

Apocalypse 1426

Chapter 1426: Splitting level nine materials

Li Daqian waited for everyone's reactions after he finished speaking. Surprisingly, the responses varied.

The smaller organizations and laboratories were visibly pleased, knowing they now had a chance. If the entire corpse were sold as a whole, they wouldn't stand a chance against super factions like Cloud Peak, Five Ring Money, and Cannibal Chain. Coming here would have been a waste of resources, leaving them with nothing but losses.

Perhaps Thousand Beast Villa would have gifted them a couple of battle beasts as compensation?

But now, things were different. If the corpse were sold in parts, the opportunity was much greater. It was obvious that Li Daqian would divide the corpse into as many pieces as possible to maximize profits.

They didn't expect to get the key parts, but some "scraps" would surely be available—enough to satisfy their appetites.

To be honest, they couldn't afford the expensive parts anyway, so getting what others didn't want was perfect for them.

As for the more powerful individuals like Ye Zhongming, Deacon Water, and Ruan Xiao, they remained calm.

They weren't fools. Li Daqian's decision to sell the corpse in parts was clearly an attempt to squeeze them for all they were worth. While this was understandable, given Thousand Beast Villa's heavy losses, it didn't mean they were willing to be taken advantage of. They were far from pleased.

Everyone wanted the best parts, and each of them had the resources to acquire the entire corpse. But if they started competing, the final price could skyrocket, far exceeding what they were willing to pay.

Li Daqian didn't give the three a chance to reach a tacit agreement. He quickly walked to the stone coffin, pulling out a blue-grade knife. With a swift motion, he cut off a part of the corpse—a limb resembling a mantis blade.

"First item."

Li Daqian's voice was soft, but he tapped the blade lightly against the severed limb, producing a metallic clink. Once removed from the coffin, the limb immediately emitted a surge of energy, revealing that the coffin itself was no ordinary object—it could conceal energy.

Ye Zhongming's eyes flickered as he saw the blade-like limb.

If anyone present understood the value of a nine-star lifeform's corpse, it was undoubtedly Ye Zhongming. He had once obtained the remains of a nine-star lifeform and personally crafted a powerful soul weapon—the Soul Shattering Staff.

As a craftsman, rare materials were a must-have. Ye Zhongming was a "dual craftsman," possessing the ability to create soul weapons.

Imagine if every core member of Cloud Peak had a weapon like the Soul Shattering Staff...

Just the thought of it was enough to excite Ye Zhongming.

“The Mantis Snatcher has four lower limbs and six upper limbs. This is one of the upper limbs—the left rear arm.”

“When we killed it, the six upper limbs had distinct characteristics. The front limbs were sharp, the middle limbs were mysterious, and the rear arms were solid. This rear arm possessed astonishing strength. Even Chisel Tooth would suffer broken bones if struck by it. Solid mountain rock could be shattered in just a few hits. I estimate that, aside from Defenders, none of us at our current evolution levels and with our current equipment could withstand more than two hits.”

Li Daqian knew that this arm, with little meat on it, wouldn't be suitable for feeding battle beasts. The buyers would likely be craftsmen or laboratories.

“Selling one arm is inconvenient. How about selling it together with the right rear arm?” Deacon Water suddenly suggested.

Li Daqian was momentarily stunned, unsure whether Deacon Water genuinely wanted to purchase the pair or was using this as a ploy to disrupt his plan to sell the corpse in parts.

“I believe Mr. Ye would understand better. Identical materials are easier to craft into sets, especially when they're part of the same body. The value of one rear arm is far less than that of two. Of course, this is just a suggestion. You don't have to agree.”

Ye Zhongming nodded. While he didn't care much about sets, acquiring two pieces of such material at once would undoubtedly be advantageous.

"Alright, I'll sell them together!" Li Daqian leaned into the coffin again and cut off the other rear arm.

Ye Zhongming glanced at the blue-grade knife but said nothing.

"My apologies, everyone. For these materials, demon crystals are the preferred currency. I'll only accept eight-star demon crystals for key parts. For other parts, seven-star crystals will suffice. Aside from demon crystals, the second priority is battle beast-related job scrolls, skill scrolls, contract scrolls, and bloodline crystals. The third priority is battle beast cubs, eggs, high-level battle beasts, or high-level beast equipment."

"Of course, high-level weapons, equipment, or technological achievements are also acceptable, but they'll be the lowest priority."

Everyone realized Li Daqian was using the nine-star corpse to cultivate eight-star evolved. After this battle, he was determined to boost Thousand Beast Villa's strength rapidly.

"This pair of rear arms—ten eight-star demon crystals."

Almost everyone frowned when they heard the price.

Ten eight-star magic crystals were enough to spin a level-eight wheel once. With good luck, one could obtain an eight-star evolution potion. Even with bad luck, the other rewards on a level-eight wheel were valuable—blue-grade equipment, rare job scrolls, or bloodlines.

“Isn’t that a bit high?” Ruan Xiao looked troubled. Even as a top executive of Cannibal Chain, one of the most renowned merchant organizations in the country, eight-star demon crystals were akin to nuclear weapons at this stage. If he had ten, he would have already used them to spin the wheel, not carry them around.

Moreover, unlike other post-apocalyptic organizations where the leader controlled all resources, Cannibal Chain operated differently. As a top executive, Ruan Xiao had significant authority, but even he had to surrender some of the eight-star demon crystals he obtained. If this level of magic crystal were used as payment, he couldn’t compete with Ye Zhongming or even the more independent Deacon Water of Five Ring Money.

“I’m truly sorry, Manager Ruan. Given the drastic changes at home, these are urgently needed. I hope you understand.” Li Daqian smiled but refused firmly, leaving no room for negotiation.

Ruan Xiao sighed and added, “Can I take the items now and pay later? I’ll deliver the demon crystals within a month. I guarantee it with Cannibal Chain’s reputation.”

Li Daqian smiled but said nothing.

This was a refusal.

Deacon Water clenched her hands, visibly hesitant.

She currently had ten eight-star demon crystals on her, but not twenty. This meant that if she bought this pair of rear arms, she couldn't afford other parts. Even if she could, she'd have to trade other valuable items, and it was clear that these weren't the best parts of the nine-star corpse.

The price of the nine-star materials far exceeded her expectations.

She was torn about how to proceed.

At this moment, Ye Zhongming spoke.

“Can I choose the parts I want?”

Chapter 1427: Splitting level nine materials (2)

Li Daqian frowned and was lost in thought.

He had split the corpse of the level-nine creature to sell it piece by piece, aiming to make a hefty profit. However, this didn't mean he intended to sell every part of the corpse.

Li Daqian wanted to keep some parts for himself, such as the brain, which he planned to feed to Chisel Tooth. He also wanted to keep the demon crystal and the internal organs meant for the Spotted Giant Bear to consume.

If it weren't for the fact that Beast Villa relied solely on the Beast Pool equipment to cultivate war beasts, without any laboratories or skilled craftsmen, Li Daqian would never have put this corpse up for sale.

His original plan was to keep what he needed and sell what he didn't.

Now, Ye Zhongming's question had put him in a difficult position.

He didn't know which part of the corpse the Cloud Peak King, this excellent craftsman, had his eye on. If Ye Zhongming wanted the same parts that Li Daqian needed, refusing him might lead to Ye Zhongming withdrawing from the deal.

Ruan Xiao clearly didn't have many level-eight demon crystals on him. If Ye Zhongming also withdrew, the only remaining buyer would be Deacon Water.

Having three buyers versus one buyer was a completely different scenario. Today's sale could shift from a seller's market to a buyer's market, and the profits would inevitably decrease.

Li Daqian decided to refuse it after some thought.

"Sorry, Boss Ye, let's stick to the original plan. Feel free to bid if there's anything you're interested in."

A flicker of disappointment passed through Ye Zhongming's eyes, but he nodded nonetheless.

However, he didn't continue bidding.

Was the item poor? No, the item was excellent. Ye Zhongming could feel the abundant energy emanating from this pair of hind limbs, likely another effect of the stone coffin.

Using this pair of hind limbs as the material could probably directly upgrade equipment below blue grade. If crafted into a soul weapon, it might not reach the level of the Soul Shattering Bone Staff, but it would definitely become an excellent artifact.

Was five level-eight demon crystals for the hind limbs of a level-nine creature expensive? Ye Zhongming felt that it was a bit high at this point in time, but not excessively so. The value of this item far exceeded that of level-eight demon crystals.

But would he spend ten level-eight demon crystals to buy this pair of materials? No!

Because Ye Zhongming had the Elimination Technique, which, when used on a level-seven or higher roulette, gave him a 20% success rate, he could exclude five unwanted rewards, leaving the five most valuable ones to spin.

In other words, if Ye Zhongming had spent ten level-eight demon crystals to buy these two materials, he would have been paying twice as much as others.

This was a terrible deal.

So, if Li Daqian insisted on using demon crystals for the transaction, Ye Zhongming decided not to bid for now.

Ye Zhongming's silence made Li Daqian's heart sink.

He realized that Cloud Peak's king had no intention of parting with his level-eight demon crystals.

Ruan Xiao was broke and couldn't afford it. Ye Zhongming had the money but wasn't buying. The only remaining buyer, Deacon Water, hesitated long before saying, "Forget it; I don't want this."

Li Daqian felt terrible. He felt embarrassed when he looked at the two hind limbs. The first sale had failed!

The atmosphere was awkward. Li Daqian coughed to cover his discomfort and said, "A pair of middle limbs, ten level-eight demon crystals."

Still, there were no takers. Ruan Xiao, now completely detached from his earlier financial situation, watched with interest.

Deacon Water occasionally glanced at Ye Zhongming, trying to guess why he wasn't bidding, but she kept her thoughts to herself.

Ye Zhongming remained silent.

The second round of bidding also received no response.

The smaller factions in the back couldn't even afford ten level-seven demon crystals, let alone ten level-eight ones.

The people from Beast Villa looked increasingly grim, their hatred for Alamos and others growing. If not for them, this high-end transaction could have included Cloud Peak, Five Ring Money, Cannibal Chain, Pin Palace, Restoring Hua Mountain, Jiu Long, and high-end laboratories from foreign regions, along with numerous factions from the domestic region. It could have been turned into an auction.

But now, only a few factions remained, and the Beast Villa desperately needed high-level demon crystals to restore their strength. They had no choice but to sell.

"A pair of front legs," Li Daqian said, his voice noticeably softer.

Still, no one responded.

Gritting his teeth, Li Daqian continued, "A pair of front legs."

Silence.

"A pair of hind legs."

Li Daqian felt numb by this point.

"Four legs, fifteen level-eight demon crystals."

A voice suddenly interrupted.

Li Daqian's eyes lit up as he looked at Ye Zhongming, who had spoken.

The first to remain silent had now made an offer?

"Boss Ye, you..."

"I only have fifteen level-eight demon crystals. If that's not enough, then forget it."

Ye Zhongming didn't give Li Daqian a chance to negotiate, making it clear that this was his final offer.

Losing five level-eight demon crystals hurt, but not selling?

Li Daqian desperately hoped that Deacon Water or others would speak up and bid against Ye Zhongming, but to his disappointment, neither said a word.

"Deal!"

The word almost choked out of his throat. Li Daqian took the fifteen level-eight demon crystals from Ye Zhongming and handed over the four legs of the level-nine creature.

"Master Li, perhaps we can discuss the forelimbs..."

"Master Li, maybe some items could replace level-eight demon crystals..."

After the transaction was completed, Deacon Water and Ruan Xiao immediately started negotiating with Li Daqian.

Ye Zhongming listened on the side without getting involved.

Since Deacon Water hadn't competed with him for the four hind legs, he now remained silent out of tacit understanding. He would only bid again after Deacon Water and Ruan Xiao had finished their purchases.

Once negotiations began, Ye Zhongming and the two commercial giants displayed astonishing financial power, leaving the smaller factions in awe.

Level-seven and level-eight demon crystals, equipment of various levels, job scrolls, potions, skill scrolls, and bloodline crystals—all were thrown into the mix as if they were worthless. Some of these items were things the smaller factions had never even heard of, let alone seen.

As the scene gradually quieted down, not only had the six upper limbs and four lower limbs of the level-nine creature been sold, but also the two pairs of wings and eight bones from its body.

Each faction had their share of the spoils. Besides purchasing the four lower limbs for fifteen level-eight demon crystals, Ye Zhongming also acquired a pair of wings, paying with three pieces of blue equipment and a job scroll. The scroll contained a job that allowed communication with mutated plants, which Li Daqian quite liked, as he had long harbored the idea of owning a mutated plant.

The rest of the items were acquired by Deacon Water and Ruan Xiao, showcasing the strength of their commercial organizations.

Later, Li Daqian also sold some flesh and blood reserved for the smaller factions, explicitly barring the three major factions from participating, much to the frustration of Ye Zhongming, Deacon Water, and Ruan Xiao.

Li Daqian decided not to sell the remaining parts, ending the sale. Although it didn't meet their expectations, their gains were enough to make everyone envious.

As it was already late, everyone stayed overnight at the Beast Villa, planning to leave the next day.

However, just as Ye Zhongming returned to his quarters and was about to sleep, Li Daqian, whom he had just parted ways with, came knocking at his door.

Chapter 1428: Secret of killing level nine lifeform

The two men walked through the scarred remains of the Beast Villa. Although night had fallen, many people were still busy cleaning up the traces left by the day's battle.

There were also people with strange auras constantly returning from outside the villa, carrying specialized equipment used on war beasts. Some of them were even leading war beasts back with them.

Clearly, these were the beast tamers of the villa, out capturing the battle beasts that escaped. However, their efforts didn't seem to be very effective. These teams of ten, accompanied by a hundred guards, were lucky if one or two tamers returned with a battle beast. Most of the groups came back empty-handed.

Seeing this, Li Daqian's eyes filled with melancholy.

The villa was not completely destroyed, but it was over half ruined. The carefully nurtured battle beasts had either been killed or fled, resulting in significant losses.

These battle beasts were the essence of the Thousand Beast Villa. Restoring the villa to its former scale would take who knows how long.

After this incident, the villa's ranking in the country would undoubtedly drop significantly.

Fortunately, after selling the level-nine creature's corpse, Li Daqian managed to recoup some losses. He had gathered a full set of blue equipment and obtained over forty level-eight demon crystals, more than a dozen job and skill scrolls, and other valuable items.

His personal strength had improved considerably after this incident.

Looking at it from another perspective, if it weren't for Li Zhizhong's severe injuries and coma, the losses would have been within an acceptable range. It would just take some time to recover.

"Master Li, you didn't come to me just for a walk, did you?" Ye Zhongming asked as he strolled alongside Li Daqian.

Li Daqian laughed. "The most important thing is to express my gratitude. If it weren't for Cloud Peak's strong support this time, I shudder to think what the outcome might have been."

Xia Bai had killed Jiu Long and subdued Jiu Bao. Ye Zhongming had slain Kim Jongyuan, severely injured Palmerk, and subdued Guancheng Chun. Even the female guards had taken down a high-ranking traitorous beast tamer and his battle beast group. It was the presence of Cloud Peak and Ye Zhongming that had shifted the balance of power. Ultimately, because Ye Zhongming held a powerful weapon, Alamos and Janandra were forced to back down and retreat without achieving anything.

Li Daqian's gratitude was sincere.

"Brother Ye, before you leave, pick some battle beasts from my stables as a token of my appreciation," Li Daqian said earnestly. Seeing Ye Zhongming about to speak, he quickly added, "Please don't refuse. The battle beasts in the stables aren't of high level. After seeing the battle beasts of your female guards, I'm worried you might find them unworthy."

Ye Zhongming nodded. He knew things weren't that simple. Li Daqian wouldn't have sought him out just for this.

After finishing this topic, Li Daqian got to the main point.

"Earlier, underground, which part were you planning to buy, Brother Ye?"

Ye Zhongming narrowed his eyes. He hadn't expected Li Daqian to bring this up.

Seeing Ye Zhongming's expression, Li Daqian sighed. Heroes truly emerge from the youth. He said, "I suppose you've figured out how I managed to kill that Mantis Snatcher."

This time, Ye Zhongming was genuinely surprised. He had thought his observations had gone unnoticed, but Li Daqian had seen right through him.

"I wasn't entirely sure earlier. It was just a guess. But Brother Ye, do you know what struck me about your bidding today?" Li Daqian stroked his chin and said bluntly, "You were holding back."

"Even though your bids seemed perfectly reasonable to others, you controlled your offers."

Facing Ye Zhongming's curious gaze, Li Daqian laughed. "In the early days of the apocalypse, I was overly greedy and learned many seemingly useless but somewhat interesting side jobs and skills."

He didn't need to elaborate further. Ye Zhongming understood that Li Daqian likely had some mental-based support jobs, perhaps ones that allowed him to detect subtle expressions or enhance his intuition.

"For someone as skilled and talented as you to hold back on your bids, the only explanation I can think of is that you believed there was a part of the corpse worth spending a fortune on. And there was only one secret..."

"It was pregnant."

"It was in its gestation period."

The two men spoke in unison and then laughed together.

Li Daqian sighed. "Fame is not without merit, Brother Ye. Your reputation is well-deserved. I think the world has underestimated you."

"Deacon Water and Ruan Xiao are giants in the merchant factions. To a certain extent, they rely on their keen eyes to make a living. Yet, neither of them noticed the condition of that level-nine creature. You, on the other hand, saw it immediately. They are far inferior to you in this regard."

Ye Zhongming shook his head, not wanting to dwell on the idea that everyone had their strengths and weaknesses. Instead, he quickly pondered Li Daqian's purpose in bringing this up.

"Let's go take another look."

Unconsciously, the two had arrived at the mountain earlier in the day. They entered the underground area once more and stood before the stone coffin.

The corpse of the level-nine creature was now incomplete, devoid of its once-overwhelming presence.

Li Daqian took out his blue blade and cut the lower abdomen.

Soon, they found what they were looking for.

It was a nearly transparent section of the intestine; several black biological eggs were wrapped in a milky-white gelatinous layer.

Sure enough, this level-nine creature had been pregnant and in the weakest state of its life cycle, which was why the Beast Manor had been able to seize the opportunity to kill it.

As he observed the eggs radiating a rich life force, Ye Zhongming couldn't help but marvel at Li Daqian's incredible luck.

Ye Zhongming had seen illustrations of this creature in his past life and knew some of its characteristics. From this "past experience," he had deduced it was in its gestation period. If Li Daqian hadn't known beforehand, it only proved that this old man dared to challenge a level-nine creature with his own unique methods and an almost heaven-defying amount of luck. If he had known, it demonstrated the Beast Villa's meticulous planning and decisive action.

"This creature is quite special. When we challenged it, it was in the process of laying an egg underground. It remained motionless as we attacked, only retracting this sharp ovipositor and fighting back after it was severely injured. By then, it had already finished laying its eggs but was too late."

Li Daqian recalled the battle, still visibly shaken. Even in its severely injured state, the level-nine creature had inflicted heavy losses on them, nearly causing the hunt to fail.

"After killing it, we dug out two mature eggs. Those two were more developed than the ones still inside its body."

With that, he clapped his hands. A section of the mountain wall suddenly rose, and a young girl in a school uniform, no more than ten years old, walked out holding a long cultivation dish. On it were two objects the size of volleyballs, emanating an intense aura that left Ye Zhongming in awe.

Chapter 1429: one third

These two mature eggs were still encased in a gelatinous membrane, but they were more transparent than the table tennis ball-sized eggs in the corpse's abdomen. Inside, one could see the curled-up embryonic life. Their aura made it clear that they were alive and healthy.

Calculating the time since the Beast Villa had killed the level-nine creature, these eggs had already been alive for several months!

"Master Li, by telling me this and showing me these living eggs, is there something you need me to do?"

Ye Zhongming's heart raced. If Li Daqian's goal was to ignite his desire to possess these eggs, he undoubtedly succeeded.

Originally, after discovering that this level-nine creature was pregnant, Ye Zhongming had wanted to purchase the midsection of the corpse, specifically the lower abdomen, in hopes of obtaining the biological eggs inside.

Now that the secret was out in the open, he no longer needed to hide his intentions.

"Yes."

Li Daqian didn't beat around the bush, either. He said directly, "These two mature eggs will not be sold. They will be placed in my Beast Pool equipment for cultivation until they hatch. I want to see their level when they are born."

Hearing this, Ye Zhongming calmed down a bit. He leaned in to examine the two mature eggs more closely. Indeed, he couldn't discern their evolutionary level from their appearance.

At least not at this stage.

At the same time, he also sensed a powerful ruler-like energy emanating from them. It seemed that they had already been bound by a war beast contract, either by Li Daqian himself or by other members of the Beast Manor.

Clearly, even if Ye Zhongming had obtained them, he wouldn't have been able to make them his own. Contracts formed during the egg stage were the most stable and nearly impossible to break.

"As for these eggs inside the body, I can let Brother Ye have them."

Li Daqian looked at the eggs with deep reluctance in his eyes.

Ye Zhongming glanced over and saw six biological eggs in the ovary, all of which appeared to be alive.

Ye Zhongming was a bit confused. These eggs also had value, so why was Li Daqian willing to sell them? Wouldn't it be better for him to keep and cultivate them himself?

After thinking for a moment, Ye Zhongming roughly understood what was happening.

Although he didn't know much about biology, he guessed that the reproductive method of this level-nine Mantis Snatcher was to form these life eggs inside its body after fertilization, then nurture them

internally. When the time was right, it would lay them underground, possibly using the energy or temperature of the environment to complete the final incubation.

In other words, the mature eggs were ready to hatch, having already left the mother's body.

But the eggs still inside the body were different. They might be underdeveloped, lacking the special energy needed to be expelled from the body, or there could be other mysterious reasons that even humanity didn't understand. In any case, these eggs were not yet mature!

What was the Beast Villa known for? What was its foundation? It was that mysterious large Beast Pool.

Ye Zhongming also had Beast Pool-type equipment, so he was somewhat familiar with it. These devices could cultivate battle beasts, even stimulate their reproduction and evolution, and maintain the life of eggs or young creatures. However, they were powerless when it came to immature life forms that they didn't cultivate.

Li Daqian's Beast Pool seemed the same—it couldn't cultivate these immature eggs.

This was evident from the different treatment of the two types of eggs. The mature eggs had already been placed in the Beast Pool for cultivation, while the immature ones could only be kept alive inside the corpse, relying on the miraculous stone coffin.

In other words, these eggs were far less useful to Li Daqian than the two mature ones.

Understanding this, it made sense why he was willing to sell the six eggs.

"Name your price."

Li Daqian had chosen his target well. Not only among the people who had come to the Beast Villa, but even in the entire country, the only ones who would be interested in these six eggs and could potentially maximize their value were the people of Cloud Peak, because they had Liu Zhenghong and the Gene Laboratory.

After hesitating momentarily, Li Daqian said, "Magic Crystal Cannon."

Ye Zhongming shook his head decisively and pointed at the eggs. "These things aren't very useful to you, and they aren't very useful to others either. At most, they could be fed to war beasts as food, significantly reducing their value. Only my laboratory can unlock their full potential, and you know that very well, Master Li. Otherwise, you wouldn't have sought me out."

"The Magic Crystal Cannon is currently a non-negotiable item for Cloud Peak. Of course, that's relative. If something truly tempted me, I might consider parting with it, but these eggs aren't enough."

Li Daqian hadn't expected Ye Zhongming to refuse so firmly. He didn't say anything momentarily.

"I do have some suggestions, though. Would you be interested, Master Li?" Ye Zhongming took the initiative, looking at Li Daqian.

"Oh? Let's hear it."

Ye Zhongming glanced at the little girl who had taken the mature eggs away, a hint of confusion in his eyes. Even now, he wasn't entirely sure why Li Daqian had shown him this scene. Was it to prove that he was a lolicon?

"Cloud Peak can collaborate with Thousand Beast Villa," Ye Zhongming began, voicing the idea he had been considering before coming here.

Li Daqian nodded, signaling for Ye Zhongming to continue, though he wasn't particularly impressed. Collaboration? What did that have to do with selling these eggs?

"There are two ways. First, Cloud Peak will purchase battle beasts of various levels from the Beast Villa on a large scale and over the long term. We pay, and you deliver."

"Cloud Peak will trade our gene-modified life forms for your battle beasts."

"Oh?" Li Daqian's interest was piqued now.

It was well known that Cloud Peak's two major specialties were crystal weapons and gene lifeforms. Gene lifeforms were a decent alternative with the crystal weapons off the table.

Of course, Thousand Beast Villa wasn't as desperate for these lifeforms as other factions, since battle beasts could replace them to some extent. So, Li Daqian's interest was only mild.

Ye Zhongming, of course, knew this. He continued, "I know your large Beast Pool equipment can cultivate battle beasts, but I imagine there's a level limit, right?"

Seeing that Li Daqian remained expressionless, Ye Zhongming took out the Demon Bee Hive, forcing the master of the Beast Manor to acknowledge this fact.

After putting away the Demon Bee Hive, Ye Zhongming added, "But my gene lifeforms can continue to improve as technology advances. I can tell you now that our mature products already possess the abilities of level-six lifeforms, and the laboratory is making breakthroughs toward level seven."

This statement was half-true and half-false. Cloud Peak did have gene-modified life forms with level-six abilities, but they couldn't be mass-produced. Each had to be individually crafted, and a batch of a hundred took about two months to complete. As for breakthroughs toward higher levels, Ye Zhongming had no idea about the progress—that was entirely in Liu Zhenghong's hands.

Li Daqian was completely unsettled now.

His large Beast Pool equipment was indeed impressive, but as of now, it couldn't cultivate level-seven battle beasts. The highest it could go was level six; even then, it couldn't produce them in large quantities. Each one took a long time to cultivate.

After that, the battle beasts had to evolve on their own in the wild to see if they could reach higher levels.

But Ye Zhongming said that Cloud Peak was close to producing level-seven lifeforms?

"We want lower-level battle beasts in exchange for higher-level gene lifeforms. Of course, the level difference is limited to one, and the quantity is capped at a thousand."

"This is one-third of what I'm prepared to offer."

Chapter 1430: Core secret

"Three thousand!"

Li Daqian's eyes lit up as he extended three fingers.

"In that case, the gene lifeforms will be limited to a maximum of level five."

Ye Zhongming shook his head. Three thousand was an unrealistic number. If Li Daqian wanted all level-six gene lifeforms, it would take Cloud Peak forever to fulfill the order.

The master of Thousand Beast Villa paced in place, clearly unable to remain calm in the face of what might be the largest battle beast trade in the villa's history.

"Five hundred. I need at least five hundred level-six gene lifeforms. The rest can be lower-level."

Ye Zhongming pondered for a moment. Although the production cycle for gene lifeforms at this level was long, the speed could be increased once sufficient experimental materials were available, and the technology matured.

However, five hundred was still too many.

"Three hundred. That's the absolute limit we can supply, Master Li. The creation of gene lifeforms isn't like an assembly line. Each one has to be cultivated individually. Even though we've mastered the technology, we can't produce an unlimited supply."

"Additionally, the timeline must be determined by us. Of course, we won't deliberately delay, but it will be a phased delivery plan, and it will take about a year to complete the entire order!"

Li Daqian looked at Ye Zhongming seriously, sensing that Cloud Peak's King wasn't lying. After some thought, he agreed.

In truth, this was already beyond his expectations.

This meant he could exchange 2,700 level-four battle beasts for an equal number of level-five gene lifeforms and 300 level-five battle beasts for 300 level-six gene lifeforms. Within a year, the Beast Manor would gain 3,000 high-level combatants. This was a deal worth making!

As a result, Li Daqian was filled with anticipation for the remaining two-thirds of Ye Zhongming's offer.

Ye Zhongming knew he had made a good start with the gene lifeforms and felt more confident.

"Five hundred. Five hundred rare and exotic battle beast cubs, eggs, or similar items, plus 500 green-grade equipment."

Li Daqian frowned slightly, not understanding what Ye Zhongming meant.

What did he mean by "rare and exotic war beasts"?

Ye Zhongming thought for a moment and decided to be honest.

"Battle beasts that are different from Earth's life forms, mostly of the physically robust type."

Li Daqian was momentarily stunned, then immediately recalled the rumors about Cloud Peak's connection to a secret realm.

"One thousand."

Ye Zhongming rolled his eyes. It seemed that haggling was an instinct for everyone, no matter who they were.

"The equipment is non-negotiable. The failure rate for crafting green-grade equipment is extremely high for me. Five hundred pieces is already a huge investment."

Currently, Cloudtop was amidst a large-scale development of the Blue Secret Realm. Although they were engaged in guerrilla warfare with the Nine-Winged Crow, which somewhat limited their gains, with the help of Saint Light Hall and the Posthumous People, they were still plundering the realm at an astonishing rate.

One of the most important harvests was the various demon cubs, demon eggs, and similar items.

Cloud Peak didn't have large-scale Beast Pool equipment or an abundance of master-servant contract scrolls. Relying solely on warriors to gain the trust of demon monsters through emotional bonding had a low success rate. Many warriors were unwilling or unable to invest the time and effort into raising these young demon monsters, which had extremely long growth cycles.

This led to Cloudtop Manor "stockpiling" many demon monster cubs, eggs, and similar items. The Gene Laboratory had absorbed some, but a significant portion remained in storage, often used to feed the Iron Chain Prisoner bloodline that produced Ghost Metal, the Meditation Bone Demon Platform, or even Cannibal Flowers and other war beasts.

In other words, Ye Zhongming's proposal, while framed as mutually beneficial, was essentially a clearance sale at a steep discount.

However, the offer of 500 green-grade equipment still demonstrated Ye Zhongming's sincerity. Aside from the female guards, no other main combat team in Cloud Peak was fully equipped with green-grade gear.

Even with Ye Zhongming's high success rate and the fact that these were non-recipe green grade equipment, producing 500 pieces would still require significant time and materials.

Li Daqian was already quite satisfied. With a single sentence, he secured an additional 500 cubs from a Secret Realm. This was an irresistible temptation for someone like him, who had made cultivating battle beasts his life's work.

"Brother Ye, to be honest, I'm very satisfied with the first two offers. But if you want to take these six eggs, I'll need to see the third offer."

Ye Zhongming smiled but didn't reveal his trump card immediately. Instead, he asked a question in return. "Can I ask a question about your two battle beasts first? It's not about prying into secrets, but the final part of my offer is related to this question."

"This..."

Even though Li Daqian had gained some understanding of Ye Zhongming's character and integrity today, this question touched on core secrets, making him hesitate.

Seeing Ye Zhongming waiting patiently, Li Daqian realized that the previously agreed-upon deals might fall through if he didn't answer.

After some internal struggle, he decided to answer.

"Just so you know, it's best to tell the truth. Otherwise, I won't be responsible for any consequences."

This time, it was Li Daqian's turn to roll his eyes. He had planned to lie.

"Go ahead and ask."

With a somewhat annoyed tone, Li Daqian gestured for Ye Zhongming to proceed.

"How many innate abilities do Chisel Tooth and the Spotted Giant Bear have?"

Li Daqian suppressed the urge to curse.

This was as direct as it got. This was the core question.

"Tell the truth."

"You!"

Taking a deep breath to calm himself, Li Daqian thought momentarily and said, "I can tell you the number, but I won't say what they are."

"I didn't plan to ask what they are."

After another deep breath, Li Daqian said, "Chisel Tooth has seven, and the Spotted Giant Bear has six."

"Only that many? Doesn't seem very impressive."

Li Daqian stared at Ye Zhongming, feeling indignant. Not impressive? What did he mean by not impressive? This was already quite impressive!

He couldn't help but retort, "At their level, one is just one short of having full skills, and the other is two short. This is already extremely rare and exceptional! For ordinary mutated lifeforms, having half their level in talent abilities is considered excellent!"

"So Chisel Tooth is still level eight, huh?"

"You!"

Li Daqian had let slip Chisel Tooth's level due to his deep affection for his two battle beasts, allowing Ye Zhongming to confirm it.

After the incident of killing the level-nine creature, there had been widespread speculation about whether Chisel Tooth had evolved to level-nine. No one was certain, and Thousand Beast Villa had been content to let everyone guess. Ye Zhongming was the first to confirm it.

"Don't mind it. What I'm about to say is related to the number of skills." Ye Zhongming smiled and extended a finger. "I can give one of these two war beasts an additional offensive talent ability!"