

Apocalypse 1756

Chapter 1756: Night Blood (9)

"Reinforcements my ass!"

The East City commander's face twisted into a vicious snarl as he shoved his subordinate down the stone steps. "Send for reinforcements! Tell them... East City's gates are breached."

Yes. The completely untouched East City gates had been shattered in an instant.

No one could believe it. Not the experienced East City commander, nor any of the defenders. They'd never witnessed—no, never even conceived—that city gates could be breached so effortlessly.

"Only essential personnel remain on the walls! Everyone else—follow me to defend below! Matar, you hold the walls!"

With that, the commander led his forces down.

His only option now was to plug the breach. If the city fell here, even if they eventually repelled or slaughtered these Easterners, his life would be forfeit.

Anyone who thought King Ahmad had grown merciful was sorely mistaken.

When the commander reached the gates and deployed his troops defensively, he finally saw the damage firsthand.

He couldn't comprehend what weapon could possibly slice through their reinforced, energy-shielded, specially constructed gates—designed to withstand any assault—in a single strike.

Not just breached. Sliced. The opening wasn't from the gates being smashed, but from the surrounding walls being cleanly carved in a perfect semicircle. The gates and adjacent stonework had simply vaporized, leaving a glass-smooth edge.

The commander's legs weakened. He couldn't imagine his fully-shielded troops surviving if that weapon fired again.

Probably... they wouldn't.

Yet strangely, the expected battle cries and charge never came. An eerie silence descended, even more profound than before. During the attacker's approach, he'd faintly heard cheers.

Frowning, he shouted upward: "Matar! Status report! Have they advanced?"

The reply came instantly: "Commander... you'd better see this yourself. I can't make sense of it."

That idiot! The commander cursed inwardly before checking the breach again. Seeing nothing, he hurried back up the walls.

"Look—they haven't moved at all," Matar pointed. "Not an inch. Even that man retreated. I... don't understand their strategy."

The Cloud Peak forces remained exactly as before—their camp now deathly still, all earlier movements ceased as if asleep.

The commander rubbed his temples. Like his subordinate, he couldn't decipher the enemy's intentions.

Yet the pressure only mounted. Staring at the flickering campfires in the distance, his tension surpassed even the initial attack.

"Report this exactly to His Majesty. Let... him decide."

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Ye Zhongming returned to camp, slightly fatigued.

Earlier, he'd used the Nature Staff to block wall attacks while channeling the Soul Crushing Bone Staff's full power into that single strike.

Exhilarating—but costly.

Previously, even with his vast mental reserves, one full-powered soul strike would nearly cripple him. At level nine, he could manage two before exhaustion.

But today's plan only required one. A second would jeopardize subsequent battles.

His enhanced mental power came with a drawback: recovery now felt "slower"—not in absolute terms, but relative to his expanded capacity. Percentage-based skills that once seemed negligible now demanded careful calculation.

The gate's destruction was never in doubt. Ye Zhongming trusted the Bone Staff implicitly—its tier might surpass purple, nearing seven-colored-grade.

But now, hairline fractures marred its surface.

At level nine, he could finally unleash its full potential—at the cost of permanent damage. These cracks whispered that the next all-out strike might be its last.

Though he now possessed ample level-nine materials, replicating the Bone Staff proved impossible. Not for lack of skill—the original bone fragment from the secret realm came from an extraordinarily powerful entity.

"Boss, Mo Ye and the Death King Tree have begun their assaults," Xiao Min reported cheerfully, as if this weren't an all-or-nothing battle for Cloud Peak's survival.

Ye Zhongming smiled wistfully, still mourning his staff.

Through the battle merit medal's chatter, he learned the other flanks were far bloodier.

South City Gate.

Here, the Death King Tree led the assault.

Having reverted to her true form—a colossal entity dwarfing the walls—her beautiful face contorted in frustration as she unleashed World Nature's full fury.

No defenders realized this sudden monstrosity was level nine, as she hid her silver magic crystal. But her domain turned the South City Gate into hell.

Initially, they'd fought back with siege engines. Soon, they learned better.

The razor-leaf storm was unstoppable. Even top-tier armor couldn't withstand the intelligent, relentless assault.

The Death King Tree hadn't planned this. She'd intended to breach the gates directly.

But lacking Ye Zhongming's single-strike capability—and without Cloud Peak's support—the shielded gates withstood her assaults, only losing their energy barrier.

Enraged, she turned her wrath upon the defenders. After several World of Nature waves, the walls were cleared—every weapon destroyed, every living defender slain.

The South City commander's heart bled. Ten thousand dead in minutes. Only his quick retreat saved him. Never had he witnessed such terrifying area annihilation.

Through cracked lips, he rasped his only remaining option:

"Inform His Majesty... a level-nine lifeform is attacking South City Gate! We require reinforcements!"

Chapter 1757: Night Blood (10)

North of the city.

In the sky, a massive yellow talisman floated in the air, like a great banner fluttering in the wind.

From it, wind blades of varying sizes continuously shot forth, ravaging the people atop the city walls.

It was indeed a form of devastation, because this talisman was positioned directly and vertically above the wall, making it impossible for the city's artillery to attack—only the weapons and skills of evolved could reach it.

Leaving aside whether most attacks could even reach such a height, even when they did hit, the talisman seemed completely unaffected. In fact, the more it was attacked, the stronger its retaliation became, with the number of wind blades increasing.

In the end, the defenders on the wall had no choice but to let it wreak havoc.

That wasn't all—a thick, massive log hovered above the ground, slamming violently against the city gates. The energy shield over them had already dimmed, clearly unable to hold on much longer.

The commander of the northern city wall had no idea how the other sides were faring, but right now, he was just frustrated.

Everyone was using every possible method to defend against the ceaselessly falling wind blades. At least eighty percent of the wall was within its attack range. They could have retreated to the remaining "twenty percent," but doing so would mean abandoning any interference with the giant log that was pounding against the gates like a bell. Without their resistance, even a fool could tell the gates wouldn't last long. Once the gates were breached, the Holy City would be in danger.

The northern commander was trapped in this dilemma, unsure of how to proceed. The situation's progression gave him a sense of slow, inevitable death.

"Did you see who it is?"

The northern commander threw out a purple card, which instantly transformed into a glowing metal hut, shielding a section of the wall.

Watching the wind blades strike it and hearing the impacts, his heart bled.

This piece of equipment had cost him a fortune—it was one of only two gold-grade items he owned. Its primary function wasn't defense, but rest. Inside, one could quickly recover stamina and mental energy, and it even had minor healing effects on external injuries.

Now, forced to use it to block these wind blades, it was a complete waste.

But he had no choice—he needed to find out where the enemy was.

It was almost laughable. The wind blades above had already killed countless defenders on the wall, and the gate's protective shield was about to shatter, yet they still didn't know who was launching these attacks! This was something they had to figure out first—otherwise, how could they make the right decisions?

The commander's question was directed at a man with an eye-related job skill, though his observation and search required some time.

"Found them!" The man exclaimed excitedly after half a minute, though his tone quickly changed.

"It's... a woman. Right in front of their camp."

"One person?!" The commander was stunned.

He had always assumed this must be some incredibly high-tier equipment or a team-based skill.

"Yes. That woman... wait, I think she's about to attack again."

As soon as he spoke, the yellow talisman in the sky suddenly vanished. Before the Holy City's defenders could rejoice, a red talisman appeared in its place.

From it, flames began to surge.

Then, one fireball after another began raining down, instantly engulfing the entire northern wall.

A fireball downpour.

Each "raindrop" was the size of a human head.

If the wind blades earlier were assassins, then these fireballs were mages.

The entire northern wall was immediately engulfed in flames.

Watching his metal hut begin to melt, the northern commander's face twisted in fury. He roared at his subordinate: "Are you fucking blind?! All of this... is that woman's doing?"

The subordinate was trembling in fear. His evolution level wasn't high—only five stars—but his visual talents made him valuable as the team's eyes.

Against this level of attack, if not for the metal hut shielding them, he wouldn't survive a single fireball.

"Y-yes, Commander... that woman... she must... must be..."

The man tried to calm himself, but he couldn't suppress the terror in his heart.

"Level nine..."

The commander finished his subordinate's sentence.

Only a level-nine evolved could unleash attacks of this magnitude—only they could achieve such a monstrous feat of holding off an entire army alone!

Bitter taste in his mouth, the commander felt today might be his last.

Just then, a deafening crash came from below the wall. He leaned over to look—the giant log had finally shattered the energy shield and slammed directly into the gates.

The log disintegrated into splinters upon impact, then vanished. The gates were left with a massive dent, and the surrounding walls, having absorbed the force, were now cracked in several places.

Seeing that the gates hadn't been fully breached, the commander exhaled slightly in relief. Turning to his subordinates, he shouted: "Everyone, off the wall! Get off the wall now!"

He had made the decision to abandon the wall's defense. There was no choice—there was no telling how long this firestorm would last. If they stayed here, taking hits passively, everyone would die.

As for whether the Easterners outside would seize the opportunity to attack, that was a problem for later.

The defenders, who had long been itching to flee, heard this command like heavenly music and stampeded down the walls. The result was that many defensive skills and equipment faltered or stopped entirely. Those who might have held on a little longer now completely broken down.

Amid the chorus of screams, the commander shut his eyes in agony. When he opened them again, he pushed forward under the metal hut and rushed down the wall himself.

He was only a level-seven evolved. Before a level-nine, he was as weak as an ant before a human—no matter how big the ant, one stomp was all it took.

If the gates were lost, so be it. Let the royal guards and the royals clean up the mess—they were the ones who reaped the benefits anyway. The fact that all four city defense commanders had been denied level-eight evolution potions, while those lazy, pleasure-seeking nobles got them instead, was already a mockery. The northern commander had long been discontent.

Now, he didn't want to risk his life for these people anymore. A voice in his head whispered—maybe it was time to leave this wretched city behind.

Just as he reached the base of the wall, he suddenly sensed a terrifying force gathering. Looking up, he saw the deadly talisman ignite on its own, transforming into the largest fireball yet, trailing black smoke as it plummeted—straight toward the gates.

BOOM!

The fireball struck the gates. The ground shook violently. The commander's neck stiffly turned to look.

The gates he had once taken pride in were now gone—replaced by raging flames.

The northern wall... had fallen.

Chapter 1758: Night Blood (11)

"Wake up the three slave armies—Hearts, Spades, and Diamonds—and send them to the eastern, southern, and northern gates, respectively. Divide the remaining members of the Royal Second Guard into four groups and position them near the four gates, ready to reinforce at any moment."

"Waleed, Faisal, Nayeef, and Suhail, the four of you take your respective teams and also reinforce the four gates. Remember, before you die, not a single person is allowed to set foot inside the Holy City through those gates."

These four royal family members were all level-eight evolved, the backbone of the Holy City. Their teams were formidable combat forces, and large-scale siege battles in the Holy City were typically centered around these groups.

"But Your Majesty, doing so would leave the palace undefended!"

Suhail, like the others, was shocked by the constant distress signals, especially the news that the eastern and northern gates had been breached. This was beyond belief.

Ordinary people might only know that the Holy City's walls and gates were sturdy, but Suhail and the others had participated in and supervised the city's construction. They had firsthand knowledge of its defenses. The fact that the gates had been shattered was far more shocking to them than to the defenders.

They realized—these outsiders were truly powerful.

The Holy City's leader was Ahmad, and its iconic structure was the royal palace. This place could not afford to fall. If the outsiders were as strong as the reports suggested, they might even have the ability to break through to the city center. If that happened, the palace—now deprived of at least half its protection—and the king himself would be in grave danger.

Suhail believed that it didn't matter who else in the Holy City died—but the king must not come to harm.

Ahmad waved his hand. Once he made a decision, he never changed it.

"I know what you're worried about, but don't be afraid. I'll have the Little Prince return. Besides, don't we still have the Royal First Guard? Though they only number ten thousand, you know exactly how strong they are. Hold on a little longer. Once dawn breaks, we'll make those outsiders regret their actions! Oh, and—have I sat on this throne for so long that you've forgotten I'm also an evolved?"

"But—"

Suhail wanted to say more, but the king cut him off. "Go now. Or do you want those outsiders to storm the city and defile our sacred land?"

The men exchanged glances, bowed solemnly, and swiftly departed.

Ahmad sat on his throne. The other subordinates had also left—their duty was to protect the palace, not to linger by the king's side.

"Aba."

The king called out softly. From the shadows of the grand hall, the air twisted, and a tall Black man emerged. He walked to Ahmad's front and knelt on one knee.

"Still... no contact?"

The Black man nodded. "Yes, Your Majesty. No word yet."

The hall fell into silence.

After a long pause, the king stood up. He stretched out his right hand, and a gray staff materialized in his grip.

His fingers traced the intricate patterns on it before he suddenly murmured, "Have I... been too cowardly? If I had agreed back then, would I have already reached another level by now?" P'ANÔTÉS

Aba remained silent—whether out of reluctance or inability to answer, it was unclear.

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Death King Tree reverted to her human form, her breathtakingly beautiful face—enough to make most real women burn with envy—slightly pale with frustration.

Through Little Tiger's Battle Contribution Badge, she had learned that the eastern and northern gates had already been breached—only hers remained intact.

In terms of kill count, Death King Tree was undoubtedly first. A single "World Nature" had slaughtered most of the southern wall's defenders. But when it came to destroying the gates, she couldn't compare to Ye Zhongming with his Soul Crushing Bone Staff or the Talisman Master Mo Ye.

Staring at the tightly shut gates—now stripped of their protective shield—she felt a humiliating sense of inferiority.

After panting for a moment, she suddenly let out a piercing shriek and charged forward.

This startled Little Tiger, who was stationed behind her.

He had been assigned to assist her, and one of his tasks was to restrain her from acting recklessly.

The siege had a plan—they didn't actually need to launch a full assault. Breaching the gates was ideal, but even if they didn't, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy was acceptable.

But the pride of a level-nine lifeform was capricious.

Little Tiger immediately reported the situation to his leader via the Battle Contribution Badge and ordered his cavalry to prepare for a charge.

A command came through the badge, and Little Tiger licked his lips excitedly. Raising his blade high, he roared and led his men in a charge after Death King Tree.

The cavalry unit, which Cloud Peak had invested tremendous resources into assembling, launched its first true large-scale charge on West Asian soil.

The Cloud-Hoof riders were light cavalry, fanning out to the sides with lances strapped to their mounts. In their hands, they wielded bows, crossbows, or firearms—whatever they excelled with.

Though Death King Tree had nearly obliterated the city's defenses, they couldn't afford to relax. Their job was to suppress any potential attacks from the walls, ensuring the heavy cavalry could charge unimpeded.

The heavy cavalry was far more direct. Under Little Tiger's lead, they gripped thick Zhanmadao blades, mounted on mutated bears, elephants, and mountain beasts. Clad in emerald-green armor, they surged toward the gates like an unstoppable tide.

Death King Tree glanced back, then suddenly stopped. Scratching her head, she pondered for a moment before deciding—this kind of dirty, exhausting work was better left to these smelly men. She was a beauty; such labor was beneath her image.

Having found the perfect excuse, she resolved to lecture Mo Ye later on a subject she'd just coined: "The Self-Cultivation of a Beautiful Woman."

Meeting no resistance, Little Tiger and his cavalry swiftly overtook Death King Tree and "crashed" into the gates.

This wasn't a suicidal charge—modern heavy cavalry, composed of evolved and mutated beasts, was far from the clumsy formations of ancient warfare.

The first wave of a dozen riders used momentum and their blades to hack at the gates before swiftly veering to the sides, clearing space for the next wave. They circled back, rejoining the charge path.

Wave after wave of heavy cavalry struck the gates with skills-enhanced slashes. After twelve full charges, the gates finally shattered, revealing the path into the Holy City.

Following the eastern and northern gates, the southern gate had now fallen.

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Standing by the towering palace window, Ahmad suddenly tensed. His gaze swept the ground below—just a few hundred meters from the palace, the earth ruptured, and two repulsive creatures, one black and one white, burrowed out.

Chapter 1759: Night Blood (12)

The ground of the Holy City had been specially treated—a feat even Cloud Peak had to admire.

Cloud Peak's terrain had also been modified, but theirs was based on defensive formations. Thanks to the presence of two top-tier laboratories, Cloud Peak's underground facilities were even more expansive than its surface, effectively making it two cities in one.

But the Holy City was far larger, spanning many times the area of Cloud Peak. Treating every inch of such a vast space was an immense challenge.

Moreover, this kind of work could only be done by specialized personnel, requiring tremendous manpower and resources.

For a city to remain untouched by mutated lifeforms, the cost was extraordinarily high.

However, the Holy City's modifications weren't as refined or "high-class" as Cloud Peak's—especially in ordinary districts, which paled in comparison to critical zones like the royal palace or military barracks.

The "disgusting creatures" in Ahmad's eyes were naturally Nine Treasures and the giant white earthworm it had brought back from North America as its mate.

Both were level-eight, with Nine Treasures even verging on level-nine, thanks to its ability to absorb energy at all times and the premium environment Cloud Peak provided—such as Lan You and other resources.

High level, excellent treatment, and reliable allies naturally led to formidable strength.

Logically, the ground near the palace should have been thoroughly reinforced. But Nine Treasures' keen senses and formidable burrowing skills allowed it to find a weak point, breaking through alongside its mate and emerging at the Holy City's heart.

A surge of fury rose in Ahmad's chest.

These people had gone too far!

Attacking the city gates was one thing. Killing the defenders—whom he didn't particularly care for—was another. But now, they had come here—right before the palace, at the core of the Holy City!

Though these creatures posed no real threat to him, their actions felt like spitting on something precious, enraging the king.

With a flick of his wrist, he hurled an object—a fist-sized golden block that rapidly expanded midair. By the time it loomed over Nine Treasures, it had grown into a small mountain.

Whether it was naturally radiant or a gold-grade equipment, the sheer menace it exuded was undeniable.

Nine Treasures hadn't expected to be attacked the moment it emerged, half its body still underground. Instinct screamed danger.

It barked a warning to its mate, and the two level-eight lifeforms prepared to counterattack. They couldn't dodge—their mission wasn't just to breach the Holy City but to open an underground passage for reinforcements.

"Ah!"

A sharp, piercing shriek—not loud but agonizingly shrill—suddenly echoed through the air. The descending golden mass staggered midair, slowing and veering slightly off course.

"Leave this to me. You two, focus on your task."

The soft, feminine voice made Nine Treasures and its mate immediately halt their attack, ignoring the falling golden block entirely. Their massive bodies twisted, fully emerging from the ground and revealing a dark, gaping tunnel beneath.

At some point, Talking Lady had appeared, cradling her black cat. The shriek had come from her.

She eyed the golden block and lazily flicked her hand—as if swatting a fly. The block obediently veered away, crashing into the ground with a deafening boom that shook the surroundings.

This level-nine being, whom Ye Zhongming had brought along out of caution, locked eyes with Ahmad high above in the palace. Then, she suddenly smiled.

"A strange one... You are lacking something, aren't you?"

Her voice was soft, spoken in Chinese, yet Ahmad heard it clearly—his face paling slightly.

This wasn't just a remark. It was a mental assault.

"Hmph!"

Ahmad snorted, his wooden staff striking the floor. The intricate tiles beneath him cracked, and his voice reverberated through the palace halls, dispelling the woman's psychic attack.

But his emotions were far from the anger he displayed. He was shaken.

Level-nine!

A woman and her cat—both ninth-level existences!

Were these Easterners' trump cards?

Ahmad glanced at the sky. The flares made it impossible to gauge the exact time—how long until dawn?

But he knew one thing: with level-nine lifeforms at his doorstep, the Holy City's only hope now lay with Sayyid.

The Holy City's ruler took a deep breath and raised his staff—

Yet, just as he prepared to fight, he realized the woman holding the level-nine mutated cat had stopped moving. She simply stood there, watching him silently.

What... was this?

As Ahmad hesitated, zombies began pouring out of the tunnel behind Talking Lady, their numbers swelling like ants from a shattered nest.

Talking Lady stood motionless, her cat in her arms, while behind her, a tide of undead surged forward. Ahmad remained at the palace window. The scene—some still, some frenzied—formed a grotesque tableau.

He knew he should attack now.

Yet he didn't.

Several seconds later, he finally spoke.

"Aba, order the Royal Guard to hold their positions—their priority is defending the palace. Send someone to intercept the Little Prince and have him rendezvous with Sayyid. And mobilize all nearby evolved to exterminate these zombies."

The Black man nodded. Without moving, the air around him distorted, and he vanished.

Watching the chaos below, listening to the rising screams and clashes, Ahmad clenched his staff in anguish.

"I... still lack the courage, after all."

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BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Every strike against the gates hammered into the western commander's heart.

He swung his weapon mechanically, cutting down the surrounding mutated lifeforms, but a crushing despair seeped into his bones.

From zombie-loaded artillery shells to barrages of missiles, and now this endless swarm of bizarre creatures, he and his defenders had witnessed too many horrors in a single day.

They had also learned that these Easterners' siege tactics defied all logic.

The commander had already committed all reserves, yet the enemy could not be stopped.

The genetic monstrosities scaling the walls grew by the minute. The defensive artillery meant to support the gates had all but ceased firing. The gates' fall was inevitable.

Now, he faced a choice.

The walls were chaos. Once the gates fell, the enemy would flood inside, stranding his forces as a lone pocket of resistance.

If they held out, they might even become a thorn in the enemy's heart—a rallying point for a counterattack.

But... could they last that long?

The enslaved armies had reached the city's base. Should he order a retreat, abandoning the walls to regroup with them?

Gritting his teeth, the northern commander chose self-preservation.

The moment his forces descended—

A deafening explosion rocked the western district.

The gates had fallen.

The Holy City now stood wide open.

Chapter 1760: People who surrendered

Perhaps none of the people living here had ever imagined that one day, the Holy City—which they believed to be impregnable—would be breached.

But cruel reality dealt them the heaviest blow.

The news that all four city gates had fallen swept through the city like a hurricane, stunning everyone who heard it.

Many refused to believe it at first, but when they saw zombies, genetic lifeforms, and other creatures that didn't belong here, they were forced to accept it—at the very least, it proved the enemy had truly broken into the city.

Having dominated West Asia for so long, the people of the Holy City had developed a blind sense of invincibility, which was one of the reasons for their downfall. Yet, in some ways, they were similar to Cloud Peak—they were unwilling to submit.

Especially to Easterners, whom they looked down upon for certain reasons. Of course, in some eras of the pre-apocalypse, they had looked down on the entire world while holding control over resources.

Cloud Peak had never intended to make these people kneel at their feet. After breaching the four gates, the other directions remained quiet, merely occupying the walls. Only the western gate saw genetic warriors and ranged attack units pour inside.

Guang Yao and Liang Chuyin stood atop the blood-soaked walls, watching the flood of genetic warriors below. The tension and excitement from earlier had faded.

"Is this... really okay?"

Guang Yao turned to the Internet Celebrity, a question in his eyes.

For this assault on the Holy City, Ye Zhongming had ordered every single genetic warrior to be deployed. Even though Guang Yao and others had deliberately avoided getting too close to the two laboratories to avoid suspicion, they knew this was Cloud Peak's entire stockpile.

Even with the zombies temporarily gathered by Talking Lady and Brain Child, their numbers wouldn't exceed 200,000.

Meanwhile, the Holy City had a population in the millions.

This wasn't the peaceful era, where civilians would surrender once the military collapsed. Now, everyone was a soldier—the size of the population directly translated to the size of the army.

Breaching the gates was just the first step. What came next was the real challenge.

200,000 against a million? Even if they somehow won through a miracle, what about the losses? Would it be worth it? Rebuilding such a force would take who knew how long.

Don't assume that just because Cloud Peak had a genetic lifeform assembly line, they could do whatever they wanted. Everything had a cost. While the two laboratories provided Ye Zhongming and Cloud Peak with achievements that made others green with envy, they also required a constant blood transfusion—materials, equipment, potions... in short, money, or rather, magic crystals. The two labs were gold-devouring monsters, surpassing even level-nine in their appetite.

Once Ye Zhongming ascended to the skies, Cloud Peak's income would plummet, forcing them into a period of financial austerity. In such conditions, replenishing these genetic warriors would be difficult.

The influencer smiled. "I don't know either. But if Zhongming says so, he must have his reasons."

"Actually, I think this is a process of... refining the essence and discarding the dross."

After more than six years in the apocalypse, Liang Chuyin had transformed from a naive girl into a strong, independent woman. Her face remained youthful, but her mind had matured.

"Look, the genetic warrior army now has a unified command—something we could never have achieved before. But they've never fought together in actual combat. This is the perfect opportunity to test them. There will be losses, but their combat effectiveness will multiply afterward. And with fewer numbers, the commanders' burden will lighten."

Guang Yao nodded in understanding.

"It's the same with the zombies. Talking Lady no longer wants a horde of followers—just a few high-quality bodyguards. After this battle, she'll release most of them. What a waste of magic crystals! Better to use them up here and let us collect the spoils. As for the rest, even Brain Child can't control that many. It's like..."

She paused, organizing her thoughts.

"Psychic lifeforms are strange. Once they reach a high level, like Talking Lady and Brain Child, their abilities lean toward 'precision' rather than 'quantity.' Numbers become a burden." RaNÖBES

Her explanation wasn't perfectly clear, but Guang Yao got the gist.

The influencer suddenly grinned. "Oh, and those damn rats are here too. Zhongming said they can establish a colony here afterward. The second-generation Rat King was thrilled."

"Spreading your legacy is a man's dream, huh? Even rats care about that?"

Guang Yao decided to head to the front lines. Talking to the influencer required a big imagination, and he wasn't quite up to the task.

The Holy City was engulfed in war.

Only Cloud Peak's ranged attack units had entered the city, protected by the genetic warriors. They only intervened against tough targets—either directing Exquisite Floating Balls for precision strikes or sniping from afar.

The rest remained on the walls, having barricaded the breached gates with various weapons.

Inside the Holy City, it was now a brutal melee between humans and mutated lifeforms.

The slave armies, intended as reinforcements, arrived too late—the gates had already fallen. Instead, their clustered formations made them prime targets for zombies and genetic warriors.

Ye Zhongming, observing the battlefield through various means, felt a pang of pity for these disabled soldiers now locked in chaotic combat with his forces.

They were all crippled.

Limb disabilities affected combat effectiveness, so the Holy City had drugged them with intelligence-damaging potions, turning them into mindless drones who only followed orders.

To ensure control, they had also poisoned their eyes, robbing them of night vision.

And when they needed to fight, they were injected with performance-enhancing drugs—which, given the massive doses, inevitably caused permanent physical damage.

The slave armies would not live long.

Under their commanders' orders, they attempted to assault the walls, only to find Cloud Peak holding an absolute advantage. The defenders rained death from above, inflicting heavy losses—not just in the east, but on all fronts.

Soon, the retreat order came. The slave armies pulled back, and Cloud Peak did not pursue.

"Broadcast a message to the entire city. Tell them to surrender."

An hour after the gates fell, Ye Zhongming issued the command to all his forces.

Soon, the call for surrender spread through the Holy City.

Ten minutes later, reports began trickling in—people were actually surrendering.