not been observing without purpose these few months. He had kept a constant watch. He was now certain that these empire-level warships were returning to the Atlan Dimension, so he immediately led the black cat Didimoss and flew directly toward those warships.

“Haha, we’re finally leaving this place and entering the Atlan Dimension!”

The black cat Didimoss appeared overjoyed. He sprawled quietly on Merlin’s shoulder. Merlin wore a serene expression but in truth, he had already unleashed the Illusory World.

The enormous Illusory World swiftly enveloped the empire-level warships in front. Those in it did not even notice Merlin’s presence as their minds were already under his control.

“Whoosh.”

Merlin had controlled the Atlans in the warship to open the hatch. He carried Didimoss, and entered the empire-level warship directly.

It was warm in the warship. There were not many people, fewer than a hundred who were controlling the warship, progressing toward the Atlan Dimension.

“Captain!”

Merlin directly went to the control center, seemingly unnoticed by those within. In truth, it was not that he was unnoticed but their minds were already under Merlin’s control, so they were helpless.

Before Merlin was a middle-aged man who wore a gray-green uniform. He appeared rather dignified but currently, he was incomparably obedient before Merlin.

“Master.”

This middle-aged captain cried out respectfully. Those who were controlled were not much different from puppets.

Merlin asked mildly, “Where are you heading now?”

“Master, we’re now transporting from the Delma Metal Mine, returning to the Atlan Dimension for it to be refined. This mineral has wide applications but it’s very rare in the Atlan Dimension. Although it’s rare in the Void Zone too, the Void Zone is large, so we can accumulate much more Delma Metal than there is in the Atlan Dimension. Thus, we’re sending these metal ores to the Atlan Dimension.”

The captain explained the situation in detail. Merlin nodded wordlessly. Although the Atlan Dimension was immense, it was not worth a mention in comparison to the Void Zone. There was no way to compare.

After so many years of development, the Atlan Dimension’s abundant resources were nearly exhausted, even on the brink of total extinction. Thus, entering the Void Zone to search for resources was one of the Atlan Dimension’s most urgent priorities.

“Very well. Carry on as usual, and enter the Atlan Dimension. Don’t pay any attention to us.”

After Merlin commanded the captain, he sat in an inconspicuous spot in the control center and waited silently. Soon, the screen was showing that gigantic, unique cloud layer of the Atlan Dimension.

“We’ve reached the Atlan Dimension’s entrance.”

Merlin looked steadily at the screen. If there was the slightest oddity, he would immediately control the warship to barge into the Atlan Dimension directly. Nonetheless, it turned out he was overthinking. It was not the first time this warship had come in and out like this. Therefore, after a brief inspection, they were allowed entry.

“Merlin, finally we’re about to enter the Atlan Dimension!”

The black cat Didimoss was rather excited and nervous at this moment, staring at the screen as the warship rapidly penetrated the cloud layer. Soon, the screen showed only black, and the entire warship started to shake.

They were entering the Atlan Dimension. This tremor only lasted for a short moment, and the screen soon brightened once more. Nevertheless, Merlin's eyes were wide with astonishment.

"This... Is this a universe? There are stars?"

Merlin stared at everything on the screen in utter shock. Even his Mind Power could not help but extended out from the warship, examining his surroundings. After entering the Atlan Dimension, there were still rows of warships packed together, waiting at the entrance of the Atlan Dimension as if they were going to enter the Void Zone.

However, Merlin was not stunned by these rows of warships but the distant space above. There were numerous stars of unparalleled size or to use a term from his past life, they were planets!

In the pitch-black stretch above, beautiful massive stars emitted a soft glow, silently hanging in the sky. Along with the tightly packed rows of warships, they formed a breathtaking, majestic sight.

Especially since this sight was like *déjà vu* to Merlin.

"No, these aren't planets. They're not moving, and there are no stars either. This isn't a universe at all."

Merlin frowned. Initially, he was astounded and did not look closely. Now, upon closer inspection, he had discovered many divergences from his previous life's universe and planets.

To start with, these "planets" did not move. Moreover, there was still powerful gravity here, so it was not like the universe at all.

Still, when Merlin looked down, he saw that in the dusky light, there were dim flashes of storm and fire, wreaking havoc. He thought carefully – was this not the land of the dimension? However, who knew how many layers of this current land had been excavated, revealing the Dimension Core within.

Every dimension had a Dimension Core. The thing that was giving off tremendous energy below must be the Dimension Core. This was ultimately a dimension, only it was slightly different from the dimensions of the Void Zone. After all, it was created by the Vestigial Tribe.

However, Merlin had never seen such a colossal Dimension Core. Furthermore, the “planets” that hung suspended in mid-air unmoving were filled with life. They were the place where many Atlans lived.

“What are those things of gorgeous colors?”

Merlin asked the captain of the warship directly.

“Master, these are the starships in which we Atlans live. Our Atlan civilization lives in warships. The starships are much larger than dimension-level warships, and more terrifying as well. In war, they can even become the most fearsome warships in an instant! However, in so many years, the Atlan Dimension has been peaceful overall. No wide-scale war has broken out, so these starships aren’t used much at all, and had been turned into places of residence.”

After the captain’s explanation, Merlin and the black cat Didimoss were both shocked, feeling rather incredulous. It turned out that these “planets” that looked as large as dimensions were warships.

All Atlans were living in warships.

As for the reason this happened, after further inquiries, Merlin found that a long time ago, a war had erupted in the Atlan Dimension. Every side required huge amounts of resources, and even the land was treated as a form of resources.

In the end, after extensive consumption, the land of the Atlan Dimension was nearly used up. Finally, they had noticed the Dimension Core buried deep within the land, which was the impressive aspect of the Atlan Dimension created by the Vestigial Tribe.

It was because of this Dimension Core that the Atlan civilization no longer had to worry about their energy source. Thus, even though they lived in warships, the Atlans could still live a good life and continue expanding their civilization.

Currently, the Atlan civilization had already been developed to the point that they could transmute energy into any material. Food, water, light, and so on, could all be transmuted from energy.

This was frightening. In this aspect, the Atlan civilization had nearly caught up to the Vestigial Tribe that had taken over the entire Void Zone.

Chapter 824: The Senate and the Army

“The Atlan civilization... Who’s your ruler?”

Since Merlin had entered the Atlan civilization, naturally, he wanted to figure out the structure of this civilization. The Spell Caster civilization knew very little about the Atlan civilization. Their knowledge was limited, not even knowing who the highest ruler was.

The captain replied immediately, “None of us is the highest ruler. The institutions with the highest authority are the Senate and the military. Initially, it was just the Senate but this recent foray the Void Zone has always been advocated by the military. Therefore, the influence of the army has now reached a point where it’s comparable to the Senate. These warships, puppets, and so on belong to the army. Even the Marshall who has led us into the Void Zone is a military man as well. However, he has links to the Senate too, which is why he’s the best choice.”

After the captain’s explanation, Merlin gradually learned that in the Atlan civilization, it was the Senate that held the supreme authority. It consisted of merely nine Senators. The Senate controlled each department of the entire Atlan civilization, allowing systematic development.

At first, the Senate controlled the army as well but after the military had proposed to exit the dimension and enter the Void Zone, the army’s influence had expanded. Currently, they had grown to a point nearly equal to the Senate. This was the current situation of the entire Atlan civilization.

“You’re now returning to the army?”

“That’s right, we’re returning to the army.”

Merlin fell into silent contemplation. He knew that he must never let this warship return to the army or there would be trouble. However, he could not let them go. Without his Mind Control, when these people had regained consciousness, they would recall this incident of Merlin's Mind Control.

In that case, the only option was to completely destroy this warship!

Nonetheless, even so, he could not just destroy it rashly. If the warship was suddenly destroyed, it was sure to attract much attention. In the end, the ensuing investigation might notice some abnormalities or detect Merlin, considering the Atlan civilization's technology.

Therefore, he must destroy this warship without attracting too much attention.

After a long moment, Merlin asked the captain, "Would an empire-level warship self-destruct due to some malfunction? In a way that neither the Senate nor the army would find out the cause?"

The captain's mind was now under full control, so he would not object even to their own suicides. Thus, he thought carefully. "There's a way indeed. Most empire-level warships might suffer from engine failure. Plus, it just so happens we're now passing the energy storm zone. This is where the Dimension Core's energy runs wild, and even dimension-level warships might be destroyed. If we're swept into this zone, there'd be no way to find out the cause at all."

Merlin thought it over. This was a viable plan indeed, so he nodded. "Very well. You're now to send a distress signal to the army immediately, saying that there's some problem with your engine and you're unable to control your warship. Then, quickly head toward the energy storm zone."

The captain followed Merlin's orders and started to send a distress signal. Following that, he intentionally headed toward the energy storm zone. Soon, Merlin could see the gusts of terrifying storms before him, inducing a sense of threat in him.

"It's all energy... This dimension created by the Vestigial Time is truly unusual!"

Merlin knew that this was merely a trickle of energy discharged by the Dimension Core. It was able to stir up such a mighty storm. Even if the Atlan civilization were to exploit this for countless years or a hundred million years, it would not make a dent.

What the Atlan civilization lacked was certain resources, especially some precious minerals. Although energy could be transmuted into many materials, a warship could not be transmuted solely from energy. Only by relying on the Void Zone's resources, constantly delivering them back here, could they manufacture endless warships and puppets.

"Very well, go on. Head toward the energy storm!"

Merlin's eyes were icy without a trace of mercy. He knew that this was the best plan. It would not reveal his tracks, plus he could leave safely. His only recourse was to let this empire-level warship self-destruct.

"Didimoss, let's go!"

From the warship, Merlin piloted a small spaceship. This sort of small spaceship had no fighting power and was tiny, able to accommodate a few dozen people at most. Moreover, it bore no special mark and could be found anywhere in the Atlan civilization. Most Atlans used this small-sized spaceship to travel around.

Therefore, even if Merlin piloted this small spaceship, he would not arouse suspicion.

"Rumble."

After the empire-level warship moved ceaselessly into the energy storm zone, the frightening crushing force of the energy immediately tore the warship into pieces. There was no trace of life left.

Merlin knew that this warship was utterly annihilated. Not even the Atlan civilization would be able to find the true cause, and they could only treat it as a regular "warship accident".

"Didimoss, we can't stay here. The army's warships will be here soon, so we have to leave."

After Merlin had ascertained that no one had survived, he immediately steered the spaceship into the distance. With this spaceship, Merlin could disguise himself as an actual Atlan for now. The only trouble was his identification.

Each Atlan had their own identification. To enter any starship, one must have identification. Otherwise, if he was unable to be identified, he would be treated as a “terrorist”.

Therefore, Merlin would try his best to avoid entering the starships.

“Merlin, where are we going now? I have to say, there are no ultimate existences, so let me have my fill. I’ll gobble up all of these Atlans.”

The black cat Didimoss said lazily. He had been by Merlin’s side for so long and had nothing to do. Plus, these Atlans looked puny and pitiful.

Merlin laughed in response. “Didimoss, can you swallow the entire herd? With such a massive dimension, even if you keep on eating, you’ll never finish.”

“Even if I can’t, there’s still the Slothful Beast. It has a huge appetite, able to swallow gigantic dimensions. Even if this dimension is bigger, we’ll just eat the Atlans. Soon, we’ll polish them off.”

As he stared at the black cat Didimoss’ plump body, Merlin shook his head powerlessly. If he truly went this route, based on the Atlan civilization’s immensity, it would take a few hundred or thousand years to eat up all of the Atlans.

Furthermore, he still had not determined if the Atlan civilization possessed some terrifying items. Acting hastily might lead them to danger. Even with the Slothful Beast, Merlin had to be cautious.

“We’ll understand the situation first, then look for clues regarding the void-level warship. Once we do that, and there’s really nothing of any threat to us, we’ll strike.”

Merlin’s thinking was different from Didimoss’. The black cat Didimoss wanted to swallow everything but Merlin wanted to learn how to fully control the Atlan civilization.

Even if he could not control, he would have to destroy the Atlan civilization utterly. He must not be trapped here in the Atlan Dimension without end. Otherwise, as time dragged on, when his opponents had manufactured their void-level warship, the Spell Caster civilization would be at risk.

The black cat Didimoss did not say anything else but sprawled across Merlin's shoulder, choosing to take a snoring nap. Meanwhile, Merlin controlled the small spaceship, keeping his distance from the starships as he moved along casually.

...

In the peaceful air, three enormous warships were chasing after a small spaceship.

Although the spaceship was tiny, it seemed to have been modified. Its speed was not inferior to the three warships at all. Furthermore, it had an offensive system as well, only it appeared rather weak against those three warships.

Within the small spaceship, there were currently ten or so men and women, dressed in black armor. This was ordinary protective armor. Of course, it was not the most classified Gray Light Armor found in the Atlan civilization's internal factions.

"D*mn it, we still can't shake off these three tails. What do we do? If we continue running, the three city-level warships are enough to wipe us out."

A woman with long, blonde hair stared at the screen anxiously. Behind them, the three city-level warships were pursuing them relentlessly.

"They won't destroy us. They want us alive. Otherwise, with their warships' attacking power, they'd have destroyed us long ago. They must want us alive."

A muscular man with a scar on his face spoke in gravelly tones.

"That's right, they want to capture us alive. After all, we're worth a lot of money in their eyes. Thus, we can simply keep running without worrying about anything. The only concern is, how much energy do we have left?"

At the mention of energy, everyone in the spaceship fell silent. This spaceship had been modified, boasting great speed and attacking powers, and could be considered an armed spaceship.

Nonetheless, a spaceship was still a spaceship. Even though it was armed, it had no way to compare with a real warship. It must be known that these were city-level warships. One shot was enough to wipe them out. Even though the warships were not firing at them, wishing to capture these people alive, their power source could easily outlast the spaceship's power, finally capturing them.

The three warships behind them planned on exhausting their energy before capturing them alive. Although everyone knew this was their opponents' plan, it was a solid plan. Plus, the spaceship could not retaliate.

"What do we do? Are we just going to wait for our doom? We don't want them to capture us alive."

"If we don't want to be captured alive, there are many solutions. If we really reach the moment where our energy's run out, and have no other options, then we can only choose self-destruction! At that point, we'll make them pay even if we have to die!"

The scar-faced man said brusquely, his words revealing a hint of determination.

Chapter 825: Rescue

The three city-level warships continued to chase after that small spaceship relentlessly. Finally, the small spaceship's power source was nearly used up, and it slowed down.

Those on the warships started to cheer. It should be known that those in the small spaceship were not ordinary targets. They were members of the "Rebellion Army" that had been elusive.

"Haha, we've finally captured the Rebellion Army alive. These people are extremely despicable, instigating Atlans everywhere. I heard that some places were instigated by this Rebellion Army, erupting chaos. Capturing them is a great merit. However, we must be careful in case they put up a last-ditch struggle."

The Atlans in the warships appeared cautious as well. Although they were excited, they remained vigilant against the "Rebellion Army", not daring to approach them lightly.

After determining that the spaceship had no power left and truly could not move anymore, the three city-level warships gradually approached.

“Rebellion Army in the spaceship, turn off your engine at once and set up a communication link. We want to see everything going on in your spaceship. We’ll give you some time to consider. If you don’t do as we say, we’ll attack immediately!”

The three city-level warships did not act rashly, not even going too near. As long as the spaceship shut down its engine and establish a communication link, they could use this link to monitor every movement of the spaceship, even accessing the spaceship’s control directly. In that case, any the Rebellion Army’s plans would be useless.

The three warships were cautious but there was only silence in the spaceship.

“Originally, we wanted to self-destruct to affect those three warships. Now, it looks like they’re too careful. Our self-destruction wouldn’t harm them. I suggest that we initiate the self-destruct sequence.”

The scar-faced man said in a determined voice.

Everyone else became quiet. Although they were the Rebellion Army, no one wanted to die. Even if there was the slightest hope, they would not choose to self-destruct.

However, now they truly had no other way out, surrounded by the three city-level warships. This armed spaceship that had just a little power left was not of much use.

“I agree. Let’s initiate the self-destruct sequence.”

Finally, someone else agreed. Soon, the rest agreed as well.

“Self-destruct sequence initiated. The countdown begins now. Ten, nine, eight...”

As the cold electronic voice rang out, they watched as the countdown of the self-destruct sequence approached the end. Although it was merely ten seconds, it seemed an eternity of agony to them.

It was not pleasant to slowly wait for the taste of death...

...

In the dark icy space, no one noticed that a small spaceship was hidden at a great distance.

“Should I rescue them? They’re from the Atlan civilization but enemies of these warships.”

It was Merlin in this spaceship. A few days ago, he had discovered this spaceship which was hunted by the three warships. He had followed it at a great distance without revealing himself. Although the distance was immense, avoiding the warships’ sensors, Merlin’s Mind Power was rather tremendous, able to observe everything clearly.

He knew that those on the spaceship were now at the end of their rope.

“Currently, I urgently need to understand the Atlan civilization – the more detailed, the better. As identification is a problem, I can’t enter the starships. Even so, these people seem to be in conflict with the authorities of the Atlan civilization. Just right for me to blend in.”

Merlin considered and ultimately decided to act. Nonetheless, this was the Atlan civilization. Before he ascertained the situation thoroughly, it was unwise to use a power foreign to the Atlan civilization.

However, his tiny spaceship was useless against these three city-level warships.

“Oh right, I have an empire-level warship. It doesn’t even need to be manned for the Matrix is controlling it.”

Merlin’s eyes brightened. The empire-level warship was much more powerful than a city-level warship. Even in the Void Zone, it was a force comparable to an Honored Legend, a warship of high-ranking in the Atlan civilization.

With this in mind, Merlin immediately whipped out the empire-level warship, then kept the small spaceship before entering the warship.

“Honored Master, what are your orders?”

Although the Matrix controlled the empire-level warship, it was inextricably linked to Merlin hence he had control over it.

“Matrix, destroy those three city-level warships!”

Merlin instantly commanded the Matrix. Immediately, the empire-level warship’s cannon started to aim, locking onto the three city-level warships swiftly.

“Fire!”

“Boom!”

Three fearsome beams of light shot by in a flash, thundering toward the three city-level warships.

“What? A danger alert?”

“D*mn it, we’ve been targeted. What’s going on?”

“It’s an empire-level warship. My heavens, have they misunderstood? The army has equipped our warships with a special identification system. How can there be a mistake? Could it be the Rebellion Army’s warship?”

“I heard that the Rebellion Army has seized empire-level warships but only a few to think that we’ve encountered one. Ask for assistance quickly. We’re under attack from the Rebellion Army’s empire-level warship...”

The three city-level warships directed all their energy into their defensive energy shields at once. If they were faced with a common city-level warship, doing this might be useful in blocking the attack.

Nonetheless, they were up against an empire-level warship comparable to an Honored Legend. Thus, their efforts were useless.

“Bang bang bang.”

Three deafening explosions sounded as the three city-level warships blew up like fireworks in the cold dark empty space, reduced to fragments.

At this sight, the Rebellion Army of the armed spaceship watched with mouths agape.

“Countdown for self-destruct sequence – three, two, one...”

The armed spaceship’s self-destruct sequence had nearly reached the final second. Fortunately, someone in the Rebellion Army had managed to respond in time, yelling, “Stop the self-destruct sequence.”

“Beep. Self-destruct sequence stopped!”

“Phew...”

Everyone sighed softly in relief. The spaceship had nearly self-destructed. No one would have imagined that the tide would turn at this point.

“What’s going on? Why would that empire-level warship destroy the three city-level warships?”

“It doesn’t bear the logo of the Rebellion Army, so it shouldn’t be our empire-level warship. Moreover, no matter how impressive the Rebellion Army’s warships are, it can’t possibly appear here out of the blue.”

“We must be careful. There might be something fishy about this warship.”

These members of the Rebellion Army appeared prudent and cautious, staring attentively at the screen at that colossal warship which appeared in the distance. Just the body of the ship alone gave them a sense of pressure.

This was one of the high-level warships of the Atlan civilization – the empire-level warship. It could not possibly be stationed there for the sake of the average starships. Only strongholds directly under the army might be stationed with an empire-level warship but even then, it would be in small numbers such as one or two.

Now that an empire-level warship had popped up here, it was suspicious indeed.

As the enormous warship approached, the Rebellion Army became nervous. They did not know whether they had gotten out of the frying pan into the fire.

“Beep. Unknown communication request. Accept request?”

The mechanical female voice in the spaceship rang out suddenly.

Those on the spaceship exchanged dismayed glances. Finally, an armored man who was the head made the call, saying hoarsely, “Accept communication request.”

Soon, an unfamiliar face appeared on the screen, looking rather excessively young. Nevertheless, the Atlan civilization’s technology was very advanced, even able to extend lives to a significant extent. It was easy to live to a few hundred or a thousand years. Thus, almost every Atlan appeared youthful and beautiful.

However, as the average lifespan increased sharply, the population numbers shot up as well. The entire Atlan Dimension was huge in the first place but their population numbered in the millions and billions. Luckily, the Atlan civilization had come up with the crucial technology for transmuting energy into materials. Otherwise, having to feed so many mouths would be a gargantuan problem.

“Who are you? What do you really want?”

The Rebellion Army’s leader, upon seeing Merlin, shot out a string of questions.

As for the young man on the screen, he smiled calmly. “I think first, you have to thank me for rescuing all of you!”

The spaceship was dead silent. It was true, this young man had rescued them.

“I’m just like you. After seeing how I destroyed the three city-level warships, you should stop being so wary. Now, this place is unsafe. Before they were annihilated, they must’ve sent out a distress signal. If we stay here, none of us will be able to leave. Bring your spaceship into my warship.”

Following that, the communication ended. Soon, the colossal empire-level warship began to open its rear cabin, which could accommodate a few hundred small spaceships.

“Bellio, this person is odd. However, he’s seasoned and careful as well, so we must be the same.”

Merlin’s tactic of cutting off the communication immediately was an old trick. This made sense. Someone who could pilot an empire-level warship to destroy city-level warships – how could they be that simple?

This group’s leader was named Bellio. Of course, he knew that there was something fishy about their savior but what choice did they have now?

“Staying here is dangerous indeed. No matter what, he destroyed the city-level warships. The Senate and the army will never let him off the hook. Even if he doesn’t belong to our Rebellion Army for now, we can request for him to join us in the future!”

Bellio’s face broke out into a smile. If they could persuade this person who possessed an empire-level warship to join the Rebellion Army, his position in the Rebellion Army would become much higher.

Thus, these ten or so members of the Rebellion Army did not hesitate, immediately steering their spaceship into the cabin of the warship.

Chapter 826: The Rebellion Army

“Huh? There’s no one here? A full-intelligence system – how’s that possible?”

When Bellio's group stepped into the empire-level warship, their eyes were filled with astonishment. In the enormous empire-level warship, no one who was controlling the ship for it was a full-intelligence system.

"Any questions?"

An unfamiliar voice spoke, following which they watched as a young man with eyes abstruse eyes walked out from the warship, staring at them serenely.

Everyone exchanged a glance. Of course, they had questions, major ones at that. According to their understanding, even the dimension-level warship had not been fully automated. After all, a warship was not just operating an engine. There were the cannon system, the life system, the navigation system, and so on, even the ability to traverse space.

Therefore, intelligent systems were always only able to assist but not fully control the warship. All the warships of the Atlan civilization that Merlin saw were still controlled by Atlans.

"A full-intelligence warship – we've never seen one before. Can it be the army's newest technological breakthrough? If that's the case, how come you're controlling it?"

Bellio's expression was aloof but his voice was unusually steady.

Merlin's heart leaped. He had overlooked this issue. He had always relied on the Matrix to control the empire-level warship. Previously, he did not think much of it, even feeling that it was ordinary. However, now that he was interrogated by Bellio, he felt that the Matrix was unusual indeed. It was no longer a common intelligent system as it was able to control such a huge warship.

Although he was caught off guard, Merlin soon thought of a response, saying softly, "You're the Rebellion Army, so do you know that the army is recently advocating for war?"

"Of course we do. The army's influence had swelled because they claimed that they could lead us out of this dimension, entering the vast Void Zone. This incessant war had caused countless deaths. This isn't what we want so we rebel against the army, the Senate, and the Atlan Federation!"

Bellio and the rest of the Rebellion Army seemed to turn proud at this moment as if they were carrying out an incomparably sacred duty.

In truth, the Rebellion Army felt this way. What they were undertaking was a sacred endeavor, opposing the military presence in the Void Zone, opposing the war.

‘I didn’t expect that the Atlan civilization would be internally divided... However, it’s not that surprising. Even the Spell Caster civilization, at the start, had parties who wanted to reconcile with the Atlan civilization. Only the three Great Arcane Wizards knew that this was impossible. So, they did not bother. However, these people have established a Rebellion Army. I can use them to conceal my identity!’

Many thoughts flashed in Merlin’s mind but he quickly responded, “Since you know of the army’s wicked acts, they’re not necessarily unrivaled in the Void Zone. Otherwise, there won’t be so many deaths. I’m one of those who entered the Void Zone. The Void Zone is too formidable. There are tyrannical forces that can easily wipe out thousands of warships. The dimension-level warships that we think are the strongest aren’t even worth mentioning before those overwhelming forces. The army has run into trouble. You must’ve received reports that the army has gathered more warships lately?”

Bellio and the rest were shocked, their faces shifting uncertainly. Following that, he nodded. “That’s right. We’ve received such news indeed. The army has mobilized warships on a wide scale lately, even starting to expand their forces. This time, we came here to investigate what’s happening in the Federation – we didn’t expect they’d been defeated in the Void Zone. Humph, this foolish army and the passive Senate that are suppressed by the army. That army sees only war. Once they have the authority, they would surely start a large-scale war. Our dimension has been destroyed by war.”

The Rebellion Army was opposed to war and marching into the Void Zone. Even if they marched in, it must be in a peaceful manner, not starting a war.

Merlin silently disapproved of this. The Rebellion Army was so naïve, it was almost cute. Although the Void Zone was large, which area was not occupied by foreign civilizations? If a new civilization rose, it would surely cause a war. Back when the Spell Caster civilization rose, they had wiped out countless weak civilizations as well before finally expanding to their current glorious state.

Merlin did not care how the Rebellion Army had acted. Now, he needed to earn their trust, and must thus justify this “intelligent system” issue.

“Since they ran into problems in the Void Zone, the army brought some incomplete technology, which is this full-intelligence system. As to how I operate this warship to return to the Atlan Dimension, I believe this is none of your concern, eh?”

“Hehe, indeed it’s not our business. Still, you drove this warship back to the Atlan Dimension on your own, a deserter through and through in the eyes of the army. You also destroyed three city-level warships. By now, you’ve become the Federation’s enemy. Where can you go? Why don’t you follow us back to the Rebellion Army? We can protect you. Similarly, you can enhance our Rebellion Army’s strength. There’ll come a day when we’ll overthrow the army and the Senate, establishing a peaceful, just world!”

Bellio’s words made everyone’s eyes shone. Nonetheless, Merlin shook his head helplessly. These people were idealists. After they survived in the Void Zone for a while, they would change their minds.

“Join your Rebellion Army? Your Rebellion Army has always been suppressed by the Federation. What future is there in joining you?”

Merlin would not agree at once, which might arouse suspicion. After all, the Federation’s power was still the greatest in the Atlan civilization, and it was a complete institution. Joining the Rebellion Army, in the eyes of many, was rather insane.

Most who joined the Rebellion Army were criminals, rogues or perhaps adventurers and idealists, and so on. A Rebellion Army like this would not accomplish much.

Unless there was a miracle.

“Miracle? Am I not the bringer of miracles to them?”

A smirk flitted over Merlin’s lips as he stared evenly at Bellio and the rest.

Still, Bellio was able to recognize reality, laying things out orderly. “Our Rebellion Army is indeed somewhat disorganized now, and we’re rather weak in power. However, it’s the only place that can protect you. After all, you steering such a massive warship is too easily noticed. If you’re blocked, I’m afraid you’d be greeted with dimension-level warships.”

As if he was considering Bellio's words, Merlin finally spoke with "great reluctance", "Alright, then I shall follow you to take a look at the Rebellion Army first, and see how it's like?"

"Haha, you'll grow to like the place."

Bellio and the rest cheered. Although they had encountered danger, they had roped in an empire-level warship, one equipped with the army's secretly researched, full-intelligence system. Such an advanced warship was undoubtedly the number one asset even in the Rebellion Army.

The Rebellion Army had only one dimension-level warship. This was the fundamental reason the Rebellion Army could survive up until now. As for the other warships, they were too rare. Even city-level warships were few, much less empire-level warships. Mostly, they only had armed spaceships that were modified.

Nevertheless, against the Federation's warships, these were useless.

Following that, everyone sat in the warship, flying toward the Rebellion Army. On the way, the members of the Rebellion Army seemed curious about this empire-level warship. They were not high-level members of the Rebellion Army. Otherwise, they would not be sent to such a hazardous investigation mission. It was their first time setting foot in an empire-level warship.

Meanwhile, Merlin stood by one side, finding out about the Atlan civilization, especially the major issues. Currently, Merlin still had some reservations such as the void-level warship. It definitely could not be easily created in the Void Zone, and must be manufactured in advance in the Atlan Dimension, so where was this place? It must be the biggest secret. Only a few people would know, and Merlin was using his inquiries to speculate about some possible locations.

Other than the void-level warship which made Merlin apprehensive, Merlin's mind was lingering over a stubborn uneasiness. Ever since he entered the Atlan Dimension, this uneasiness had stayed with him.

After some consideration, he realized that the Atlan Dimension was left behind by the Vestigial Tribe. Its most mystical aspect was its ability to cut off the natural order. What did the Vestigial Tribe use to cut off the natural order?

This was something Merlin had to find out urgently. Only after resolving both of these inquiries to a reasonable extent would Merlin act with swift tremendous force to annihilate the Atlan civilization.

Only after he had an absolute guarantee would Merlin act.

“Merlin, I’m awake. These people are so weak. Why don’t you act? I’m rather ravenous now. This place is filled with energy, it’s wonderful...”

The black cat Didimoss had woken up. He stared at the starships beyond the warship, and the Dimension Core below, his eyes gleaming with desire.

Due to the Dimension Core left by the Vestigial Tribe, this place was filled with energy everywhere. This was where Didimoss had the best advantage. Moreover, without the natural order, could Didimoss break past the critical point?

In that case, the black cat Didimoss would forever be unable to leave the Atlan Dimension. Otherwise, if he went out, he would suffer the onslaught of the Void Zone’s natural order.

“These people are weak indeed but they ultimately received a large part of knowledge and technology left by the Vestigial Tribe. The Vestigial Tribe could even kill powerful beings like the Thirty-six Emperors. Didimoss, we’d better be careful, and only act when we’re certain of success.”

Merlin pacified the black cat Didimoss. Merlin dared not underestimate the Vestigial Tribe in the slightest.

“Beep. Danger alert. A few small spaceships are approaching from the front. Destroy them?”

After an unknown period, the piercing warning rang out, startling awake everyone in the warship.

Chapter 827: The Three Battalions

“Spaceships?”

Indeed, more than ten spaceships had appeared onscreen. Moreover, they were all modified armed warships. Even so, these spaceships were no threat at all against Merlin’s empire-level warship. An auxiliary laser cannon was enough to easily destroy these armed spaceships.

“Don’t, Merlin. These are the armed spaceships of the Rebellion Army, only they belonged to the Second Battalion.”

As Bellio stared at the spaceships onscreen that were approaching without stopping, he looked uncomfortable. Merlin looked at the rest, whose expressions were stiff as well as if they disliked these armed spaceships.

“They’re the armed spaceships of the Rebellion Army?”

In the end, Merlin did not fire, merely maintaining the warship’s defensive shield.

“Beep. Unknown communication request. Accept request?”

“Accept!”

Merlin immediately accepted the other party’s communication request, following which a well-built man’s face appeared onscreen.

“Stop. This is the Rebellion Army Headquarters. Who are you?”

They were still a long distance away from the Rebellion Army Headquarters. These spaceships must be here on patrol, coming across this empire-level warship by coincidence.

Of course, they were unafraid as well. After all, if this warship was sent by the Federation, it would not be just one empire-level warship. Furthermore, this warship still had not activated its cannons.

“Humph, we’re the First Battalion. I’m Bellio!”

Bellio immediately replied in gravelly tones when he saw this man.

“The First Battalion? I didn’t know that the First Battalion had an empire-level warship to spare.”

The well-built man’s eyes flashed with a hint of surprise. The First Battalion and their Second Battalion were not on peaceful terms. If it were not for their leader’s control, they would have erupted in conflict long ago.

“You can check with His Excellency Commander Keno of the First Battalion. The mission we’re carrying out is personally ordered by the Commander himself!”

Bellio spoke coldly.

Thereafter, the face onscreen became silent, contacting the First Battalion’s Commander Keno.

“Beep. Unknown communication request. Accept request?”

“Accept!”

Another man who looked like he belonged to the military appeared onscreen. He glanced at Bellio and the rest, his face revealing his astonishment. “Bellio, it’s really you guys? How come you’re piloting an empire-level warship?”

Commander Keno was stunned. He had sent Bellio and the rest to find out some information but did not ask them to hijack an empire-level warship. Even if he had, they could not possibly have succeeded.

“Your Excellency, during our mission, we were hunted by the Federation’s warships. Luckily, Merlin saved us, and the empire-level warship is his. The specifics of the matter are more complicated. We’ll report to Your Excellency when we return.”

Commander Keno who was onscreen noticed Merlin’s unfamiliar face. Merlin was not a member of the Rebellion Army.

“Your Excellency Merlin, welcome on board the First Battalion of our Rebellion Army! Please be rest assured, we’re very safe here. I’ll ask them to let your warship pass.”

After a pause, Commander Keno seemed to recall something, saying to Bellio softly, “Bellio, I’ll immediately send someone from the First Battalion to meet you. Before that, you mustn’t let anyone on board the warship. Remember, not anyone!”

Bellio seemed to connect this with something, and nodded solemnly.

Following that, Commander Keno vanished, and that previous well-built man appeared once more.

“Commander Keno has already confirmed your identities. You may pass. Let’s go, my spaceship will escort you to headquarters.”

Following that, Merlin’s warship trailed behind the spaceships and continued on its way.

In the small spaceship, that well-built man was hurriedly reporting to his superiors. This time, he was directly reporting to the Second Battalion’s Commander Lombass.

“Your Excellency Commander Lombass, we’ve just discovered that a scouting group of the First Battalion has returned with an empire-level warship. What are your instructions?”

The face onscreen was handsome and very young. Nonetheless, based on his abstruse, cold eyes, one knew that he had lived for a long time.

In the Atlan civilization, one’s age could not be guessed based on appearance.

“What? The group from the First Battalion had brought back an empire-level warship? This won’t do. Keno’s First Battalion already has a few empire-level warships. With one more, our Second Battalion will be suppressed completely. Where are you now?”

Commander Lombass immediately raised his head, and spoke seriously.

“Your Excellency, we’re escorting the warship back to headquarters,” answered the well-built man candidly.

“Returning to headquarters? That’s good. Now, you must immediately ask to gain entry into the warship. No matter what you do, gain entry. You must control everyone from the First Battalion in the warship, then bring the warship safely back to the Second Battalion. Remember, bring it back to the Second Battalion. Humph, you’re much closer to the station of the Second Battalion. The fleet Keno sent can’t catch up to us at all.”

An apprehensive look had gripped the well-built man’s face. He knew that by “snatching” the First Battalion’s warship in broad daylight, although it might not affect Lombass in the end, he would be out of luck.

“Your Excellency, this... If the leader assigns blame, I’m afraid...”

The well-built man spoke awkwardly.

“Humph, what are you scared of? As long as you bring the warship back to the Second Battalion, I’ll make you the captain of a city-level warship. Even Keno won’t be able to do anything to you. Got it?”

Lombass spoke full of indifference.

The well-built man felt a burst of glee. To become captain of an actual warship, his position would be much higher than his current post as the leader of this scouting group with their armed spaceships. These positions were poles apart with no way of comparison.

Due to the warship’s immense power, in addition to the scarce number of warships in the Rebellion Army, any captain of a warship would enjoy a high status, considered a real figure of power within the Rebellion Army.

Lombass immediately promoted an unknown leader of a small group to a warship captain, a figure of real power. Naturally, the well-built man was endlessly delighted.

Still, he knew that what Lombass wanted was this empire-level warship. Only when the empire-level warship was sent to the Second Battalion would he become the captain of a warship.

“Link up to the empire-level warship’s communication right now.”

“Beep, unknown communication request. Accept request?”

In Merlin’s warship, another request for communication sounded.

“Accept.”

Merlin saw that the well-built man had appeared onscreen once more, and he frowned. “What do you want?”

The well-built man remained placid, saying lowly, “Our spaceships are too slow. Why don’t you open your hatch and let us in? Then we’ll be much faster, reaching headquarters even sooner.”

“Open the hatch?”

Merlin was rather tempted. These spaceships were slow indeed, not even a tenth of his empire-level warship’s speed. This agonizing pace would take who-knew-how-long to reach the Rebellion Army Headquarters.

“Hold on, Your Excellency Merlin. Don’t open the cabin at all costs. They’re from the Second Battalion. Earlier, Commander Keno has already commanded us not to let anyone enter.”

Bellio immediately yelled out loud, stopping Merlin.

Merlin knitted his brow. He now saw the first signs of division within the Rebellion Army. It looked like they were rather disorganized, split into the First Battalion and the Second Battalion.

Moreover, the First Battalion and the Second Battalion did not get along. His empire-level warship was now the target of their struggles.

“This is my warship! In addition, I’m not under Commander Keno yet. I can freely choose which battalion to join, right?”

Merlin said with a humorless smile but his tone had become icy. He could not care less about the bickering between the two battalions. Joining whichever side would not affect Merlin. Anyway, he did not have plans to join the Rebellion Army.

Bellio was slightly taken aback but then recovered. He seemed to have panicked, and his previous “command” seemed to arouse Merlin’s antipathy.

With that, Bellio drew in a deep breath and said softly, “Merlin, maybe you’re still unclear about some matters within the Rebellion Army. To you, joining the First or the Second Battalion makes a huge difference because our First Battalion is the true Rebellion Army. We’ve joined the Rebellion Army for the same goal. Those who join the First Battalion want to establish a just, fair world without war. Everyone in the First Battalion is silently fighting for this goal but the other two battalions, humph, they’re not as simple.

“First, the Second Battalion is a group of scoundrels, bandits, and rogues. In general, those in the Second Battalion are criminals, a majority of whom were on the death row. They had escaped the Federation and attached themselves to our Rebellion Army. As our Rebellion Army is still weak, we can’t turn away anyone. These vagrants, criminals, and scoundrels thus formed the Second Battalion on their own. They’re scum. They don’t care about any ideal society. After our Rebellion Army has won, we’ll clear them away sooner or later.

“As for the Third Battalion, they comprise of captives of Federation army members from successive battles. Due to various reasons like coercion or fear of penalty upon return to the Federation, they joined our Rebellion Army. However, they’re extremely disloyal, so they only control some transport ships, having no authority to control warships. Only the First and Second Battalion possess many warships, making up the Rebellion Army’s primary forces!

“Your Excellency Merlin, have you come all the way to the Rebellion Army only to join that group of scum and scoundrels?”

Bellio was righteously indignant as he rebuked the Second Battalion before Merlin, allowing Merlin to learn about the power divides within the Rebellion Army. On the surface, they had three battalions but only the First and Second Battalions had actual fighting power.

It was just that the First Battalion comprised true idealists who willingly became the Rebellion Army whereas the Second Battalion was formed by criminals who had no other recourse. Naturally, they were loathed by the First Battalion of idealists.

Merlin shook his head softly. With a Rebellion Army of such complex factions, success was only possible through a miracle...

Chapter 828: Open Fire I

Merlin thought about it for a moment, and finally did not agree to the well-built man's request, keeping the hatch closed.

"Your Excellency Merlin, please be rest assured. After joining our First Battalion, you won't regret joining the Rebellion Army. Only the First Battalion is the hope and future of the Rebellion Army!"

Bellio seemed to value Merlin highly or to be more accurate, he valued the full-intelligence empire-level warship. An ordinary empire-level warship was already a formidable military force in the Rebellion Army. Moreover, Merlin's warship was not an average one, equipped with a full-intelligence system. A powerful warship like this did not require anyone to operate it. This was highly useful to the Rebellion Army who did not have many people.

If they could decode this full-intelligence system, the Rebellion Army would not need to worry about nurturing talents to control the warships. After all, a warship could not be controlled by just anyone. Only an expert who had long hours of training would be able to control it.

"Where's the station of the First Battalion?"

Merlin asked immediately. He no longer wished to follow behind those armed spaceships.

Bellio answered right away, "The First Battalion's station is further away but with this warship's speed, we can still reach there quickly. There's no need to be courteous to these scoundrels of the Second Battalion. Just shake them off directly."

Bellio did not like those from the Second Battalion, making a disdainful expression each time he mentioned them. One could well imagine how deep the conflict was between the First and Second Battalion.

With such deep conflict, they could still live alongside each other. It must be due to the intimidation from that dimension-level warship owned by the leader of the Rebellion Army, Medrick.

If ever the First or the Second Battalion obtained a dimension-level warship or Medrick died due to some accident, disturbing the balance of power, the First and Second Battalion would start fighting at once. The Rebellion Army had expanded blindly to reinforce its strength, causing an irreconcilable internal conflict.

In the pitch-dark space, the massive warship started to speed up, paying no mind to those armed spaceships in front, barging forward in a straight line.

How would these armed spaceships dare to clash against this enormous warship? Therefore, they quickly dodged to one side. They could not match the warship's speed at all, and could only watch helplessly as the warship drew further away.

"Leader, the warship had flown away. What do we do?"

These armed spaceships were flown by the Second Battalion. They were rather stupefied when they saw the warship leaving suddenly. Without the warship, Lombass' previous promise was null.

"D*mn it. It must be the instigation of Bellio and the rest in the warship. We must quickly report this to His Excellency the Commander."

Thus, the well-built man hurriedly contacted Lombass.

"Your Excellency Commander Lombass, things don't look good. That empire-level warship, thanks to the poison words of Bellio from the First Battalion, had left us behind. The warship is too fast, and we can't catch up at all. I'm afraid they're heading directly for the First Battalion's station."

The well-built man swiftly reported the situation in detail to Lombass, the Commander of the Second Battalion.

Lombass was somewhat irritable, bellowing furiously, “You trash, what are you waiting for? Forget it, there’s no point in you chasing after them. I’ll send a warship to intercept this empire-level warship. Humph, being in the territory of my Second Battalion, you wish to slip away to Keno’s hands? How delusional!”

After Lombass’ enraged rant, the communication was cut off. Everyone exchanged dismayed looks. Their leader’s dream had been shattered. He could forget about becoming the captain of a warship.

“D*mn that Bellio, ruining my good fortune. D*mn the First Battalion...”

This lowly group leader’s resentment encompassed the First Battalion but he was powerless as he stared at the receding empire-level warship.

...

In a black warship, the First Battalion’s Commander Keno was wearing a gray-green military outfit. He was slim but he appeared full of vitality, standing ramrod straight, looking just like a military officer.

“Your Excellency, you don’t have to greet Bellio yourself. Although an empire-level warship is valuable, it’s enough to send us. Why the big fanfare?”

The adjutant asked, puzzled. Greeting an empire-level warship was still justified. After all, empire-level warships were the main forces of the First Battalion. In the entire First Battalion, there were only eighteen empire-level warships.

However, Keno was now bringing no fewer than nine empire-level warships in addition to over twenty city-level warships. Such a gigantic fleet was nearly enough to form an attack fleet. Was this just to receive an empire-level warship? An outsider might think that a war was starting...

Commander Keno's expression did not shift, his eyes appearing quite inscrutable. Before this, he had communicated with Bellio. Although Bellio did not say anything, Keno had keenly discerned that this empire-level warship was something else.

Of course, he could send some warships to receive them without such great fanfare but it must not be forgotten – this time, Bellio and the rest were passing through an area controlled by the Second Battalion after the guard had been switched.

Based on the behavior of that scoundrel Lombass, he might act to seize a captive empire-level warship directly. After all, it would not be the first time he had snatched a warship.

"I'll go myself. Lombass won't dare to cross the line!"

Commander Keno spoke concisely but everyone could feel the steel in his voice. No one in the First Battalion did not loathe the Second Battalion. Those were an absolute bunch of criminals, scum, and scoundrels, unfit to join the Rebellion Army at all.

Only the First Battalion could represent the Rebellion Army. Nonetheless, although they despised the Second Battalion, it did not mean they would take the Second Battalion lightly. The First Battalion possessed eighteen empire-level warships, and though the Second Battalion was slightly weaker, they had sixteen empire-level warships too, which was not a huge disparity.

If Lombass were to gain this empire-level warship, the Second Battalion would have seventeen empire-level warships. That would be nearly no different from the First Battalion. Would the Second Battalion not act even more arrogantly?

"Your Excellency, we understand. However, we've just received some bad news."

"What is it? Speak."

Commander Keno knitted his brow.

"We've just received news that the Second Battalion's station had sent out three empire-level warships. Moreover, Lombass had ordered various stations to mobilize warships to intercept Bellio and the rest."

The adjutant reported nervously.

The furrow on Commander Keno's forehead deepened, and he said coldly, "Speed up instantly. Don't care about energy consumption and move at the greatest speed. We must reach before Lombass. Otherwise, if any clashes occur, that lunatic Lombass might do something foolish."

After Commander Keno gave the order, nine empire-level warships and more than twenty city-level warships formed a massive fleet. They poured on speed mightily, heading outside the headquarters.

...

"Hmm? Isn't that the warship His Excellency the Commander has asked us to look out for? Quick, report this to the Commander."

At a station of the Second Battalion, someone noticed a colossal empire-level warship in the air. This was the Second Battalion's defense area. Naturally, such a large warship could not be concealed no matter what.

Soon, the station had contacted Commander Lombass.

"Your Excellency, we at Station Eight have discovered that empire-level warship. Please instruct us on the next step."

Lombass felt a burst of delight, and said in a low voice, "Station Eight, you have eight city-level warships there, right? Send out all of them and surround that empire-level warship tightly."

"What, surround the warship? Your Excellency, that's an empire-level warship, and we're just small-sized city-level warships, this..."

The person in charge was in an awkward position. Anyone would know the disparity between a city-level and an empire-level warship. Even the defensive shield of the latter could not be defeated. If they started fighting, their eight city-level warships were no match for that huge empire-level warship at all.

“Humph, they want to join the Rebellion Army, so why would they attack? Besides, I’m bringing three empire-level warships. You’ll be safe. How about this – if they want to pass your checkpoint, tell them you want to board the warship for inspection. If they don’t obey, then stall them momentarily and don’t allow them to pass. Got it?”

“Your Excellency, we understand.”

The person in charge at Station Eight nodded. It looked like Commander Lombass attached great importance to this empire-level warship. Nonetheless, if one thought about it, if the empire-level warship joined the First Battalion, it would have nineteen empire-level warships while the Second Battalion only had sixteen. Under this trend, the Second Battalion’s capability would grow weaker.

Therefore, of course, Lombass would use any means to hold on to this empire-level warship.

Currently, in the empire-level warship, Merlin and the rest were faced with a dilemma. On the large screen, there was a military checkpoint, asking them to open the hatch to allow inspection of the warship’s interior.

This was a defensive checkpoint. An inspection was justifiable but the problem was the people at this checkpoint were from the Second Battalion. Of course, Bellio knew that they wanted to seize this chance to enter the warship and gain control.

“Your Excellency Merlin, we mustn’t open the hatch. They won’t dare to do anything to us.”

Bellio said hoarsely.

“If we don’t let them inspect, we can’t get past this checkpoint. Don’t you want to return to the First Battalion?”

Naturally, Merlin had figured out the Second Battalion’s plan. They did not force their way on board the warship, merely using the eight city-level warships to surround Merlin’s warship tightly. They were waiting for others from the Second Battalion to arrive.

“Commander Keno is sure to send someone from the First Battalion to receive us.”

“How far away is the First Battalion? How about the Second Battalion? Look at these people. They’ve surrounded us, and are waiting for reinforcements from the Second Battalion.”

Merlin shook his head powerlessly. If it were up to him, he might as well force his way through.

Bellio’s face paled. He knew that what Merlin said made sense. If they were continually delayed here, those from the Second Battalion would surely arrive first. At that point, with a few empire-level warships cornering them, they would not be as “friendly” as they were now.

However, barging through the checkpoint would cause huge trouble. That would be an act of war. Even if it were brought before the leader Medrick, the First Battalion would be penalized.

Merlin shook his head. These people were too indecisive. He ordered the Matrix curtly, “Barge through the checkpoint!”

“Boom.”

The gigantic warship started to move with complete disregard for this fortress checkpoint. It should be known that although city-level warships could not compare to an empire-level warship, this was still a fortress checkpoint, equipped with a fortress cannon.

A fortress cannon was quite a threat to an empire-level warship. To activate the fortress cannon, one must obtain permission from the battalion’s highest commander.

“They’re forcing their way through. Report to the Commander!”

Those from the Second Battalion who were at this station dared not fire. They had no authority to activate the fortress cannon, so they could only report to Lombass.

“What? Do they dare to force their way through? It looks like this warship is already controlled by the First Battalion, even disregarding the checkpoint to return to the First Battalion. In that case, I won’t hold back. They ignored the checkpoint first. Even if we bring this to the leader, it’s the First Battalion who will be punished. Send out an alert, saying there’s

an invasion by an enemy warship. I'll enable access to Station Eight's fortress cannon immediately. You can use the fortress cannon to destroy the invading enemy warship!"

Activating the fortress cannon to destroy the empire-level warship, one that was ready to join the Rebellion Army – this was truly an internal conflict.

Nonetheless, being part of the Second Battalion, naturally, they knew that the relationship between the First and Second Battalion was basically like fire and water. The conflict ran deep, and could not be resolved.

They must not let the First Battalion's forces increased. Furthermore, even Lombass had given the order. These people who were defending the fortress checkpoint dared not disobey.

"Activate the fortress cannon, lock onto the target."

"Beep, beep, beep. Warning, warning. Targeted by fortress cannon, danger, extreme danger. Destroy fortress cannon?"

In Merlin's warship, everyone's heart was pounding. Earlier, Merlin had easily barged forward, and they were still considering the possible penalty. However, they were now frightened by the words "fortress cannon" from the warning.

"What? Fortress cannon? My heavens, has Lombass gone insane? Has the Second Battalion lost their minds? Are they trying to start a full-on war with our First Battalion?"

Bellio could only scold furiously but this did not improve things.

As for Merlin, his expression was serene. He knew about the fortress cannon's fearsome power. It was certainly a threat to the empire-level warship. The empire-level warship he was in now was just an ordinary empire-level warship. It must not be hit by the fortress cannon. Otherwise, Merlin could not hide any longer, and could only reveal his true strength to resolve the crisis.

"Matrix, fire immediately. Destroy the fortress cannon and the surrounding warships!"

Merlin's gaze was icy. He would not wait helplessly to experience being blown up. He immediately struck first to gain the upper hand, ordering the Matrix to fire.

Chapter 829: Open Fire II

"Lock, fire!"

The Matrix's voice remained as unfeeling as ever. Nevertheless, the moment its voice subsided, Merlin's empire-level warship blasted more than a dozen dazzling beams of light.

The huge light beams lit up the sky in a spectacular display. It actually hit the fortress cannon first. The combined impact of more than a dozen light beams was pure terror.

"Boom."

Before the fortress cannon could even fire, it was blown into pieces. The warship attack system controlled by the Matrix seemed to be much faster than the average warship.

Merlin realized with a jolt. Apparently, with an intelligence system like the Matrix, the warship would undergo some changes.

"City-level warships?"

Merlin looked at the screen. There were a few city-level warships that were preparing to flee. Regardless, Merlin had no intention of sparing them. He immediately commanded the Matrix to open fire and destroy these city-level warships completely.

"A fortress destroyed, just like that?"

Bellio watched the destruction on the screen with his mouth agape. It was important to note that the fortresses built by the Rebellion Army were extraordinary. Even faced against an empire-level warship, it had the ability to intercept and destroy the empire-level warship.

However, this fortress, including the fortress cannon, was blown into pieces. The entire fortress was destroyed by Merlin's empire-level warship. Nevertheless, when Bellio thought carefully, he realized how Merlin had emerged as the victor.

"Speed, it's the warship attack system's speed. Even though the fortress cannon was the first to lock down the warship, the full-intelligence system onboard is able to open fire upon command. Hence, the fortress cannon was shot down before it could launch an attack."

After the initial shock, Bellio eventually calmed down. He looked at this empire-level warship in amazement. Merlin had displayed too many surprises. Such a fast response speed coupled with a fully-intelligent warship. Despite the fact that there were no component upgrades whatsoever, the combat power of the warship was massively enhanced.

"The military's secret research on full-intelligence systems is truly powerful. If the entire fleet of the First Battalion is equipped with this full-intelligence system, then the battalion's strength would be enhanced by unknown proportions."

While Bellio was speculating the benefits of the full-intelligence system on the warships, the rest of the people from the First Battalion were utterly stunned, expressions of incredible disbelief were plastered all over their faces.

A fortress destroyed, this was equivalent to a declaration of war!

"We're dead. If the warships of the Second Battalion get here, they can kill us with proper justification because the fortress was destroyed. Currently, we're not too far from the Second Battalion's base."

Everyone realized that the severity of the situation at hand increased significantly. If the Second Battalion managed to arrive at the scene, all of them would be in grave danger.

Thinking of this, Bellio spoke to Merlin gravely. "Merlin, we must leave now and hurry towards the base of the First Battalion as fast as we can. Only then, with the help of Commander Keno, we might be able to smooth this matter over."

Honestly, Bellio was not sure whether this matter could be smoothed over, but in the current circumstances, he had no choice but to say that. Moreover, a fully-intelligent system empire-level warship like this would greatly increase the overall strength of the Rebellion Army.

Therefore, should the leader decide on a punishment, it most probably would not inconvenience Merlin too much.

Merlin nodded. Naturally, he anticipated the consequences of his actions. However, since the other side had activated the fortress cannon, he could not afford to hesitate and struck first.

“Let’s go!”

Activating the empire-level warship, they left the fortress as quickly as possible.

Shortly after the warship departed, three empire-level warships and a dozen city-level warships rushed to the fortress. Lombass looked at the ruins of No. 8 Fortress with a dark expression.

“Great, marvelous, they even dare to destroy a fortress. Hehe, but this is good too. Now we can justify destroying this warship. Alert all the fortress checkpoints, anyone who spots this empire-level warship, destroy it immediately. Activate the first level warfare alarm right now. Every fortress cannon should be charged to their highest limits. In addition, mobilize another ten empire-level warships and surround that warship!”

A ruthless sneer appeared on the corner of Lombass’ mouth. Since the Second Battalion could not obtain this warship, he would not allow the First Battalion to obtain it either.

“Merlin, can the warship go any faster?”

Bellio asked with a sense of urgency. In fact, he was not the only one who was nervous. The rest of his men were also very anxious because along the way, they had been locked down by several warships.

Fortunately, the empire-level warship was fast enough, coupled with the Matrix’s full-intelligence system. With a single command from Merlin, the warship could respond accordingly, so they had been able to prevent another violent battle so far.

However, they could surmise that the Second Battalion must have issued a siege order. Otherwise, the warships that they encountered would not have chosen to target and open fire at Merlin’s warship as soon as they spotted it.

“Beep beep beep. Warning, warning, extreme danger, we’ve been locked down as target!”

“Locked down again? Matrix, retreat backward.”

Merlin made a decisive call. They encountered too many target locks within this period of time but he had been able to handle it flawlessly thanks to the Matrix’s near-perfect control of the empire-level warship. This linkage allowed the warship to be a lot more responsive compared to the other empire-level warships.

“There is a fortress in front? No wonder we were locked down. Is there any other way around here?”

Merlin asked with a frown. A fortress lied ahead of them, obviously guarded by the Second Battalion as well. The extreme threat detected earlier was definitely due to them being locked down by a fortress cannon.

It was impossible to activate the full limit of the fortress cannon in such a short time, so the only reasonable explanation was that Lombass had already raised the alarm to the first level, which was in preparation for war.

In other words, Lombass’ Second Battalion was now dead set on destroying Merlin’s empire-level warship.

“Damn it, how can they be so despicable? Lombass has gone crazy. Is he trying to pick a fight between the First and Second Battalions?”

Bellio was furious but helpless all the same.

“It’s a war now!”

Merlin also felt slightly helpless. He did not expect that just as he was about to infiltrate the Rebellion Army and slowly understand the situation of the entire Atlan civilization, he would encounter such a crisis.

If the Second Battalion managed to catch up to them, he could not rely on this empire-level warship alone to escape. So, when that time comes, Merlin could only wield his true abilities. Despite being able to Mind Control the Rebellion Army, it was troublesome.

After all, Mind Control was not a perpetual control. Once the person leaves the effective range of Merlin's Mind Power, they would recover. Thus, Merlin's tracks would be uncovered.

Bellio said helplessly, "We don't have an escape route anymore. It's possible to circle around the fortress, but it is still within the firing range of the fortress cannon. As soon as we advance a little further, we will be locked down immediately."

Merlin had no desire to test the power of the fortress cannon. One strike could strip the defensive layer of the warship and lose 50-60% of its energy, whereas two or three strikes could destroy the warship.

The fortress cannons had been specifically designed to deal with empire-level warships. These fortress cannons were still considered harmless compared to the fortress cannons installed on the important starships. Those were true horror. Even dimension-level warships were unable to withstand more than a few hits.

"Warning, warning; large number of warships detected!"

Just as Merlin was caught in a dilemma, the Matrix blared out a piercing alarm. At some unknown point of time, a huge fleet of warships had appeared behind the warship.

"Tsss."

Seeing this huge fleet of warships, everyone inhaled sharply. This was a massive force composed of twelve empire-level warships and almost thirty city-level warships.

Looking at the insignias, they were obviously warships that belonged to Lombass from the Second Battalion!

"We've been surrounded..."

Bellio clenched his fist tightly but he was powerless to react. Under the siege of twelve empire-level warships and the fortress cannon, there was simply no way for them to escape.

Merlin stared at the fleet coldly. If they really dared to destroy his warship, he would not spare any thought to show his true abilities and crush all of them to dust.

However, Merlin's identity would be revealed.

...

In the Second Battalion's fleet, Lombass was seated inside the commanding ship. Looking at the empire-level warship, a grin broke out across his face. "Hehe, we've finally caught up to you. Let's see where else you can escape to this time."

"Sir Commander, do you want us to destroy it now?"

"Stupid!"

Lombass sneered. "I allowed you to destroy it earlier on to prevent this empire-level warship from falling into the hands of the First Battalion, but now that it has been surrounded by us, it will become the main warship of the Second Battalion. Are we going to destroy our own main warship? No matter what, this is an empire-level warship. Recently, the Federation has been imposing a stricter restriction on us, we can't even transport some key spare parts. Replacing warship spare parts is already problematic enough, let alone building new warships."

Lombass looked at the warship greedily. Thus, he ordered ten empire-level warships to slowly surround it. However, he was extremely cautious and kept the commanding ship far away, outside the firing range of an empire-level warship. The rest of the warships locked down Merlin's empire-level warship securely.

If there were any peculiarities, all the warships would open fire at once.

"Tell them, take the spaceship and leave the warship immediately. No one must be left behind on the warship. Otherwise, we will open fire and destroy the entire empire-level warship!"

Lombass' tone was indifferent, but his eyes portrayed a malicious glint.

Chapter 830: The First Battalion

On Merlin's body, no one could see waves of Mind Power fluctuating around him. Moreover, Merlin was a Great Lord who had consolidated two ultimate Maxims; the Flame Maxim and Darkness Maxim respectively.

Since the Atlan Dimension did not contain the power of natural order, the power of Maxims was also significantly weakened and could not draw power from the outside world. So, Merlin could only depend on his own Maxim power and magic power.

Nonetheless, despite being slightly weakened, he still possessed the fighting ability of a Lord. Hence, defeating these empire-level warships was merely a walk in the park. In addition, he also had the Illusory World. He shrouded them gradually without being detected. If his opponents were to open fire, he would be able to control the minds of everyone inside the warships.

Silently and invisibly, his Mind Power permeated all the warships. Even Lombass was entrapped by Merlin. Under the cover of the Illusory World, they were unknowingly trapped in Merlin's Illusory World. It was completely undetectable.

"Illusory World is really amazing. It is able to transform into any illusion, which allows anyone to enter it unaware and allows the Mind Power Master to control minds!"

Merlin became more and more aware of the uniqueness of the Illusory World. Previously, the invisible Mind Power of the Illusory Heart realm could still be detected by some strong contenders.

On the other hand, the Illusory World could materialize with just a single thought from Merlin and mimic any kind of environment. For example, this empty sky had already been replaced by Merlin's Illusory World. Any warship that entered this space could be controlled by Merlin and destroyed easily.

"The minds of the Atlans are just too weak..."

The Atlans appeared to have only developed the knowledge system of the Vestigial Tribe and did not improve their own bodies. Therefore, they were very weak. Without the warships, puppets and armors, their bodies were extremely fragile.

Under the influence of Merlin's Illusory World, he could easily control their minds and also kill them without warning.

As the warship gradually approached nearer, the atmosphere became tenser. Inside the commanding ship, Lombass was watching Merlin's motionless warship with glee. He sneered. "Open the hatch, or immediately open fire!"

"Beep beep beep, there is an unknown call incoming, accept?"

Inside Merlin's warship, the warning sound blared, causing everyone to become more nervous.

"Accept."

Soon, a military officer-like person appeared on the screen. He spoke in a grim and straightforward tone. "The commander of the Second Battalion orders you to open your hatch and submit for inspection. Otherwise, we will regard you as an enemy vessel and destroy you!"

As soon as he finished speaking, the military officer quietly waited for Merlin's decision.

"I guess we have no choice but to allow them to enter the warship..."

Regardless of how much Bellio hated the people from the Second Battalion, he understood the severity of the situation. If they continued to resist, they would most probably be destroyed.

"Turn it off."

Instead, Merlin turned off the screen and his lips quirked into a smile.

At this time, he was already ready to wield his Mind Control. At most, he would just enter the Rebellion Army headquarters by force and gain control over a part of the Rebellion Army. Afterward, he could simply take his time to interrogate them about the Atlan Dimension.

It was just that such an act was too rash and prone to be exposed. If he attracted the attention of the Atlan Federation Army and Senate, it would be potentially disastrous.

“Sir Commander, they ended the call and did not open the hatch until now.”

Lombass looked murderous inside the commanding ship. He did not expect that despite being surrounded by twelve warships, they still refused to surrender.

“Hmph, in that case, destroy them!”

Lombass did not hesitate and immediately ordered them to open fire.

“Boom”.

Suddenly, a dazzling beam of light exploded from the distant void and slammed violently into Lombass’ commanding ship. In an instant, the energy level of the commanding ship plummeted more than fifty percent. With just one more strike, the whole commanding ship would be destroyed.

“Damn it, an empire-level warship. Who dares to attack my commanding ship?”

Lombass was incredibly incensed. Just now, when the dazzling light glowed bright, he could almost sense the aura of death. Ever since becoming the commander of the Second Battalion, he had not felt such a critical life-and-death moment for a long time. Even when they were under siege by the Federation’s warships, he merely gave instructions from a faraway and safe location. He did not feel this horrible feeling of brushing with death.

However, right now, that cannon was fired by a real empire-level warship. If he had not propped up the defensive shield of the warship, perhaps they would have been blown to pieces with just a single hit.

“Sir Commander, it seems like the people of the First Battalion have arrived!”

The deputy commander seemed to have received some news. He pointed towards the screen. Amidst the pitch-black void, a huge fleet came into view. The insignia on the warships was unmistakable. It was Commander Keno of the First Battalion.

“The First Battalion? Damn it, why have they come here? Pay no attention to them. Open fire and destroy this empire-level warship first!”

Lombass’ face darkened. It was supposed to be a guaranteed victory, but the First Battalion arrived unexpectedly with such a huge fleet.

“Beep, unknown call incoming, accept?”

Lombass’ face shifted with uncertainty. Finally, he decided to accept it. Subsequently, a well-built officer appeared on the screen. Upon seeing this familiar figure, Lombass’ expression soured even more.

“Lombass, I will be reporting all your actions to the Leader. At the same time, you better tell your warships not to act rashly. All of you have been locked as targets. Perhaps you have a few more empire-level warships, but don’t forget that your commanding ship has already been hit once. I wonder if it can survive a second hit?”

This officer was Commander Keno from the First Battalion.

Lombass wanted to go on a rampage, but upon thinking about the commanding ship that had been locked down by the First Battalion, he had no choice but to suppress his urge. That feeling of having a close brush with death was not something he would like to repeat.

“Cease fire. Everyone, retreat.”

Helpless, Lombass could only issue such an order. Nevertheless, he stared unblinkingly at Keno and sneered. “Keno, this is my defense region, plus this warship destroyed my No. 8 Fortress. I suspect there is a Federation spy onboard. Even if you escalate this to the Leader, you won’t escape unscathed.”

“This empire-level warship had already agreed to join the First Battalion. If not for the obstruction from the Second Battalion, why would it destroy your No. 8 Fortress for no reason? Moreover, an empire-level warship was able to destroy your fortress, what does it say about your defenses if the Federation Army actually arrived? Your extreme incompetence is truly embarrassing to the Rebellion Army. I’m sure our Leader would be severely disappointed in the Second Battalion.”

Commander Keno was unruffled, instead there was a hint of ridicule in his eyes. The purpose of a fortress was to defend against warships, especially empire-level warships. By right, it should be able to intercept at least two to three warships.

However, it was destroyed by just one empire-level warship. Although there were many contributing factors, such as the fact that No. 8 Fortress was not fully prepared, it was undeniable that a fortress had been destroyed.

If they were to report such an incident to the Leader, then Merlin’s act of destroying the fortress would not be the biggest sin. Instead, the Second Battalion would be punished.

Now that his commanding ship had been hit and would not be replenished in a short time, if they were to go against the nine warships of the First Battalion, the outcome would be difficult to ascertain. Nonetheless, Lombass knew that he would die for sure.

After a long while, Lombass finally gritted his teeth and withdrew all his warships. The only ship left in the void with the First Battalion warships was Merlin’s empire-level warship.

“Haha, it’s the First Battalion. It’s Commander Keno!”

Watching the scene inside the screen, Bellio and the others were overjoyed. The First Battalion had come to pick them up.

“Beep. Unknown call incoming. Accept?”

“Accept!”

Merlin saw that on the screen, a burly officer with a keen personality appeared. This was the living definition of a military officer – strict, imposing, authoritative!

When Bellio saw this officer, his expression turned serious. Immediately, he said, “Commander Keno, this is Captain Merlin. He would like to join the Rebellion Army but encountered the Second Battalion’s obstructions.”

This imposing officer was, of course, Commander Keno. His stern expression gradually relaxed and spoke calmly. “I’m aware of the Second Battalion’s obstruction, they won’t dare to harm you anymore. Captain Merlin, please steer your warship behind the First Battalion. We will protect you until we get to the First Battalion’s base.”

Merlin nodded and did not say anything. Due to the timely intervention of the First Battalion at the most critical moment, he did not have to reveal his real identity and abilities, which was a good thing.

Therefore, he immediately commanded the Matrix to start the warship and flew behind the First Battalion.

Lombass was cautious, so he dared not open fire. Thus, he could only watch the First Battalion depart quickly before his eyes. This time, not only did he lose a fortress, but the First Battalion obtained another warship. Now, the First Battalion had obviously surpassed the Second Battalion.

“Keno... Hmph, go back. There’s still a lot of time. As long as the Leader needs us and our sixteen empire-level warships, I will still be the Commander of the Second Battalion!”

Although Lombass’ heart was seething with rage, he had no choice but to issue orders for the fleet to return to base.

Inside Merlin’s warship, Bellio and the others sighed a breath of relief and showed a faint smile.

“Merlin, don’t worry, Commander Keno will surely think highly of you. Once you arrive at the First Battalion, you’ll be safe.”

Bellio patted Merlin’s shoulder.

“Safe?”

Merlin did not reply. Joining the First Battalion of the Rebellion Army was merely the beginning of his foray into the Atlan civilization!