

## **Apocalypse 1731**

Chapter 1731: Many level nines

"Ah, it's Ah Lang. Come, sit."

Ji Ruiguang glanced at the young man who had knocked and entered, smiling as he beckoned before continuing his tea-brewing ritual.

Ah Lang removed his hood and sat beside the chair, eyeing the elder before him with curiosity.

No—aside from ingrained perceptions, the man before him showed no trace of aging. Instead, he exuded an air of... vitality.

This was not how a man nearing seventy should look.

It was as if he had reversed the aging process.

Perhaps this was the power of nine-star evolution.

"Why are you looking at me like that?"

Ji Ruiguang placed a smooth celadon teacup in front of Ah Lang, filled with amber-hued tea.

Though Ji Ruiguang had suffered setbacks, he had quickly rebounded. To the outside world, he might have seemed to vanish, but within the Resistance Zone, he remained the undisputed leader, his authority unchallenged.

Now, as a nine-star evolved, his grip on the Resistance Zone had reached its zenith.

Even Zhang Hetai and Wen Zhong were deferential in his presence.

Only Ah Lang could remain so composed, even bordering on audacious.

Ji Ruiguang's fondness for him was genuine.

Not because Ah Lang was his grandson or illegitimate child, but out of true admiration.

At just twenty-two, Ah Lang possessed a maturity beyond his years. His "Vortex" combat division, established just two years prior, had already risen to become the Resistance Zone's elite. He himself had reached eight-star evolved without relying on the Resistance Zone's resources. How could Ji Ruiguang not appreciate such talent?

Another reason for Ji Ruiguang's leniency was Ah Lang's uncanny luck. When spinning for his own evolution potions, from one-star to eight-star, he had succeeded three times on the first try.

In the apocalypse, strength mattered—but luck was just as crucial.

The older Ji Ruiguang grew, the more he preferred keeping company with the fortunate.

"Uncle, Ye Zhongming reached nine-star days ago. Now Cloud Peak has another. And you... You're just sitting here drinking tea?"

Ah Lang's voice was as steady as his actions—just as he had calmly delivered the news at Fat Sheep Tavern.

He had assumed that once Ji Ruiguang became nine-star, he would make sweeping decisions and lead major initiatives. But instead, the man who allowed him to call him "Uncle" in private had done... nothing.

Not only had he retreated to the comfort of Tang City, but he spent his days drinking tea, reading, gardening, and playing chess. It was practically...

A waste of time!

"Oh?" Ji Ruiguang smiled. "What do you think I should do?"

Ah Lang faltered, opening his mouth but finding no words.

Should he suggest eliminating Zhang Hetai, that ungrateful wolf? Challenge Ye Zhongming to settle old scores? Or seize this moment to unify the Resistance Zone? ̄aJŌbĒs

He had considered all these before, but under the elder's wise gaze, none of it felt worth voicing.

It all seemed... childish.

Nine-star might mean invincibility—but not omnipotence.

"My boy, I had many ideas too... before reaching nine-star." Ji Ruiguang sipped his tea, feeling the warmth spread through his limbs.

Some of Cloud Peak's products were truly exceptional. Even as adversaries, he had to admit that.

"But once you stand at the pinnacle of this planet, you realize many things—and many people—are not what you imagined."

Ji Ruiguang's gaze grew distant, becoming unreadable to Ah Lang.

"You see me drinking tea and playing chess, but I am thinking. Or rather... making decisions."

Ah Lang straightened slightly.

But to his disappointment, Ji Ruiguang didn't elaborate, let alone reveal what those decisions were.

"As for Cloud Peak Villa..." Ji Ruiguang's expression turned complex at the name. "It's a remarkable place, with a remarkable leader. I lost to him once, and I accepted that defeat wholeheartedly."

Ah Lang's expression finally shifted dramatically. He hadn't expected his uncle to hold that man in such regard.

"But now we're both nine-star. Who is stronger? Who can say?"

Hearing this, Ah Lang relaxed. As long as his uncle hadn't lost confidence, that was enough. He firmly believed the current King of the Resistance Zone would not be weaker than the King of Cloud Peak!

"Then... will you face him in a duel? A battle at the summit?"

Ji Ruiguang burst into laughter, leaving Ah Lang baffled.

"Ah Lang, you are the finest of the Resistance Zone's new generation. If you were in my position—leading not just your 'Vortex,' but the entire Resistance Zone—what would you do?"

Ah Lang was stunned. Even if he had pondered this before, he had never seriously considered it. He couldn't answer carelessly—nor did he fully grasp why Ji Ruiguang was asking.

"No need to answer now. We have time. Think it over, then tell me. Don't stress—this isn't a test."

Ah Lang exhaled in relief. After sharing two more cups of tea, he stood to leave.

At the door, Ji Ruiguang suddenly called out again.

"Ah Lang, don't turn around. Just listen."

His voice seemed almost ethereal, as if it didn't come from behind. Ah Lang could even hear the sound of tea being sipped—an eerie sensation that sent chills down his spine.

"I once had a chosen successor. But he has changed. If one day, you take my place, remember this:"

"The Resistance Zone belongs to the Chinese region."

Ah Lang waited, expecting more, but only the sound of tea-drinking followed.

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"Crack." "Crack." "Crack."

Walnuts were being crushed one after another. On the table, fragments had piled up half a meter high.

Fourteen people sat along the conference table in utter silence, all watching the man at the head methodically destroying walnuts.

Had anyone witnessed this, they would have been astounded—for this was a gathering of the Glory Army's highest leadership.

"Sigh. Still not great at controlling this strength. Wonder how Ji Ruiguang and Ye Zhongming adjusted so fast."

Tossing the last walnut aside, the man finally spoke, and the room seemed to come alive again.

"Should we... write to them for advice?"

A short, bald man rubbed his head and chuckled, drawing light laughter from the others.

The leader laughed too. "Third Brother, they say your men are the cheekiest. I see now it's your influence."

The bald man grinned, as if receiving praise.

"But... it's not a bad idea."

The room froze. Even the bald man stiffened before stammering, "B-Boss, don't joke. At your level, a fight would have massive consequences. Think carefully—don't listen to my nonsense."

Mu Hanyi waved dismissively before standing and locking eyes with the middle-aged man at his left.

"Strategist, while I'm gone, assist Second Brother in leading the Glory Army."

The man called Strategist frowned. "Hanyi, you're not seriously planning to fight the other two, are you?"

Mu Hanyi shrugged, avoiding a direct answer. Instead, he asked, "Who's the second nine-star at Cloud Peak? That black-hearted Xia Lei? Or that lapdog Xia Bai?"

The others shook their heads—no confirmed intel on that yet.

The Radiant Army's leader smirked and strode toward the door, tossing over his shoulder:

"Second Brother, hold the fort. If I don't return, the Glory Army is yours. But remember—"

"Find Ninth Brother. No matter what."

With that, Mu Hanyi left. The remaining members exchanged glances before their eyes settled on the room's sole empty chair.

Chapter 1732: Many level nines

"Why me?"

At the tip of a tree, Mo Ye hung there, watching a peculiar battle in the distance.

It was a fight between two groups of mutated lifeforms, extremely fierce. They almost entirely occupied the small plain between two mountain peaks. Even from this far away, the scent of blood drifted here, thick and pungent.

Upon closer inspection, one could see that the group on the eastern side was numerous, fiercely surrounding and attacking the western side. Among them, high-level lifeforms included one level nine and several level eight beings. The rest consisted of at least one-tenth level seven mutated lifeforms—a terrifying proportion.

In terms of variety, they had everything from flying creatures to ground-runners.

The mutated lifeforms on the other side were somewhat peculiar. Though seemingly at a disadvantage, even retreating bit by bit, their formation was incredibly dense. From a high vantage point, it was clear they weren't charging recklessly but were steadily defending. Small groups continuously maneuvered within the formation, replacing wounded or exhausted comrades.

Their fighting style was also bizarre. Compared to the other side's flurry of skills and energy, this side was shockingly simplistic, relying entirely on physical combat—even the flying monsters in the sky were enduring attacks head-on.

Ye Zhongming stood firmly at the treetop as well, arms crossed, unmoving despite the strong winds.

After reaching nine-star, his power had undergone a qualitative leap.

Before, he hadn't truly understood what a nine-star evolved was. Even with two lifetimes of experience and countless legends about such beings, he had never truly felt it firsthand.

For the first three or four days after evolving, he struggled to adapt to the surging energy within his body. Now, he had mostly completed the fusion.

Ye Zhongming knew that, strictly speaking, this was the true completion of evolution after taking the nine-star potion.

No wonder rumors in his past life claimed that evolving to nine-star took a long time—they had divided the process into two phases: the dormant stage and the adaptation stage after awakening.

When he first woke from evolution, he felt not stronger but significantly weaker, his body in an unusual state of frailty.

However, that weakness was soon replaced by a rapid surge of power.

Every day, his strength grew, quickly surpassing his original level until it stabilized today.

Ye Zhongming believed that, with the aid of his equipment, a full-force strike from him might truly destroy a giant mountain.

Hearing Cloud Peak's second nine-star evolved speak to him, he knew some things needed to be clarified.

"Do you know why we came to the northwest?"

Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye had arrived here after evolving. With their speed and Yangos' flight, the long journey took only two days.

"Is it... because of those monsters?"

Mo Ye's gaze fell on the defensive group to the west. She had long noticed their uniqueness.

Their physical strength was terrifyingly formidable.

Their opponents included a level nine being. Even if it wasn't the strongest among its peers, it was still a top-tier lifeform. Yet, even after fifteen minutes of battle, it hadn't broken through the defensive formation.

"Mm." Ye Zhongming watched the battle with a solemn expression.

"Remember the demon monsters? Those green-skinned monsters? I once thought they were aberrations created by nuclear leaks or radioactive materials. Do you recall my experience in Cold Bay Rainforest? Or those bizarre, magic-less lifeforms we encountered at the mountain villa?"

Mo Ye naturally remembered. Was Ye Zhongming suggesting a connection between the three?

"I'm going up there..." Ye Zhongming pointed to the sky. "Among the many preparations I need to make, I came here first to see for myself if there's a link."

Mo Ye pondered his words. "No demon crystals? Relying entirely on physical combat, with abilities mostly related to martial techniques?"

Ye Zhongming nodded. "Though their appearances vary wildly, these are their common traits. I don't know what they are, but perhaps the answers lie in the sky. Just what are these disgusting things?"

"But... you still haven't answered why you gave the second nine-star potion to me. Many others are more deserving."

Ye Zhongming smiled, looking at the short-haired, heroic Mo Ye.

"During my absence, Cloud Peak will inevitably enter a defensive phase."

Just this sentence made Mo Ye disagree.

While Cloud Peak's strength would drop significantly without Ye Zhongming, the mountain villa's inherent power was formidable. The remaining members could hold their ground.

Mo Ye understood Ye Zhongming's decision not to bring another nine-star to the sky—it was to compensate for his absence. But she didn't understand why defense was necessary.

"There will be more and more nine-star evolved in the country. I don't know how many there'll be when I return, nor their stance toward Cloud Peak. Just the two labs alone are enough to tempt others to take risks. My absence presents the perfect opportunity."

Ye Zhongming exhaled softly. "But I have to go. The sky is dangerous, but in a way, it represents the future. For Cloud Peak to stay ahead, I must scout the path. Besides, the enslavement by the universe races looms over us Earthlings like a shadow."

"So we'll hold the line until I return. Then, we'll decide our next move."

Though still not entirely convinced, Mo Ye nodded.

"Xia Lei isn't suitable. She's already overwhelmed with responsibilities, and when it comes to matters involving me, she... doesn't listen."

Ye Zhongming chuckled awkwardly.

"If Xia Lei became a nine-star, she'd insist on following me, even if it meant seizing another entry ticket."

The battlefield shifted. The strange lifeforms launched a counterattack, piercing the Earth mutants' flanks. They were attempting to encircle their still-slightly-superior foes!

"Teacher Park is support-class, so evolution isn't a priority. The same goes for Liu Zhengong and Le Dayuan."

"Little Tiger and Chuyin... they're too aggressive. If they became nine-star, the villa would constantly attack rather than defend. Unrestrained, they'd leave openings."

"What about Xia Bai? She obeys you unconditionally. If you ordered her to stay and protect the villa, she'd comply."

Surprisingly, Ye Zhongming nodded.

"Xia Bai would indeed be suitable. As you said, she'd follow my commands without question. But her evolution is too different from ours—too unpredictable. There are too many uncertainties. It's better to wait until I return and discuss it with Sister Hong before evolving her."

"The others aren't quite qualified, so I won't elaborate."

"But you—steady, calm, well-rounded in ability, respected, and able to command—are the perfect guardian for Cloud Peak in my absence."

With that, Ye Zhongming's body strangely floated forward.

"Let's go stir things up. Otherwise, that level nine fool will be torn apart—and those are valuable materials."

Chapter 1733: Functional Rat

"Is this all you brought back?"

Liu Zhenghong looked at the 'specimens' collected by the two nine-star evolved, Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye, with undisguised disdain, her words cutting deep.

Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye could only smile wryly.

Ever since they evolved to nine-star, everyone's attitude toward them had shifted.

Among the core members they were familiar with, the change wasn't drastic, but at first, there had been a subtle sense of... awe, or perhaps unfamiliarity.

Maybe this was the pressure and prestige that came with being the strongest evolved on the planet.

But that feeling quickly faded.

For ordinary evolved, however, it was different. Even when Ye Zhongming didn't deliberately exude any aura, evolved below level eight would still feel nervous around him. If he so much as glanced at them, the more timid ones might even shiver.

This was the effect of overwhelming power.

Of course, there were exceptions. Even Le Dayuan had been a bit reserved when he first saw Ye Zhongming after his evolution. But his wife, Liu Zhenghong, remained as blunt as ever, treating Ye Zhongming not like a nine-star evolved, but like some unknown cell under her microscope.

The way she looked at the King of Cloud Peak made even a nine-star evolved shudder.

In the end, Ye Zhongming had three large tubes of blood drawn, over a dozen strands of hair plucked, and was even "humiliated" into providing various bodily fluids...

The most frustrating part? The skin of a nine-star evolved was no ordinary thing. Ye Zhongming had to use a specially crafted purple dagger to cut his own blood vessels.

No choice—if he used a gold-grade weapon, it would take multiple slashes just to draw a few drops of blood, and the wound would heal in seconds, making it impossible to collect enough.

And so, the newly ascended nine-star evolved, the first of his rank in the entire country, was nearly driven to despair.

"Let's see how these differ from the demon monsters and those other monsters."

With that, Liu Zhengong motioned for the corpses to be hauled away, but then noticed Ye Zhongming hesitating.

"Tch, what's the big deal? Look how worked up you are."

Sister Hong shot the King of Cloud Peak a look of utter disdain, then crooked a finger, leading the two to a nearby lab.

"Old Liu showed off those two robots to you, right? That's basically his latest achievement. That guy, always slacking—he should've focused on upgrading the energy cannons another level!"

Ye Zhongming's lips twitched at that.

The current Annihilation Ultimate-Type Energy Cannons at Cloud Peak were already stronger than the most powerful ones he'd seen in his past life after ten years. Their firepower was more than satisfactory. With these massive cannons mounted on the city walls and within the villa, even if a level nine lifeform attacked, Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye wouldn't need to lift a finger—the enemy would suffer dearly.

And yet, Sister Hong still wasn't satisfied?

At this level, even a minor improvement in firepower required an exorbitant cost, immense time, and solving near-impossible technical hurdles.

The difficulty was too high, the time too long, and the cost-effectiveness too low.

That was why Le Dayuan had taken a different path.

"Enough about him. Let me show you two little toys."

Of course, the only person who'd refer to the achievements of the Gene Lab as "little toys" was this blunt director.

"See this?"

Liu Zhenghong pointed to a small cage containing a white mouse the size of a finger.

Ye Zhongming was surprised—he sensed something familiar about this little creature.

"The Rat King's grandson."

That one sentence explained its origins.

Ye Zhongming knew about the Rat King's son, a formidable battle-rat that had been released into the wild and quickly carved out a vast underground territory. In just a short time, it had reached level eight. Ye Zhongming hadn't summoned it back, since Cloud Peak wasn't exactly lacking in level eight fighters. He planned to recall it only after it evolved to level nine. ㄝㄝㄝㄝ

Who'd have thought he'd meet the grandson before the son?

"It's... different."

Mo Ye studied it closely before speaking.

Red Sister nodded. "Of course. Because this is a utility rat."

Facing their puzzled looks, Liu Zhenghong opened the cage and gave a soft whistle. The mouse suddenly extended two fleshy wings from its sides and flew out. It seemed wary of Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye, hesitant to approach, but since the Rat King was, in a way, half Ye Zhongming's battle-beast, it was also curious about him, torn between approaching and fleeing.

Liu Zhenghong whistled again—and the mouse vanished mid-flight!

"Invisibility?!"

Ye Zhongming was stunned.

As a nine-star evolved, he could still sense its life signature, but visually, there was nothing there.

Another whistle, and the faint life signal in the air disappeared entirely.

Even someone of Ye Zhongming's level had to expend a burst of mental energy to locate the invisible mouse—and it took him two full seconds.

The little thing was hovering near his left knee.

Two seconds were more than enough for it to launch an attack.

Even if it wouldn't do much to Ye Zhongming, it was still impressive.

Under Liu Zhenghong's commands, the mouse demonstrated a variety of abilities: diving underwater faster than mutated fish, burrowing through hard rock effortlessly with razor-sharp claws, storing over a hundred small items in an internal spatial pouch, and mimicking the calls of any creature it had heard.

But what impressed Ye Zhongming most was its complete immunity to poison and fire.

Not only did these elemental attacks have no effect, but they actually replenished its stamina and energy slightly.

"What I can control is just this much. But once a master-servant bond is formed, two additional abilities become available: Shared Senses and Size Shift."

"Names I came up with, of course."

Liu Zhenghong had the mouse reappear and land on her palm before slowly passing it to Ye Zhongming. Though still nervous, it didn't flee.

Ye Zhongming took it, feeling a cool, pleasant sensation in his hand.

"Shared Senses means you can see and hear everything the mouse does in real time, even speak through it—unlimited range, identical voice."

"Size Shift lets it adjust its body size at will. The smallest... is this."

The mouse shrank rapidly, becoming no larger than a soybean.

"The largest... is this."

It leapt from Ye Zhongming's hand and scurried into the corridor, where space allowed. There, it expanded abruptly, stopping only when it reached the size of two adult elephants.

In an instant, the tiny, adorable creature had transformed into a monstrous beast with gleaming red eyes, jagged teeth, and lethal claws.

"So, Little Ye, after cracking the secrets of the Life Brain, I made you this little guy. Not bad, huh?"

Chapter 1734: True feelings

Ye Zhongming nodded decisively.

When he ascended using the entry pass, he wasn't certain whether his battle beasts—like Yellow Ball, Yangos, and the others—could accompany him.

If they couldn't go up, his overall strength would undoubtedly decline. However, Ye Zhongming believed that items on his person should be permissible.

In that case... this little white mouse, which could easily slip into a pocket, had a high chance of being able to follow him to the sky. With it, many tasks would become far more convenient.

But Mo Ye quickly spotted an issue.

"It... has no demon crystal?"

Liu Zhenghong grinned smugly.

"Exactly. No magic crystal. Strictly speaking, it's not a mutated lifeform—it's a genetic life." She had the mouse flutter up and pointed at it. "Its uniqueness began at birth. The Rat King's son probably sensed its peculiarity and sent it to Cloud Peak. After raising and studying it, I got an idea."

"First, I tried merging the genes of those special lifeforms you brought back with it. The results were shockingly good—they fused almost perfectly. This means conventional methods don't bind its evolution but can grow stronger like those special lifeforms."

"It also inherited their physical resilience. This little thing has high defense and strength. While it lost other abilities, it excels in these areas, making it a top-tier combatant for its level. In terms of power... right now, at twenty days old, it's roughly equivalent to a six-star mutated lifeform."

Ye Zhongming listened in amazement. "Then what did you mean by 'Life Brain' earlier?"

Liu Zhenghong smirked mysteriously. "Sentience and emotions."

The two nine-star evolved were still puzzled.

"Think about it—why did the Death King Tree stand out among all those Roselle Cedar trees? Though the Life Brain was an accident, it's also, in a way, the essence of a high-level lifeform."

"Before, how could the Death King Tree graft a woman's face onto itself? Why did it possess such high intelligence and display complex emotions rare in mutated plants? All because of the Life Brain—it just didn't know how to utilize it properly."

Liu Zhenghong seemed to recall her time with the Death King Tree and smiled. "I studied it extensively and found it's a bizarre organic gel. To preserve its activity, I tried many methods—well, never mind, you wouldn't understand. The point is, the mouse absorbed a trace of the Life Brain, gaining extreme intelligence and human-like emotions."

Mo Ye frowned, only half-comprehending. "But Yangos, Yellow Ball, Nine Treasures, even the Rat King—they all have high intelligence and rich emotions. Aren't they practically human-like in that regard?"

Liu Zhengong shook her head rapidly.

"It's different. Their intelligence and emotions developed gradually through evolution. Only at their current level do they have matching... minds."

"This mouse is different. Immediately after birth, when I fused it with the Life Brain, its intelligence and emotions reached their peak. All it needs now is experience and knowledge."

By now, Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye roughly understood.

The mouse's evolution resembled that of demon monsters—a coveted process where natural growth enhances power, and energy absorption accelerates it. With high intelligence, it could optimize this process, reaching peak strength swiftly.

As for advanced emotions, they were a hallmark of top-tier lifeforms.

Creatures like Yangos and Yellow Ball undoubtedly belonged to this category (though Nine Treasures fell slightly short). Put simply, the evil dragon and big yellow dog were practically human in mind—just not in appearance. Nine Treasures wasn't there yet.

"Does this mean... one day, this little guy might talk?" Ye Zhongming eyed the mouse.

"Of course, just like Yangos." Liu Zhenghong laughed. "Imagine that smug dragon's face when it realizes a mouse is its intellectual equal!"

The trio chatted cheerfully as they exited, the mouse perched on Ye Zhongming, acting adorably—much to Mo Ye's envy.

"Next, I'll show you two more creations. One's for Zhongming's absence, the other for his trip to the sky. We'll discuss those later."

They entered the largest lab capsule—the primary research hub for the Gene Life Lab's core projects.

Most researchers remained engrossed in their work, unaware that the King of Cloud Peak stood behind them. Only a few greeted him.

"Ya Ni and Ya Tian."

Liu Zhenghong's tone lost all its earlier levity, now laced with sorrow, pity, and regret.

Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye, too, shed their nine-star demeanor, faces etched with shock.

"Big Brother, you're here."

A girl riddled with tubes smiled brightly at Ye Zhongming, but her pallor and the pain in her eyes betrayed her suffering.

"Was... this worth it?"

Ye Zhongming grasped Ya Tian's immobile hand, cold as polar ice.

"Yes."

She tried to move, to reciprocate, but discomfort twisted her features.

"Because her sister Ya Ni is just a Silver Corpse," Liu Zhenhong explained quietly. "As Ya Tian's evolution advanced, her energy grew too potent for their bond. We thought their twin link and the Companion gear would balance it, but we were wrong." §

Mo Ye opened her mouth, but Liu Zhenhong squeezed her hand. "To us, the power gap might not matter. But Ya Tian refused to accept it."

A heavy silence fell over the group. Everyone knew the twins' story—their bond, Ya Tian's choice—and none were surprised.

Liu Zhenghong took a deep breath, rallying.

"After Zhongming refused her request to become a Silver Corpse, she came to me. I'm soft-hearted—I agreed to try. I know you were furious, Little Ye. It's the first time your expression scared me. But I had to help this stubborn girl."

"At first, I had no confidence. But now, with ample level nine specimens and the Life Brain, I devised an assimilation plan."

She inhaled deeply—a rare display of gravity.

"Not to turn Ya Tian into a Silver Corpse, but... to make Ya Ni human!"

Chapter 1735: Red Soul Pearl

For anyone else, this would be terrifying.

Turning a corpse—a lifeless puppet—back into a human? How is this different from revival?

But Cloud Peak already had Red Hair as a precedent, making them far more accepting of such things than ordinary people.

They all understood true resurrection was impossible. Take Red Hair—her evolution was so bizarre that even Liu Zhenghong couldn't explain it. But one thing was certain: she wasn't "revived." Whether she remembered her past before becoming a puppet was unknown, and even if she did, those memories would be "coldly processed."

Red Hair never considered herself the same person she'd been in life.

Liu Zhenghong had once worried this might cause problems—though she couldn't pinpoint what—warning Ye Zhongming that when Red Hair reached the pinnacle, she might face unforeseen mental challenges.

"With other puppets—the ones you created—it's impossible. But these sisters... are special."

Liu Zhenghong signaled a researcher to bring a crystal vial containing about ten milliliters of blood. This blood was unusual, faintly tinged with a sporadic pink hue.

"Your blood."

Ye Zhongming nodded. If any blood could be used on the twins, his was the only compatible option.

Liu Zhenghong slowly injected the blood into a device, where it was pumped through transparent tubes into the twins' bodies.

"Will it work?" Mo Ye asked anxiously.

Pre-apocalypse knowledge dictated that mismatched blood types could be fatal. Post-apocalypse, evolved bodies were even more intolerant—no two were alike, their blood uniquely tailored to their physiology.

No normal evolved could assimilate another's blood without specialized jobs, skills, or bloodline abilities.

Though Liu Zhenghong sounded confident, this was likely the first blood-infusion experiment. If something went wrong—Mo Ye, like everyone at Cloud Peak, adored these twins.

"This isn't the first infusion. It's the last." Red Sister replied, then joined other researchers in operating machines, injecting fluids into the twins while extracting others.

The two nine-star evolved could only wait.

Yatian, who'd been awake earlier, now had her eyes closed. Ya Ni's body trembled, her once-human-like skin turning ashen and cracked, like drying clay.

Ye Zhongming's heart clenched.

Then came a more harrowing sight: Ya Tian's skin split open. Blood gushed, drenching her alive.

Mo Ye, hardened by countless battles, couldn't bear to watch and turned away.

Ye Zhongming didn't. He trusted Liu Zhenghong—this was a necessary ordeal.

Moreover, he sensed something shifting.

Ya Tian was growing cold. Ya Ni, feverish.

"The Life Brain made this possible for Ya Ni. Not true revival, but... a new form of existence. If I had to explain..."

Liu Zhenghong glanced at the monitors. "Think of her as Ya Tian's avatar."

Seeing their confusion, she clarified: "It's not precise, but close enough. The dead can't return—this isn't some instant-revival item. But to fulfill the little one's wish, this was the only way." §

"Oh, Little Ye, I used about ten precious level nine materials, 300 vials of top-tier perfect genes, all remaining Life Brain, and..."

Each item listed made the onlookers flinch.

Ten level nine materials—enough for Ye Zhongming to craft at least one purple-grade equipment.

300 vials of elite genes—enough to create Cloud Peak's strongest gene warriors.

The Life Brain alone could've endowed dozens of beings with high intelligence and formidable bodies.

And there was more.

"The Red Soul Beast Pearl."

This time, even Mo Ye was startled.

From five spins of the wheel (using level nine demon crystals gifted by allied factions and Cloud Peak's own stash), Ye Zhongming had obtained two nine-star potions and three other items—one being the Red Soul Beast Pearl.

This treasure granted mutated lifeforms a second soul.

Benefits included:

Unique mental energy, boosting skill potency.

Breaking innate ability limits, allowing new abilities.

Removing level nine evolution lock, enabling natural progression.

Used on Yangos, Yellow Ball, or Nine Treasures, it would've skyrocketed their power. Imagine the evil dragon, already a top-level eight, unlocking ancestral abilities and advancing to level nine swiftly.

Yet Ye Zhongming had let Liu Zhenghong use it on the twins, sacrificing an immediate level nine battle beast for them.

"So the result...?" Mo Ye pressed.

"Will be exceptional." Liu Zhenghong tapped a screen. The twins convulsed violently, their tremors perfectly synchronized.

"Before, as a Golden Zombie, Ya Ni paired with eight-star Ya Tian could only overpower peers. After this, either alone will rival top eight-star evolved, perhaps just slightly weaker than Little Ye pre-nine-star. But that's not the key."

She paused, making everyone brace.

"The key is, when Yatian evolves to nine-star, Ya Ni will too... with just one nine-star potion!"