

Apocalypse 1736

Chapter 1736: Healing gel

One nine-star potion serving two, at the cost of losing a battle beast's rapid advancement to level nine. On paper, the trade-off seems balanced, but in reality, it's a huge bargain.

Ya Tian and Ya Ni were already extraordinary twin sisters. Together, their combined strength surpassed others of the same level.

Once both became nine-star evolved, their coordinated power would overwhelm all but the most formidable level nine lifeforms.

Of course, battles hinge on countless factors—raw comparisons don't always dictate outcomes—but this was the only metric available.

Another reason Ye Zhongming sacrificed the rare Red Soul Beast Pearl was his confidence in Cloud Peak's battle beasts. He believed they could reach level nine through conventional means.

Even now, Yangos, Yellow Ball, and others showed signs of impending evolution, having peaked at level eight, stalled only by the level nine bottleneck.

And let's not forget Lanyou—the miraculous plant within Cloud Peak's grounds. Its aid to battle beasts was immense!

Last time it bloomed, its petals alone greatly benefited level eight beasts. Once those petals withered and bore fruit, the effects, while perhaps not matching the Red Soul Beast Pearl, would come close.

"After this transformation, they'll develop enhancements even I can't predict—direction, magnitude, all uncertain. But the changes will be positive."

The machines hummed to a gradual stop. The twins' convulsions ceased, and female researchers carried them to silver liquid pods, submerging them in a pale blue, seawater-like fluid.

"Now we wait. The awakening will take at least four or five days. When they rise... they'll essentially be one person. Sigh."

Even after completing what others would deem a groundbreaking experiment, Liu Zhengong and Ye Zhongming felt only complexity.

Shaking off the mood, the group moved to another lab—or rather, the Gene Life Production Facility.

Mature gene warriors were already being mass-produced here via assembly lines.

Passing through these, they reached an innermost metal door. Inside, Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye spotted Liu Zhengong's lab coats—this was evidently her private rest area.

"This is for Little Ye's trip to the sky."

Ye Zhongming was puzzled. The small room seemed devoid of anything noteworthy.

"You said activating the entry pass might trigger unpredictable restrictions—possibly even barring spatial equipment." Liu Zhenghong opened a drawer, retrieving a crystal box and placing it before them.
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"If that happens, your ability to handle danger would plummet. None of us wants you dead."

At first, the box appeared empty. Then Ye Zhongming noticed it.

"I call it 'Healing Gel'—a placeholder name."

Red Sister dipped a finger into the box, lifting a nearly transparent, gelatinous substance.

"Without spatial gear, your potions stay behind. Even with your regeneration, injuries could temporarily weaken you. Against the alien races and unknown foes? Unacceptable."

She instructed Ye Zhongming to cut his wrist, then applied the gel.

An icy sensation spread, like frost over skin.

"It absorbs into your body. When injured, you can direct it to heal any wound, except mental damage."

True to her words, the gel dissolved into Ye Zhongming's bloodstream, threading through his arm.

The sensation was unsettling—foreign matter invading one's body carried inherent risks.

"Remember: it's consumable. You control where and how much it heals. Once depleted, it's gone."

Mo Ye's eyes widened.

The gel's simplicity belied its power—a portable, omnidirectional medic (minus mental health).
Controlled healing: slow for minor wounds, instant for crises.

With Park Xiuying unable to accompany Ye Zhongming skyward, this gel was a lifeline.

"Total healing capacity..." Liu Zhenghong paused. "Based on your eight-star data, it could offset two lethal injuries. But you're nine-star now. The updated analysis isn't complete, so I can't say for sure."

"I'd estimate instant recovery from one critical wound."

Research on nine-star evolved was still nascent. Even Cloud Peak's top-tier labs had limited insights. The gel's efficacy on Ye Zhongming remained theoretical.

"This is already incredible!"

The King of Cloud Peak was thrilled.

Others lacked his firsthand dread of the Universal Races and their enslaved species. Ye Zhongming knew the sky's dangers—this near-instant heal was invaluable.

"I need sleep. Get out."

Liu Zhenghong shooed them off. Only she could dismiss two nine-star evolved so brusquely.

As they turned to leave—

"Oh, Little Ye." Her drowsy voice trailed after them.

"At current capacity—factoring in maintenance, upkeep, and medical support—we'll hit peak gene warrior production in a month."

Ye Zhongming looked back at her, now sprawled on the bed, eyes closed.

"Meaning: in 30 days, you'll have an army of 100,000 gene warriors."

Chapter 1737: Nine stars hard to kill?

"How much for this?"

"What? Six level six demon crystal? Are you insane?"

"Fine, I'll take it. Here's your money. You're all a bunch of bloodsuckers."

"Hey, beautiful, how much for this one?"

"One level eight demon crystal?! Is this your overnight fee? Why so expensive?"

"Alright, alright, stop yelling. Here you go. Got a gift box?"

"This one's nice. How about a six-star evolution potion for it?"

"Deal!"

On an ordinary morning, Puxing Town welcomed a peculiar visitor. Curious about everything, he wore an exaggerated expression of shock at prices, yet never actually haggled. In just two hours, he'd already been swindled out of hundreds of level six demon crystals worth of goods by the town's "ruthless" shops.

But he seemed filthy rich, utterly unbothered, strolling around asking about anything that caught his eye and buying on impulse.

This behavior was rare in Puxing Town.

In the apocalypse, every demon crystal an evolved earned was soaked in blood, hard-won through life-or-death struggles. Spending them frivolously was unthinkable.

Puxing Town was already one of the fairest markets, with relatively honest pricing—yet a sucker like this was unheard of. Soon, the guards took notice.

People like him weren't impossible, just vanishingly rare. Almost no one in the apocalypse had demon crystal to burn—except maybe second-generation rich kids like Adam, certainly not this middle-aged man.

As the man shopped, the news spread rapidly up the chain of command.

"Boss Ye himself personally crafted this battle statue! That's why I'm selling it for just two level eight demon crystals—a steal!" The shopkeeper's eyes gleamed like they'd unlocked a skill. The man's reputation had spread fast.

"Look, this statue has three abilities: Thousand Strands Blade at the head, Guardian Light at the waist, and Cage-Piercing Spear in the hands. The first fires razor-sharp hair strands over two meters long—shreds anything below green-grade gear..."

The shopkeeper's pitch was dazzling, but the statue was just a discarded green-grade relic from Cloud Peak, cracked and nearing the end of its durability.

It had entered the market during Cloud Peak's equipment surplus era. Now, after their "rectification," such leaks were impossible, making these leftovers coveted treasures in Puxing Town.

The man examined it, his face cycling through exaggerated expressions. The shopkeeper relaxed—this was his tell for starting negotiations. A little acting poor or stern, and the man would cave, dutifully handing over two level eight demon crystals for an item worth one at most.

But the expression vanished as quickly as it appeared. The man looked toward the street corner and smiled oddly.

Then, he was gone.

The shopkeeper nearly collapsed.

Based on his limited combat experience, sudden disappearance meant either teleportation gear/skills... or being a nine-star evolved.

At the street corner, Xia Lei watched calmly as the man materialized before her, studying him with mild interest.

"The Blackhearted Queen of Cloud Peak. Not bad." The man crossed his arms, towering over her. His gaze held ferocity, mockery, scorn, surprise... and a hint of wariness.

"Should I scream, 'I'm so scared of you, nine-star evolved!' or say, 'Had I known Mu Hanyi, leader of Glory Army, was visiting, I'd have rolled out the red carpet'?"

Xia Lei's appearance had already drawn attention. While celebrity culture was dead in the apocalypse, she was Cloud Peak's de facto ruler—befriending her often mattered more than currying favor with Ye Zhongming himself.

Those who deemed themselves worthy edged closer, eager for even a glance of recognition.

Until they heard "Mu Hanyi." Then they bolted.

Mu Hanyi? Leader of the Glory Army! A mythic powerhouse whose numbered war divisions' full extent remained unknown!

His relationship with Cloud Peak? Bitter enemies! Cloud Peak had annihilated several of his divisions and allegedly killed one of Glory's founders!

And now, Mu Hanyi was also a nine-star!

This was vengeance in the flesh!

Staying meant risking annihilation with the town.

Word spread like a virus. Within minutes, thanks to evolved reflexes, the bustling streets emptied. Only the two figures remained facing off on the main road.

"Aren't you afraid I'll snap your neck right now?"

Mu Hanyi's gaze lingered on Xia Lei's throat. At full nine-star pressure, she should've been gasping.

Yet she stood unfazed, meeting his eyes without flinching.

"I am. But you wouldn't dare."

He scoffed—then froze.

She was right. Why hadn't he crushed her windpipe already? Was he... afraid? Him, a nine-star evolved? Since when did he hesitate to kill?

The realization humiliated him. He shut his eyes, then snapped them open.

He'd come today to settle scores with Cloud Peak and Ye Zhongming. Fear had no place here!

Mu Hanyi decided to act. This woman would be his opening move—a perfect bargaining chip.

But before he could strike, her words stopped him cold.

"Know why we're talking peacefully, Mu Hanyi? Because you've behaved... so far."

The Glory Army leader laughed incredulously. "Or what?"

Xia Lei smirked. "Think becoming nine-star makes you invincible? News flash—you're not. Had you made one wrong move today, you'd already be a corpse."

"Don't overestimate how hard it is to kill a nine-star evolved."

Chapter 1738: Black and White Nightmare Space

Mu Hanyi laughed again.

So far, the entire country had only four nine-star evolved, and each of them knew exactly how they had reached this level, and the price they had paid.

At this stage, they understood better than anyone just how powerful they were.

Why else would everyone scramble to break through? Wasn't it because, at this level, they could go anywhere in the world without fear?

Nine-star evolved easy to kill? What a childish notion!

"I know you don't believe me, but that's fine. You will soon."

As soon as Xia Lei finished speaking, she and the people behind her suddenly vanished. Not like Mu Hanyi's teleportation-like movement—this was true disappearance.

The leader of the Glory Army was stunned.

Only when they disappeared did he realize—these weren't real bodies, but projections from some unknown source!

No wonder Xia Lei, an eight-star evolved, hadn't reacted at all when he unleashed his full aura. She hadn't been physically present.

But what kind of ability was this? To deceive even a nine-star evolved?

Mu Hanyi swiftly changed positions.

Though he didn't believe anyone in Cloud Peak besides Ye Zhongming and the other unknown nine-star evolved could threaten him, caution was still wise. After all, this was the territory of the country's top faction.

But the moment he moved, he felt locked on.

He stopped.

Not because he couldn't break free, but because he realized the target wasn't him—it was the entire Puxing Town. Unless he could instantly escape the town's boundaries, he was within the firing range.

He looked up toward the faintly visible main compound of Cloud Peak in the distance.

Mu Hanyi could dash out of the town in seconds, given his strength. But he had a feeling—the moment he moved, those Annihilation Ultimate-Type Energy Cannons would fire.

From them, he sensed genuine threat.

Had Cloud Peak's energy cannons grown this powerful?

Mu Hanyi lowered his gaze and saw the ground of Puxing Town light up. Streets, buildings—everything was crisscrossed with glowing lines. Before he could react, the lines formed an isolated space, trapping him inside. **RANOBES**

The surroundings remained unchanged—every blade of grass, every tree, still visible. But beyond the glowing lines, it was as if he'd entered another world.

Like something out of a sci-fi movie, machines and rows of gene warriors materialized around him, alongside soldiers wielding energy weapons—even Mu Hanyi recognized them.

Learning from his earlier mistake, he scrutinized them carefully and confirmed they were all projections.

"Leader Mu, welcome to the Black-and-White Nightmare Space."

Xia Lei's voice echoed from all directions, impossible to pinpoint.

Mu Hanyi summoned a pair of gloves—black leather with silver-white spikes, looking like something a street thug would wear.

At the same time, a delicate whistle appeared between his lips, and behind him, a massive red-and-purple battle flag unfurled.

While the gloves and whistle were unfamiliar to others, the flag was infamous across the country.

The Howling Sky Battle Flag of the Glory Army.

This equipment had suffered a tumultuous fate, enduring multiple repairs and upgrades before reaching its current purple-grade status. It was one of the few items in the country that could rival Cloud Peak's gear.

"In this space, there's only one way out—defeat the opponents preset within it."

Xia Lei continued, her voice brimming with barely concealed glee, as if she'd stumbled upon something incredibly amusing.

"Leader Mu, I know you think nine-star makes you invincible. You probably believe even if you waltz into Cloud Peak's home base, you can just leave whenever you want—no one can stop you."

As she spoke, the so-called Black-and-White Nightmare Space conjured more bizarre sights in Mu Hanyi's eyes.

A towering mech. A robot bristling with gunports.

And many mutated plants he didn't recognize.

"Yes, if our Zhongming isn't willing to go all out, we can't do anything to you. Even now, trapping you in this space doesn't mean we can kill you. Our goal is simply to prove my earlier point—that killing a nine-star evolved isn't as hard as you think."

Xia Lei paused, giving Mu Hanyi time to process, then continued:

"In the Black-and-White Nightmare Space, everything is fake. You're fake. The opponents you see are fake. But in another sense, you're real—your strength, your control, even your sensations. Your opponents, however, are Cloud Peak's genuine forces. You'll fight them here."

"Leader Mu, you think nine-star makes you invincible? Then go all out. Show us what you've got. By your logic, everything before you should be easily crushed. Defeat them, and you'll leave this space. Then, if you still want to challenge our Zhongming, I'll arrange it for you."

She seemed to remember something and added:

"Oh, one more thing. Even if you 'die' here, it won't be real death—you'll still leave the space, just like if you won. But the experience won't be pleasant. So... tread carefully."

This time, Xia Lei's voice didn't return. Instead, the roar of energy cannons replaced her.

Outside Puxing Town, Cloud Peak's top brass had gathered. Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye, both nine-star evolved, stood alongside Redhair, Xia Bai, and even the Death King Tree.

Watching the town engulfed in light, Mo Ye turned to Ye Zhongming.

"Will he... really fall for it?"

Ye Zhongming didn't answer, but Xia Lei chuckled.

"Silly girl, whether he falls for it or not doesn't matter." She pointed at Puxing Town. "I lied—death in that space is as real as it gets. But even if I hadn't, do you think he'd walk out alive? Look who's standing beside you. You, Zhongming, and the Death King Tree—sorry, Miss Yan—could kill him twice over! We're just testing equipment on him."

Mo Ye nodded. In her heart, she was confident she could take Mu Hanyi one-on-one.

Since reaching nine-star, she'd only sparred briefly with Ye Zhongming, never unleashing her full power. This was her small regret. If this chance let her go all out, she'd gladly take it.

"It's starting..." Ye Zhongming said softly.

Everyone turned their attention to a smooth metal mirror before them. Inside, the leader of the Glory Army was being bombarded by thirty Annihilation Ultimate-Type Energy Cannons.

Chapter 1739: Projection Battle

Mu Hanyi was someone who trusted his instincts completely.

Realizing that these energy cannons might pose a threat to him, he immediately went all-out in defense.

A shimmering water barrier appeared around his body, shielding him.

Due to their immense power, the Annihilation Ultimate-Type Energy Cannons had a relatively slow firing rate. However, their numerical advantage ensured a continuous barrage of attacks on the rippling water barrier, making it tremble even more violently.

Inside, Mu Hanyi was forced back a step with each cannon blast.

At first, he tried dodging. For a nine-star evolved, reacting and repositioning the moment the cannons fired wasn't particularly difficult.

Yet, for some reason, even if not all the cannons could lock onto him immediately, a few always managed to hit. And once struck, dodging became useless.

Mu Hanyi was forced into retreat, step by step.

"Not bad."

He muttered these two words—his evaluation of the weapon.

In truth, the Annihilation Ultimate-Type was far from "not bad." Its lethality against top-tier lifeforms was very real—just look at the blood at the corner of his mouth.

Of course, under normal circumstances, even thirty Annihilation Ultimate-Type Energy Cannons wouldn't have been so effective at hitting Mu Hanyi. This result was only possible because of this bizarre space.

The bombardment gradually weakened as the thirty cannons ceased fire one after another.

"What a shame."

Little Tiger, who had tagged along, pounded his chest in frustration. "Boss, can't we just blast him to death like this?"

The true capabilities of this equipment, obtained from a level nine roulette, were unclear to many.

"No." Ye Zhongming watched as the next wave of attacks commenced and explained to Xiao Hu and the others: "Theoretically, yes—if we had over a thousand Annihilation Ultimate-Type cannons, or a hundred firing nonstop, we could indeed kill Mu Hanyi this way, even with his best defensive gear."

"This theory applies to any level nine lifeform, including me."

Little Tiger scratched his head, suddenly worried he'd stumbled onto a sensitive topic. Had he just exposed his boss's weakness? Would Xia Lei or even Mo Ye beat him up later?

"Then I better tell Old Le right away—no making a thousand Annihilation-Type cannons, and no further upgrades to the current model!"

Everyone laughed. Xia Lei rolled her eyes. "You think that'll stop threats to Zhongming? Or that Annihilation Ultimate-Type cannons are so easy to produce? If it were that simple, we wouldn't have only fifty by now."

"Fifty after the upgrade," Little Tiger muttered weakly in protest.

Originally, there had been many Annihilation Ultimate-Type cannons. But Le Dayuan had spent considerable time and materials on a modest upgrade.

This upgrade didn't completely overhaul the cannons' parameters—it wasn't a generational leap, just a... Pro version.

Yet, for cannons of this tier, even such tweaks were incredibly difficult, and the results were astonishing.

So, in the minds of the core members, only these fifty upgraded cannons truly deserved the name Annihilation Ultimate-Type.

"The Black-and-White Nightmare Space has an upper limit."

By now, the attackers inside the space had shifted to gene warriors and the melee robot, with the ranged robot providing fire support from the periphery. 然而

"Its energy capacity is fixed. Every entity I choose to challenge the trapped target consumes a portion of that energy. Once depleted, the number of entities we can deploy won't increase further."

Listening to Ye Zhongming's explanation, Guang Yao pondered. "Like a board game with limited pieces?"

"You could say that." Ye Zhongming pointed at the ongoing battle visible to all. "These are what I've deployed—Annihilation Ultimate-Type** cannons, two robots, top-tier gene warriors, some of Sister Hong's research, and, though not yet visible, various battle beasts and... zombies."**

"They've filled the space's energy capacity."

As he spoke, Ye Zhongming handed a small key to Xia Lei.

"This controls the equipment. Where to deploy it will be your call."

The first time he saw the Black-and-White Nightmare Space, Ye Zhongming had briefly found it more alluring than the nine-star potion. Because it meant that even in his absence, his comrades could handle nine-star evolved and level nine lifeforms.

What Ye Zhongming valued most was the equipment's ability to trap level nine lifeforms temporarily, and anyone could operate it.

The equipment had three components: First, a small stone box that, once buried, even a nine-star evolved couldn't detect, ensuring the target would be trapped upon activation. Second, the key. Third, the smooth metal panel before them.

The latter two worked together. The key activated the equipment, then projections of pre-recorded targets were selected on the panel, initiating the battle.

If the target was killed, they died for real. If the target won, the projections suffered no losses.

This was Ye Zhongming's second priority.

Everyone knew the devastation level nine lifeforms could wreak. If they rampaged through Cloud Peak, even if defeated, the losses—both in lives and resources—would be severe. With this equipment, such losses could be avoided.

Even if the target weren't killed inside the space, any injuries or exhaustion would carry over to reality, making them far easier to deal with.

Just like Mu Hanyi now.

The melee robot required a highly compatible pilot in reality, but inside the space, it fought flawlessly—until destroyed.

Energy cannons needed demon monsters, but here, they didn't.

With the robot leading the assault, gene warriors supporting, and the ranged robot harassing, Mu Hanyi was thoroughly disheveled.

He'd stopped using the whistle—it seemed ineffective against projections. But the gloves and Howling Sky Battle Flag left the Cloud Peak onlookers in awe.

"So this is the melee robot at full power?"

"The ranged one's no slouch either—look how it's pressuring a nine-star evolved."

"Limited ammo though. Projections have constraints."

"Look! That's the Howling Sky Battle Flag's most famous ability—Ten Miles Wind. The AoE damage is terrifying."

"One of the glove's abilities must be Tremor. See? Any gene warrior touched by his fists gets shattered."

"Is this the power of nine-star? It's terrifying."

Mu Hanyi's performance in the Black-and-White Nightmare Space was fearsome. Even his simplest punches and kicks carried the weight of skills.

After about five minutes, as the melee robot was destroyed, this wave of projections was neutralized. Mu Hanyi was visibly drained but bore no obvious injuries.

Ye Zhongming tapped the panel, summoning an army of zombies and battle beasts—led by Brainchild, who hadn't been seen in a long time.

Still level eight, Brainchild commanded nearly ten thousand zombies—at least a hundred at level eight, over two thousand at level seven, and the rest at level six.

The battle beasts, all Cloud Peak's, lacked level eight specimens but numbered over three thousand at level seven.

They surged toward Mu Hanyi, swiftly engulfing him.

On the smooth metal panel, Mu Hanyi's figure was completely obscured.

Every Cloud Peak observer wondered: Could these zombies and beasts really kill a nine-star evolved?

"Look—light!"

At Candy's exclamation, beams of light erupted from within the zombie swarm, exploding outward and cleansing the entire space.

Any zombie or beast touched by the light vanished instantly, like snow melting under sunlight.

"The space is broken."

With those words, Ye Zhongming vanished. Mo Ye followed closely, sprinting in the same direction!

Chapter 1740: Afraid so quickly?

"He got away."

Mo Ye crouched down, running her hand over the ground. With some unknown ability and just a brief closing of her eyes, she made this judgment.

Ye Zhongming fully trusted her assessment.

"He really does have quite a few good items."

Ye Zhongming muttered to himself, thinking that no top-tier lifeform should ever be underestimated—especially someone like Mu Hanyi, who commanded the Glory Army.

The Glory Army, the Resistance Zone, and Cloud Peak were the three most powerful combat organizations in the country, with the largest numbers of warriors. As one of the "Big Three," Mu Hanyi undoubtedly possessed no shortage of treasures.

From forcefully breaking out of the Black-and-White Nightmare Space despite taking damage, to using successive methods and equipment to shake off Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye's pursuit, all of it proved this point.

"Someone helped him."

Mo Ye spoke again.

Ye Zhongming nodded once more.

After evolving to nine-star, or rather, all nine-star evolved, one's job would undergo a qualitative leap.

The Rune Master job had undergone tremendous changes at nine-star. With Cloud Peak's full resources poured into upgrading it to the highest level, combined with equipment tailored for Mo Ye, she now possessed extraordinary abilities.

The types of runes she mastered were numerous. Beyond combat-focused runes, there were also support runes, one of which was the Perception Rune.

It could detect movements within an area, surpassing even Ye Zhongming's similar abilities in both range and precision.

Moreover, aside from lacking visual feedback, this Perception Rune had another ability that Ye Zhongming greatly admired: a rough, incomplete event reconstruction.

This was why Mo Ye sensed that someone had helped Mu Hanyi escape.

"As for who could help him..." Mo Ye didn't finish, because she wasn't entirely certain—she only had a strong suspicion.

"Yes, it must be him."

Aside from Cloud Peak's second nine-star evolved remaining a mystery, the identities of the other two in the country were basically common knowledge. Of course, after this incident, Mo Ye's name would also be repeatedly mentioned by major factions.

The person Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye were referring to was... Ji Ruiguang.

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"Ji Ruiguang came too?"

Upon Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye's return, the Cloud Peak members were shocked by this news. Who would've thought that all four of the country's nine-star evolved would gather at Cloud Peak at the same time?

"Wait, does Ji Ruiguang even have any reason to save Mu Hanyi?"

Guang Yao, who had come from the Resistance Zone, was particularly puzzled. While there hadn't been any major conflicts between the Resistance Zone and the Glory Army, they certainly weren't friends. If Mu Hanyi died, shouldn't that be good for the Resistance Zone?

Or, looking at it the other way, if they wanted to move against Cloud Peak, wouldn't it be better to jointly attack Ye Zhongming and Mo Ye? Yet Mu Hanyi came first, and Ji Ruiguang arrived later—clearly not a premeditated plan. So, did the latter come specifically to rescue him?

Ye Zhongming shook his head, equally confused.

Listening to the clamor below about launching a preemptive strike against the Resistance Zone or the Glory Army before he left for the sky, Ye Zhongming felt a pang of concern.

It seemed his decision to adopt a defensive strategy during his absence and have Mo Ye become nine-star was the right one. Looking at the expressions of those present now, even steady figures like Guang Yao, Lu Yi, Sister Rong, and Ah Tao showed subtle eagerness for battle.

This wasn't necessarily a flaw—in fact, it was commendable, as losing ambition would be far worse. But in his absence, this aggressiveness could easily spark conflicts, and conflicts meant uncontrollable variables.

Cloud Peak had strong soldiers and abundant resources. Cloud Peak was the strongest in power.

But Cloud Peak was not invincible.

"Boss, someone delivered something."

Xiao Min walked in, holding a box. The lid was open, revealing a note inside.

This wasn't the Female Guard arbitrarily opening mail—the post-apocalyptic world was full of bizarre dangers, so they screened for every conceivable threat. For this note and box to reach Ye Zhongming, it had to pass at least five inspections.

Ye Zhongming took it, first examining the box, then reading the note.

Everyone's eyes were fixed on his face, noticing the odd expression on the King of Cloud Peak.

The boss remained silent, so no one dared ask—after all, they didn't know if the contents were suitable for public knowledge. But someone with low emotional intelligence blurted out:

"Boss, what's up?"

Little Tiger craned his neck, practically itching to read it himself.

"A message from Ji Ruiguang."

Everyone exchanged glances. Not only had this guy rescued Mu Hanyi, but he'd also left a note? Was it a provocation?

Ye Zhongming waved his hand, signaling it wasn't what they thought.

"It mainly mentions three things." Ye Zhongming spoke slowly, thinking as he went.

"First, the entry pass needs to be activated as soon as possible. Every day delayed means... losses—yes, he used that word. He plans to activate his in two days and will advise Mu Hanyi to do the same."

Just this first point left Ye Zhongming baffled. What did activating the entry pass mean? Why the urgency?

The Resistance Zone truly lived up to its name—they really did know a lot.

"Second, he advised me to avoid overusing my abilities recently and to focus on physical conditioning and training."

This only deepened everyone's confusion.

This point sounded like nonsense.

Evolved were constantly seeking ways to strengthen themselves—did he really need to say that? And what did "avoid overusing abilities" even mean?

Xiao Hu and others scoffed at this.

"What about the third thing?"

Xia Lei was more concerned with the full context—perhaps looking at it holistically would make Ji Ruiguang's intentions clearer.

Ye Zhongming placed the note back in the box, retrieving a vial of potion from the bottom. His expression turned grave.

"He said that while we're away, the Resistance Zone won't provoke Cloud Peak. He apologized for the earlier attack on our intelligence outpost and offered this eight-star potion as compensation... the one under the note."

Silence fell over the room.

Everyone knew the Resistance Zone had obtained a formidable piece of equipment from the level nine wheel, installed on their war fortress, making it even more formidable. According to analyses by Guang Yao, Mo Ye, and Le Dayuan's strategy team, that thing was likely far more powerful than the Annihilation Ultimate-Type Energy Cannons.

Yet after their bold attack on Cloud Peak's intelligence station, they were now apologizing and offering an eight-star potion? They were backing down too quickly—were they afraid Cloud Peak would retaliate?

"Boss, could the note be fake?"

Xiao Hu voiced his suspicion.

"No. Leaving aside the fact that no one would spend an eight-star potion just to impersonate someone, the residual energy on it could only come from a nine-star evolved."

Ye Zhongming stood up, pausing for about ten seconds before declaring:

"The Western Offensive Plan is moved up. We strike tomorrow."