

Beast T 531

Chapter 531: The First Surprise of the New Year!

For Su Ping, this was the first New Year's Eve he had spent alone. Moreover, celebrating it with all his Pet Beasts made it an occasion of truly extraordinary significance.

For many others, the dawn of this New Year was likewise extraordinary.

Take Dong Muyun, for example. Like her, quite a few others were not observing the vigil with their families at this moment. Instead, they were being scolded by their relatives as they hunched in front of their computers.

Of course, aside from those being scolded, many other family members were also gathered with them before these computers, awaiting the countdown.

The early hours, spanning from New Year's Eve to New Year's Day, marked a special time for this group.

This was because the high-end products from the Pingyun Group were officially launching today!

It was a revolutionary product.

Without a doubt, anyone who could afford such an item was no ordinary individual.

However, even these extraordinary individuals had to queue honestly. At most, they could only urge their subordinates to join them in line.

Beyond that, attempting to use their usual backdoor connections was utterly useless.

This group included some prominent figures.

However, regardless of how important these figures were, Dong Muyun offered no special treatment this time.

Of course, this was limited to those below the Spirit Saint Level.

However, even those who had reached the Spirit Saint Level paid little attention to the launch of the Heart of Dreams.

After all, at that Realm, they had far too many matters to attend to daily.

Some might have been curious about the Heart of Dreams, but without it being tested by others, relying solely on advertisements and that young woman's live stream still lacked credibility.

So, after unsuccessfully trying to appeal to Dong MUYUN, these people had no choice but to quietly join the queue and rush to make their purchases.

They couldn't help it; they, too, had wanted to resort to some extreme measures.

However, after learning about the Pingyun Group's background, that thought vanished into thin air.

Dong MUYUN's background hardly needed elaboration; she hailed from the Mirror Saint Family, a lineage continuing since the late Liang Dynasty.

Although it had declined somewhat in recent times, the profound heritage of such a noble Family was not something ordinary people could lightly challenge. In such circumstances, these Families were naturally in a different league than ordinary people.

However, apart from Dong MUYUN, the most crucial factor was that hidden name.

Su Ping, this year's champion of the Breeder competition.

He was also the one backed by both Sang Sheng and Ghost Saint. While most people were unaware of this, those with a keener ear for information knew it clearly.

Thus, those who had initially harbored schemes instantly became compliant.

Even several individuals who had considered causing trouble for Yin Yin, the young live streamer with little backing, abandoned the idea.

At this moment, Dong Muyun had not returned to the Dong Family's old mansion like Dong Muxuan. Instead, she sat in her office in the Pingyun Group's skyscraper, extremely nervous.

"Chairman, it's about to start!"

Assistant Luo, beside her, also clenched his fists nervously, eagerly watching the countdown on the Pingyun Group's official website with Dong Muyun.

Although they were selling a mere twenty-eight Heart of Dreams helmets, it was important to remember that the price of each Heart of Dreams was extremely high.

A selling price of one hundred and twenty million was not something an ordinary person could afford.

"Well, Xiao Luo, how long do you think it will take to sell out these twenty-eight Hearts of Dreams?"

Assistant Luo naturally understood that his chairman was also a bit nervous.

Otherwise, with the chairman's personality, she certainly wouldn't have asked such a question.

So, to boost his chairman's confidence, Assistant Luo thought for a moment and said, with some exaggeration, "It's the New Year's vigil right now, so I expect many customers are still awake. I estimate they'll sell out in half an hour at most! After all, the previous response to the Heart of Dreams was excellent, and Yin Yin's live stream was also very effective. I observed in the live stream that there are a few big spenders; I'm sure they're definite buyers for the Heart of Dreams!"

Dong Muyun nodded. Half an hour... After all, thirty failed Mechanical Cores represented a substantial sum. The accumulation of billions in costs, if these items remained unsold, would indeed be a significant pressure for Pingyun.

Time slowly passed. Finally, the numbers on the electronic clock on the wall hit zero.

Dong Muyun exhaled.

Then, on the Pingyun Group's backend system, Dong Muyun gently clicked refresh.

Dong Muyun could guarantee with her strength as a Monarch Level Beastmaster that she truly hadn't delayed much.

The interval between midnight striking and the countdown numbers reaching zero definitely hadn't exceeded five seconds.

Yet, in that mere five-second span, the remaining presale count displayed on the backend system, visible to Dong Muyun and Assistant Luo, was a crystal-clear 0!

Zero?!

They both blinked. Sold out in less than five seconds?

How could that be possible?

Yet, that was indeed the reality.

Dong Muyun immediately logged into Yin Yin's live stream.

Yin Yin was still broadcasting. Evidently, her live stream room had become the main hub for everyone interested in the Heart of Dreams!

"Fisher King: I got one! {Image}{Image}"

"Dragon City Chen: Hahaha, I got one too, and I grabbed two!"

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"Haonan: Damn, I'm jealous! Brother Chen, is that other one available? I'll add twenty million more!"

"Erya: I'll add fifty million, Brother Chen~"

"Ah Fu Dog King: So envious of the rich guys upstairs who snagged the big toy."

"..."

Above the barrage of comments, message after message flashed across the screen, each one signifying one thing: the popularity of the Heart of Dreams truly exceeded all expectations. After all, this was clear from the constant flurry of other demands flashing by, as well as the complaints about Pingyun's limited production capacity.

Dong Muyun finally let out the breath he had been holding. At the same time, he quickly instructed his assistant Luo, "Okay, prepare to receive these distinguished guests, get their identity cards ready, and customize the helmets' special features according to their requests."

Meanwhile, Dong Muyun couldn't wait to send Su Ping the good news.

「This New Year's Eve, some people rejoiced while others worried.」

For instance, at this very moment, in the Imperial Capital of the Dragon Nation—also known as Dragon City, the nation's central hub—even at this festive season, one area was still not on holiday and was working overtime through the night. This place was none other than the Qintian Monitor building. The ancient Touch Gold Officers, now the Qintian Monitor's Secret Realm Prospecting Team, were indeed extremely busy at this time.

Huang Tianbing rubbed his eyes, already reddened from fatigue, and sighed helplessly as he looked over the never-ending files on new Secret Realm situations. What the hell is going on? The number of new Secret Realms appearing these last two years is just ridiculous. Plus, there were too many messy situations to deal with.

Sure enough, as soon as this thought crossed his mind, someone knocked on his door.

The previous Deputy Director Lin came in again, his eyes showing an urgent expression. "Boss, there's trouble again with the Tidal Secret Realm at Yanxun Island in the Eastern Sea!"

Huang Tianbing massaged his forehead and temples. "What happened this time?"

"Cracks have appeared in the space vortex's very fabric!"

"What?"

Huang Tianbing furrowed his brow. He had thought it was just a minor issue of leaking energy tidal fluctuations. The appearance of cracks in a space vortex meant the Secret Realm could potentially explode with enough force to impact the real world. Furthermore, after such an explosion, the Secret Realm's manifestation within reality could lead to temporary local spatial disorder. This was a serious matter.

Damn, how did it worsen so quickly?

Huang Tianbing's frown deepened. Deputy Director Lin, after a moment of hesitation, began to speak with some reservation, "It might have something to do with the Tidal Saint's Space Characteristics. His Space Characteristics are extremely powerful, causing the Secret Realm to become relatively unstable as it manifests in the real world. At this rate, if not handled properly, the Tidal Secret Realm might completely collapse and merge with reality in two months..."

Listening to Deputy Director Lin's explanation, Huang Tianbing nodded. "The residents on Yanxun Island in the Eastern Sea have already been evacuated, so there's not much of an immediate issue there. However, it is still part of the Dragon Nation's territory. The merging of the Mysterious Realm Space will

lead to spatial disorder and have a significant impact on future generations. We must address this as soon as possible."

Old Lin gave a wry smile. Everyone knew what needed to be said, but how could it actually be dealt with? Space-type mechanical weapons were all precious, and a Space Oscillator was too valuable to use if it could be avoided. Unfortunately, the location of this Tidal Secret Realm was awkward. It wasn't in a bustling urban area, so it wouldn't cause too much damage to people's property, but it was still troublesome. Using a Space Oscillator or requesting a certain powerful individual to intervene didn't seem worth it, but leaving it would be as annoying as a persistent fly.

Clearly, Huang Tianbing paid no heed to Old Lin's resignation. He simply waved his hand. "I already have a plan. You go back and keep monitoring it. You've worked hard this time, and after this is sorted out, I'll give you a New Year's holiday."

Deputy Director Lin had stopped hoping. After all, the boss had been saying this since the second half of the year, but it had yet to be realized.

After Old Lin had left, Huang Tianbing tossed the files aside and started working on his computer. He reopened the backend, but it had been a long time since Young Master Su had replied to him. He understood, of course. After all, Young Master Su was participating in the Breeder Association's competition. For him, compared to such a significant event, dealing with a Secret Realm was naturally a trifling matter. Still, I'd been communicating with this young master in the backend before. We could more or less be considered acquaintances, right?

If previously Huang Tianbing had to be cautious around Su Ping because he was associated with the Ghost Saint and had special Skills for Secret Realms, now that he knew the young master had won first place in the Breeder competition, he couldn't afford to be careless at all. One must be cautious when dealing with such an individual. But the situation with the Tidal Secret Realm really had to be dealt with. So, it's time to make personal contact with this Young Master Su!

Exhaling deeply, Huang Tianbing made up his mind, determined. He happened to know Su Ping's phone number, as he had seen it when registering the young master's information. But wouldn't calling him abruptly seem a bit intrusive? Huang Tianbing's meticulous customer service background made him feel this was impolite. Lost in thought, he worked through the night, pondering the matter.

In the end, on the first day of the New Year, Huang Tianbing decided to use his phone to send his New Year's greetings to Breeder Su!

「In the early morning, Su Ping, who had only dozed off for a bit, opened his eyes.」

It was the first day of the New Year. Of course, he hadn't woken up naturally. His phone was ringing, video call notifications from his contact app were chiming, text message tones were sounding—a cacophony of alerts. Why didn't I just turn off my phone before going to sleep?

[Qin Xiaoxue: Don't be lazy this New Year's Day, get up early!]

[Ye Zhou: Happy New Year, Junior Su! When can I come to Heart of Woods to research the Darkflame Ancient Raven with you?]

[Dong Muyun: Our Heart of Dreams is selling like crazy! I think we should increase the production capacity accordingly.]

[Sun Chaoju: It's the first day of the New Year, and I wish everyone in the coming year, their Pet Beast career...]

[Yang He: It's the first day of the New Year, and I wish everyone in the coming year, their Pet Beast career...]

[Wang Wei: It's the first day of the New Year, and I wish everyone in the coming year...]

[Old Zhao: It's the first day of the New Year...]

[...]

Seeing all these identical notifications, dark lines appeared on Su Ping's forehead. Damn it, did these Wolf Pet Breeders from the Jianghai Breeder Association just copy and paste a single template? Can't they put a little sincerity into their New Year's texts?

But soon, Su Ping saw an unfamiliar message:

[Phone number 154*****: Hello, Su Ping, Happy New Year!]

Su Ping raised an eyebrow. Who is this? While my personal phone number isn't exactly top secret, not just anyone should have it, right?

But at that moment, he didn't think much about it because his phone was still buzzing with video calls and telephone rings. Su Ping started checking them one by one. He immediately hung up on Su Anyong's call, not bothering with it. Next was Qin Xiaoxue, calling, unable to wait to give her New Year's greetings. Of course, the others were mostly the same.

Su Ping replied to each call, and finally, as he expected, Liu Fuhai's call came through as well.

Su Ping answered the call. "Old Liu, we're so well acquainted, let's not be so formal, shall we?"

"Hm? What's going on?" Liu Fuhai sounded taken aback for a moment, but he quickly brushed aside such details and began to speak jovially, "Alright, kid! Are you at Heart of Woods now? Master Zhu and I are heading your way. The evolution of the Elemental Papercraft Person is complete!"

"What?!"

Su Ping was about to retort where else he could be on New Year's Day if not at home when he suddenly realized what Liu Fuhai had said.

The further evolution of the Elemental Papercraft Person... is complete?

He had not expected that on the first day after the Spring Festival, Old Liu would bring him such a big surprise!

Chapter 533: The Second Evolution of Paperman!

Clearly, in the days around the Chinese New Year, Su Ping had sent these two off to have a good holiday, telling them to stop obsessing over Pet Beast evolution. However, that didn't quell their tide-like

enthusiasm. Su Ping then recalled how these two insisted on taking the previous five Elemental Papercraft People when they left. Now it seemed that they had been busy with the Breeder Association during this period. After these days had passed, they had indeed made significant progress.

Su Ping didn't bother to wash up. Still in his pajamas and wearing his sleep cap, he rushed to the entrance of the Heart of Myriad Spirits. At the same time, not far down the road, a car quickly stopped in front of him. The two old fellows cheerfully waved from the car, "Open the gate; we're going straight to the lab."

The last incident, when the Undead cultivation basement was blown up, was a justifiable reason for Su Ping to temporarily halt the cultivation of Papermen. However, during this time, while other tasks might have been paused, Su Ping's short-term Undead cultivation room was quickly planned out.

Following the car into the Heart of Woods, Old Liu hurriedly opened the trunk, where several small Papermen were squatting. One thing worth mentioning was that one of them was very distinctly different from the other four.

The evolution still started with the Fire Element. Thus, the Elemental Papercraft Person that completed the evolution also began with the Fire Element. The previous Paperman · Fire exhibited a fiery red color, but overall, there really wasn't much change. But this time, the Papermen were somewhat different. Their paper bodies had gained an ethereal and surreal quality compared to before. Of course, the essence of their bodies was still paper, but the quality had improved further, and the Elementalization was more thorough. This was progress that only evolution could bring! It really succeeded!

Su Ping instinctively stretched out his hand and touched the body of this little thing. A faint warmth transferred to his fingertips; it was no longer the simple touch of paper, but now there was a softness, as though touching the substance of a flame.

Liu Fuhai looked a bit nervous. "I didn't expect the evolution to go this smoothly, either," he said. "But after the evolution, it seems that the Paperman's body underwent some changes. Whether it can still carry the Five Elements, Master Zhu and I can't say for sure."

Su Ping nodded, then surreptitiously used the Eye of Truth to take a closer look at the little thing in front of him.

[Burning Paperman]

[Attribute: Undead, Fire]

[Current Level: Commander Third Rank]

[Racial Potential: Commander Tenth Rank]

[Skills: Paper Body Folding (Proficient), Paper Body Joint · Fire (Proficient), Paper Body Compression (Proficiency), Fireball Technique (Proficiency), Ash Rebirth (Beginner), Heart of Fire (Proficiency), Rapid Burning (Beginner)]

Commanding Rank! Both the race limit and current potential were at Commander, which meant this evolution didn't have a high ceiling. But for a Paperman, such an ordinary enhancement was the best improvement. He well knew that Papermen had much potential to unearth, but he also had to leave some opportunities for other Breeders, didn't he? For him, the main research goal of the Papermen was to see whether the Five Elements generation and restriction could be perfectly developed. Now, there had been another great advancement.

Su Ping looked at Liu Fuhai. "Old Liu, how was this Paperman's evolution carried out?"

"Actually, it was quite simple," Old Liu explained. "The attribute joint skill was promoted up a level, continuing to enhance with the corresponding Fire-type Resources. However, the difference this time is that, unlike before, this evolution didn't require jointing.

"But I followed your advice and carried out some Elemental Strengthening on the Paperman's paper body. So now I'm not sure if it can still carry the Five Elements generation and restriction."

Su Ping nodded. The first evolution of a Paperman could only be accomplished after mastering Paper Body Joint and being in a jointed state. This second evolution, however, seemed to eliminate that requirement.

But... Su Ping looked at the thing strangely and clicked his teeth. Although its Level had been raised to the Commander Level, the peak for common Pet Beasts, why did it still look so silly? Even after jointing, was the Paperman's soul unable to fully evolve? Su Ping found it baffling.

But at that moment, he nodded decisively. "If that's the case, let's carry out the evolution of these other few as well, and then start the fourth Five Elements generation and restriction experiment!"

"Great!" Old Liu and Master Zhu responded in unison.

As Old Liu and Master Zhu responded in unison, the Myriad Spirit Beast Atlas slowly unfolded. Indeed, in the Paperman Catalog within it, a new entry appeared:

[Paperman discovered and recorded. Paperman → Elemental Papercraft Person → Advanced Level Elemental Papercraft Person · Burning Paperman evolutionary branch form, 1,000 points added to the Paperman Catalog!]

It wasn't much, and Su Ping didn't seem to be in a hurry for the Paperman Catalog to evolve. But it's undeniable that these 1,000 points in the Paperman Catalog equated to 100 Universal Experience Points. One hundred Universal Experience Points meant I am one step closer to perfecting my External Incarnation. Thus, any slight improvement is tremendously meaningful at the moment.

However, since I didn't personally complete the cultivation of this Paperman, and even observers could gain experience, does it mean that any evolution meeting the intimacy requirement will do?

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Thinking of this, Su Ping did indeed glance at the Paperman's Experience Points. The sight startled him slightly.

[Catalog: Paperman]

[...]

[Current Catalog Level: 3 (7,317/20,000)]

Yes, this level was somewhat beyond his expectations. But it made sense. Before he went to the Magic Capital, the Paperman Catalog had already advanced to Level 3, unlocking the Mind's Eye ability. Although, that ability was pretty useless for the Paperman.

After returning from the Magic Capital, there was the Heart of Elements and various other Cultivations. He was also inseparable from it every day, continuously performing Cultivation and enhancements; this process repeated daily. Now, after the Second Stage Evolution, he had gained a lot of Experience Points; this number wasn't unexpected.

At this thought, Su Ping exhaled deeply. It seemed that if he wished, he could now completely transfer all the Experience Points from the Forest Wolf and the Paperman, and then perfect his External Incarnation. Couldn't he? But Su Ping soon suppressed this thought. There was no rush for now. Xiao Qing hadn't broken through to Commander Level yet. Even if he perfected the External Incarnation, Cultivation might not be possible. Besides, such a conversion was still too much of a loss. Su Ping wanted to see if he could successfully perfect the Super-Rank Skill involving the generation and restriction among the Five Elements, and then recover significantly. From his previous experience with the Heart of the Sun and the Heart of Elements, cultivating Super-Rank Skills was indeed one of the best shortcuts to acquiring Universal Experience Points.

But then again, just by evolving the Fire Paperman into a Burning Paperman, he had gained a thousand points of Catalog Experience. Would the evolutions of the other Papermen associated with the remaining Five Elements and other Elements also yield such results?

With this thought in mind, Su Ping and Liu Zhu, on the first day of the New Year, didn't even consider making New Year visits. They went straight into the room Su Ping had cleared out to serve as the brand-new Cultivation laboratory for Undead Papermen.

Clearly, Su Ping's imagination was wonderfully optimistic. But reality was cruel.

Following the same procedure, the five Papermen, which weren't very different to begin with, soon began their Cultivation and evolution. Just one day and night later, the remaining four Papermen naturally grew, broke through, and completed their evolution. However, apart from the 1,000 points of Catalog Experience from the first Burning Paperman, the other four—Earth, Water, Gold, and Wood—only yielded a total of 800 Experience Points.

Of course, these were undoubtedly just minor details. What was truly important was the experiment with the generation and restriction among the Five Elements! Moreover, this was an experiment conducted after their evolution. Whether the corresponding Burning Paperman, Moist Paperman, Golden Armor Paperman, Rock Paperman, and Green Wood Paperman could continue to sustain the cycle of the Five Elements was still a question.

With this in mind, he summoned Qian Yi, who was in charge of basic assembly. The three of them watched with a mix of nervousness and anticipation.

...

「Meanwhile.」

In the eastern suburbs of Linzhou City. This was where Guan Qianshan had bought his new house. It wasn't one of the expensive tube buildings in the city center. Lao Guan had purchased it when land prices in the eastern suburbs were low, partly for convenience and partly because Su Ping had advised him to. It was a detached estate, similar to a large rural farmhouse. It had to be said, the purchase of this mansion alone had allowed Guan Qianshan's assets, accumulated over twenty years, to multiply several times in just the past few months! The value of this property had skyrocketed during the New Year period as Linzhou's development direction was confirmed.

Guan Qianshan's and Guan Lili's status at the Heart of Myriad Spirits meant that Guan Qianshan, who had never been able to hold his head high in front of his relatives—especially his wife's family—could finally stand tall. Although Guan Qianshan had never openly boasted about it, all his relatives knew that the Guan family's daughter could now be addressed as Guan Cultivator. She just hadn't taken the certification exam yet.

「On the second day of the New Year.」

Originally, Lao Guan should have taken his daughter and wife to visit his wife's parents. But before dawn, his father-in-law, along with some of his wife's younger brothers and other relatives, took the initiative to visit them instead. The manifestation of social status was always like this, regardless of the era.

Lao Guan then observed the scene. His elder brother-in-law's daughter—now a student at the Eastern Advanced Tamer Academy—was chatting affectionately with Lili, the younger cousin she once disdained. Meanwhile, his younger brother-in-law's son, who had graduated alongside Lili but had paid a high price for a Commander Level beast, was also respectfully calling Lili "older cousin." As for their parents—Lao Guan's brothers-in-law who had previously looked down on him—they were now even more obsequiously flattering.

It would be impossible for Lao Guan not to feel a surge of satisfaction, yet also some annoyance.

However, Lao Guan also understood that, ultimately, they were only there because they wanted something. But he had to be clear about his own position, didn't he? Su Ping valued him, and his friendship with Su Anyong was based on this. If he didn't recognize his own standing, trouble could easily arise. Getting his daughter into the Heart of Myriad Spirits had already cost Lao Guan a great deal of face. At this point, he naturally knew what he could agree to and what he should deflect.

So, as Lao Guan looked at these relatives from his wife's side of the family, who clearly had ulterior motives for their visit, his initial satisfaction gave way to a feeling of unease. However, what comforted Lao Guan was that his wife was sensible. When they had been less fortunate, his wife had also experienced her share of cold shoulders. Now, her husband and daughter were what mattered most.

So, while they were cooking, the two of them whispered in the kitchen.

"Dear," his wife began, "find an excuse to go out later. If they have any requests, I'll ask them directly and make things clear. That way, my older brother and younger brother won't be able to say you've forgotten your 'poor relatives' now that you're successful."

Lao Guan nodded. "Alright. I'm a bit worried about Xiao Ping being alone at the base for the New Year. Old Su is really something else... what could be more important than coming home for a family reunion! The kid probably isn't feeling too great. I'll go check on him."

"Good! Then you should go."

After their discussion, Lao Guan and his wife put on a bit of a show for the relatives. Then, Lao Guan finally left the house, sighing with relief. Driving the new car he had just gotten for the New Year, Lao Guan leisurely arrived at the familiar gate of the Heart of Myriad Spirits. But as soon as he stepped out of the car, Lao Guan was slightly stunned. His gaze fell upon the sides of the gate. Bright red couplets

were written on Vermilion Sandpaper. Anything written on this type of paper wouldn't fade easily, even when exposed to wind and rain.

However, that clearly wasn't the main point. The real issue was, what on earth was written on these couplets? Twisted and curving, they looked nothing like human handwriting! What on earth was that little ancestor up to, messing around like this? Still, it might be the little ancestor's precious calligraphy. Although Lao Guan's temples throbbed as he looked at it, he didn't say anything. He took out his spare key and opened the gate.

Inside the base, it was very quiet. After all, Su Ping had said the official opening would be after the tenth day of the New Year. It was only the second day now, so it was normal for no one to be around. But where was that brat?

As he stepped into the Heart of Woods, Old Sha, who was basking in the sun, glanced at him briefly before ignoring him. Lao Guan, however, quickly noticed a rare sight: a car parked inside the Heart of Woods. He recognized the car. Wasn't it the vehicle of the illustrious president of the Breeder Association? Lao Guan's eyelids twitched. He suddenly had a bad premonition. Those two, together with the little ancestor, always seemed to conjure up some rather unpleasant mental images, didn't they?

He quickened his pace. However, he had only covered a few hundred meters and had just reached Su Ping's rest area and the guest rooms within the Heart of Woods when, suddenly, as if confirming his suspicions, a familiar, immense roar erupted not far in front of him!

BOOM!

The sound was disturbingly familiar, bringing with it a strong sense of *déjà vu*. The earth-yellow Yellow Dragon indeed appeared as expected. Its earthy-yellow energy shell once again protected several people and prevented the energy from leaking out. Meanwhile, the guest room that the little ancestor had temporarily requisitioned as an Undead Cultivation laboratory collapsed before his eyes once again. This time, however, the difference was that some scales on the Yellow Dragon's body had been blasted black.

Lao Guan felt a mixture of despair and bewilderment. Is this kid the reincarnation of a Husky? But Huskies just demolish houses; I've never heard of one constantly throwing bombs inside the house!

Chapter 535: Huge Improvement! The Battle Method of the Five Elements Paper Map?

This was an unprecedented improvement! Such an improvement was unforeseen by Su Ping, Master Zhu Hong, and Liu Fuhai. Therefore, Su Ping would willingly accept it even if several more temporary laboratory guest rooms were blown up.

Previously, after the Papermen had cultivated their corresponding Heart of Elements, they tested the effects of the Five Elements Paper Diagram's generation and negation cycle for the last time. The individual Paperman in that experiment was at the Elite Seventh Rank, and the assembled Five Elements Paper Diagram had an initial energy value of 348. Ultimately, the Five Elements generation and negation cycle lasted for less than three Grand Circulations. However, with only two and a half Grand Circulations, the final energy value skyrocketed to 5,000 points. This already represented energy conversion at the Monarch Level.

This time, the Paperman that formed the Five Elements Paper Diagram was at the Commander Third Rank. Starting with the Fire Element, and bolstered by the Heart of Elements, its initial energy value reached an astonishing 2,258 points!

Evolution is the most direct way for any Pet Beast to visibly enhance its strength. Of course, the main reasons for this substantial increase weren't just that. Firstly, the increase in Level was a given. Secondly, after the Heart of Elements skills of these five Papermen reached the Proficient Level, their skill levels also improved. Therefore, once assembled, the Five Elements Paper Diagram, now at Commander Seventh Rank, could unleash a near-Peak Commander energy value from the outset.

However, for a Five Elements Paper Diagram possessing a Super-Rank Elemental Heart, this initial value wasn't considered unreasonably high.

Then came the operation of the Five Elements generation and negation cycle. This time, it operated for four and a half Grand Circulations! That's right, four and a half!

Not only had Old Liu successfully identified a new evolutionary form for the Paperman, but this evolution also further enhanced the durability of its paper body and its elemental compatibility. Another key factor was the upgraded skill level of the Heart of Elements. Consequently, for the first time, an energy fluctuation occurred that caused even Master Zhu Hong and the usually unfazed Da Huang to show a slight change in expression.

After one Grand Circulation, the energy value surged from 2,258 to 4,515. Compared to the previous instance, the rate of increase per cycle was somewhat reduced, now only a little more than double. However, this single cycle's output already matched the previous experiment's maximum effort.

After the second Grand Circulation, the energy value increased from 4,515 to 9,582. This value, needless to say, often appeared during the Breeder Competition.

As they watched, the third Grand Circulation completed, and the energy rose from 9,582 to 20,071! Twenty thousand! Typically, only Advanced Level Monarchs could produce energy fluctuations of this magnitude.

However, this was not the end!

Although the increase during the fourth Grand Circulation further diminished, the final value achieved was enough to unsettle anyone: 38,957! This number was outrageous! It represented Monarch Peak energy fluctuations; even some Emperor Pet Beasts not proficient in energy bursts might only reach this level.

Back in the Breeder Competition, Old Sha's fully unleashed Solar Cannon had an energy value more than four thousand lower than this! Keep in mind that Old Sha was a First Rank Monarch, while these assembled Paperman evolutionary bodies were merely Commander Third Rank. Even when combined into the Five Elements Paper Diagram, they were only Commander Seventh Rank!

Of course, the circulation of Five Elements energy takes time. If Old Sha had charged power for that long or used a charged Solar Cannon, its might would naturally not have been so limited. Similarly, the Five Elements Paper Diagram's operation hadn't stopped.

Ultimately, the energy value from this generation and negation cycle locked in at 63,957. This was an energy value manifestation of the Emperor Level.

What did this represent? It was undeniably a Super-Rank Skill Module! Even among Super-Rank Skills, it was likely an extremely powerful and terrifying one, fully capable of ranking among Hall of Fame level Super-Rank Skills!

Admittedly, completing so many Five Elements cycles takes considerable time, and actual combat is far more complex. Pet Beast battles aren't decided solely by the magnitude of energy fluctuations; otherwise, there would be no need for combat—comparisons of energy levels and Realm would suffice. Nevertheless, such an improvement was absolutely worthwhile!

And yet, it was still one step short of completing the full five Grand Circulations! That's right; it was described as four and a half, but in reality, it was just one step shy of five Grand Circulations.

According to Master Zhu Hong's speculation, a Super-Rank Skill requires about five cycles of Five Elements conversion to form. Of course, this was just speculation; Su Ping didn't know if other aspects needed to be supplemented. After all, like the previous Heart of the Sun, besides the three skills of the sun formula, it also required the Blinding Technique—a Special Skill that initially utilized Light Power—to complete its fusion into a Super-Rank Skill.

Nevertheless, they were one step closer to this unimaginable Super-Rank Skill! Perhaps only a single step away! This improvement could be achieved either by further advancing the Paperman avatar's Heart of Elements rank or, more simply, by continuing to pour resources into boosting the strength of the already evolved Paperman.

The ultimate result, of course, was Da Huang's stunned expression, as if it had seen a ghost. An explosion like that, created by this seemingly insignificant human? For the first time, Da Huang perceived Su Ping differently. That is, before the damned thing exploded and blackened its rugged, wildly beautiful Dragon Scales.

Su Ping was unaware of Da Huang's thoughts, but he knew he could finally start considering the practical challenges concerning the Paperman. For example, the most immediate issue was its combat application. If battles were solely about energy fluctuations, Pet Beasts wouldn't be necessary; Mechanical Weapons would suffice. But in reality, Mechanical Weapons were far inferior to Pet Beasts of the same rank. Therefore, how to effectively utilize this energy in combat was paramount.

Aside from monitoring Old Liu's and Master Zhu's cultivation efforts, this was the issue Su Ping had been contemplating over the past few days since the New Year.

However, this Five Elements Paper Diagram, compared to the Paper Swords assembled from three Papermen, possessed a skill that the Paper Swords lacked. It was precisely this skill that allowed for unusual variations in the Five Elements Paper Diagram's combat applications. The skill was none other than Paper Body Folding!

Yes, the basic Racial Skill possessed by an ordinary Paperman. This allowed it to freely change its own form and folding pattern. As long as there were no issues with the energy flow in the joined parts of the paper diagram, everything would be fine. This was to be expected; the Five Elements Paper Diagram wasn't like the Paper Swords. It was merely a pentagonal sheet formed by five Papermen flattening themselves and interlocking. Therefore, theoretically, the Papermen composing the Five Elements Paper Diagram could fold into various shapes and forms to fight, just like ordinary Papermen.

「For instance, right now.」

Su Ping found himself in total darkness. Five or six days had passed since the Spring Festival. The entire Dragon Nation was slowly recovering from the holiday visits; although work had not yet resumed, the festive atmosphere had begun to wane. The situation at the Heart of Myriad Spirits remained unchanged.

However, Su Ping, now clad in a special paper-like life jacket, was surrounded by serene darkness, accompanied by the sound of bubbles. Yes, he was underwater! Below the Lingxi River. Or rather, beneath the Heart of Water.

A faint blue ripple emanated from Su Ping's life jacket. Although this Paperman was not his Contracted Beast, their intimacy level was sufficient for basic control. Currently, with the Five Elements Paper Diagram transformed into a life jacket and all its Five Elements Attributes converted to the Water Attribute, Su Ping could not only breathe underwater but also felt no pressure or suffocation. He could move freely, even more easily than on land. Moreover, with this Five Elements Paper Diagram life jacket, no one dared to provoke him.

Now, Su Ping once again passed through the water elemental barrier above the Heart of Water and closely approached the nest of the Rainbow Coral Worm. The multicolored rainbow light illuminated the underwater depths of the Heart of Water. Outside the barrier, schools of Pet Beast Fish circled, unable to breach it. After all, the barrier was made of an Advanced Level material worth one hundred million per square meter; it was exceedingly difficult for aquatic Pet Beasts, at Commander Level at most, to enter.

From the outside, the colossal coral reef gave no indication that it housed such a rare and precious Pet Beast. But Su Ping was already quite familiar with it.

In the days since acquiring the Underwater Breathing Talent, Su Ping had researched the Rainbow Coral Worm. The creature was so rare that he likely wouldn't have found any information if not for his standing in the Breeder Association. Thankfully, he learned some key details, including its preferred and beneficial food: a bait made from an Ordinary Level resource called Fluorescent Grass, mixed with other ingredients. This was the Rainbow Coral Worm's favorite food.

With practiced motions, Su Ping placed the bait nearby. As expected, an opening soon appeared on the Rainbow Coral reef, and a suction force pulled the bait inside.

Smiling, Su Ping gently touched the coral reef underwater, then glanced at the Sea Core Spirit Turtle happily playing within the water elemental barrier. He then used Psychic Communication: "Little one, our underwater playtime is over for today. Time to go!"

The small turtle swam swiftly to Su Ping's side. Propelled by a water jet from the Five Elements Paper Diagram life jacket, man and turtle shot upwards from tens of meters underwater, emerging amidst a great splash onto the shore of the Heart of Water.

After placing the small turtle near the Heart of Water, Su Ping shook himself off. Shortly after, the Five Elements Paper Diagram life jacket shifted to its Fire Element state, completely drying him.

So convenient! The composite body formed by the Five Elements Paper Diagram, coupled with its ability to fold at will, was incredibly handy! Yet, Su Ping regrettably hadn't found a suitable opportunity for this versatile Pet Beast's inaugural battle. The white-eyed fish beneath the Heart of Water were an option, but since they were practically his own assets, it felt wasteful.

Just as Su Ping was feeling somewhat disappointed, even considering arranging a sparring session with professional trainers or Old Liu's group, Huang Tianbing, at the Qintian Monitor in the Imperial Capital, was growing restless. He had waited five days for Su Ping's reply without success. Suddenly, he felt that some matters might be more reliably addressed with a phone call.

Chapter 536: Huang Tianbing: I'm Your Pen Pal!

In the Heart of Woods' instrument laboratory.

"No, this Darkflame Ancient Raven, it doesn't show any difference at all!?" Ye Zhou squatted in front of an analysis instrument, looking at the extracted DNA of the Darkflame Ancient Raven. He furrowed his brow, repeating words he had uttered countless times.

Su Ping glanced at him, toying with his cell phone. "What difference do you expect? For it to transform into another species outright? Have other Pet Beast species changed from birds directly into plants or Elemental Types? Ultimately, even if it's a Pet Beast that has vanished into the mists of history, degenerated, or even gone extinct, it's still fundamentally a Pet Beast."

Ye Zhou felt somewhat vexed, but Su Ping couldn't be bothered with him anymore. Ever since the third day of the Lunar New Year, this fellow had returned from the Dong Family to the Heart of Woods, preparing to study the Darkflame Ancient Raven carcass from Su Ping's Beast Taming Space. He had been researching it ever since.

The remains of the other creatures had been buried by Su Ping right in front of Little Crow Ya Ya, laying them to rest peacefully. Only this Darkflame Ancient Raven, after gaining Ya Ya's consent, served as an experimental subject for his and Ye Zhou's research on extinct Pet Beasts.

"The thing is, there should be a reason, right? Why would the Darkflame Ancient Raven degenerate into a Flame-Eating Crow? And why would this particular Darkflame Ancient Raven show signs of atavism under these circumstances? Aren't these all questions needing answers?"

"Exactly. Isn't that what I told you? So, go find those reasons," Su Ping said with a smile.

Ye Zhou rolled his eyes at this guy and actually began to think deeply. "Say, do you think it's possible that the number of Darkflame Ancient Ravens was too small, leading to inbreeding, and that's the cause?"

This time, it was Su Ping's turn to roll his eyes at this fellow. How could he even suggest such a thing?

"I don't know. I don't have the time or energy to research that right now. Providing you with some directions should be enough." Although he was indeed very interested in the Flame-Eating Crow's ancient progenitor, the Three-legged Golden Crow, priorities were priorities, weren't they?

However, he did have some speculations and ideas. After a pause, he continued, "You could research in the direction of Energy. In my view, the extinction of ancient Pet Beasts was largely due to subtle changes in the Energy on Blue Star, which could no longer sustain the ancient species, thus causing their degeneration!"

At these words, Ye Zhou's eyes brightened. "That makes sense."

Having made his point, Su Ping shook his head, no longer bothering with this fellow who had rediscovered his purpose and direction. Right now, his most important task was something else: to quickly obtain Water Element Space Characteristics resources to perfect his Beast Taming Space and rapidly advance to the Commander Level. This Elite Level, he couldn't stand it for another day.

However, Su Ping had searched the Breeder Association, Leng Ye's connections, and even the Legion, but found no sign of such resources. This left Su Ping quite frustrated. He had even considered using Wood Element Space Characteristics resources to see if they could neutralize the Fire-type Resources.

However, just as Su Ping was propping his chin, watching Ye Zhou investigate the Energy composition of the Darkflame Ancient Raven, the cell phone he was toying with suddenly rang.

He glanced at it—a strange yet familiar number. Hadn't it sent him a New Year's greeting message during the festival? He frowned slightly but ultimately answered the call. Knowing his number meant the caller was no ordinary person.

"Hello."

"Hello, is this Breeder Su Ping?"

In the Imperial Capital, hearing the voice on the phone, Huang Tianbing instantly felt his spirits lift.

"Hello, may I ask who is speaking?" Su Ping asked politely.

"Respected Breeder Su Ping, it's me! We've talked for a long time! Haha, I'm your pen pal~" Huang Tianbing said with a laugh. He believed that with his customer-service-like tone, the other party would surely remember him.

However, Su Ping looked at the phone dubiously and scratched his head.

It's you? Who are you? We've talked for a long time?

There were only a handful of people in the world with whom he could have had long conversations—let alone someone he didn't recognize afterward.

So, although the situation was abstract, Su Ping's first thought was a distinct possibility:

A phone scam? Do those things exist on Blue Star too?

Instantly, Su Ping's gaze turned 'sharp.'

Hearing no response from the other end, Huang Tianbing cleared his throat lightly and then prompted, "You've forgotten? You asked me whether the chicken or the egg came first! We used to chat every day back then."

"???"

A flicker of confusion crossed Su Ping's eyes.

Someone who could say something so mentally questionable didn't seem like a phone scammer. After all, those scam operations probably wouldn't let someone with intellectual disabilities participate in fraud, right? But since the person could state his own background, it didn't seem like a wrong number either.

Su Ping blinked. "Have you, perhaps, misunderstood something?"

Hearing the voice on the other end, Huang Tianbing also blinked.

How could there be a misunderstanding? With anyone else, perhaps, but not with this little ancestor, surely? After all, around the time of the Breeder Competition, he had painstakingly engaged in over five Xiaoshi of intense daily chats with this little ancestor. He, the Chief Supervisor of the Qintian Monitor, had practically become a dedicated chat companion. And now this guy was denying it?

Chapter 537: Huang Tianbing: I'm Your Pen Pal!_2

At this moment, Huang Tianbing was also dumbfounded.

But when they were online, this young master said they were friends!

So, Huang Tianbing said directly, "I'm the person you chatted with in the Qintian Monitor's backend system back then."

"Huh?" Su Ping blinked. "When did I..."

Wait a second!

Smacking his forehead, Su Ping suddenly remembered something.

So, in response to the somewhat aggrieved voice of the man opposite him, Su Ping also cleared his throat. "AHEM. So it was you."

Only then did Huang Tianbing breathe a sigh of relief. If Su Ping had continued to deny it, Huang Tianbing would have had reason to suspect that this kid might have taken Su Ping's Qintian Monitor identity to do something else entirely.

"HEHEHE, I had been thinking of calling you to wish you a Happy New Year, but I was hesitant as it might have been abrupt. Now I've finally truly met you, Breeder Su. Allow me to introduce myself. I am Huang Tianbing, Chief Supervisor of the Qintian Monitor."

Huh?

Su Ping was startled again.

Chief Supervisor!? Wasn't he customer service?

He pursed his lips, then while responding, he quickly logged into the Qintian Monitor's backend to check the message history.

A quick glance was all it took. After scrolling through tens of thousands of messages, he finally stopped at those exchanged after his return from Magic Capital.

It made sense, though. Feifei had already begun research on the Heart of Dreams back then.

Su Ping pursed his lips, listening to the words of praise from Huang Tianbing on the phone, but he ultimately didn't have the heart to reveal this cruel fact to Lord Jianzheng, a man he hadn't met in person but felt incredibly close to.

If Director Huang knew that the person he had been chatting with for over half a month, exchanging tens of thousands of messages, wasn't actually Su Ping, but a recently awakened Mechanical Core whose intelligence differed from typical artificial intelligence... I wonder if Director Huang's composure would shatter.

Therefore, Su Ping cleared his throat again and pretended to be very familiar and affectionate. "So that's how it is! HAHAHA! I thought you were just customer service for the Qintian Monitor. No wonder the Qintian Monitor's influence in Dragon Nation has soared! With a hands-on helmsman like Director Huang, it's only natural you'd receive such attention!"

"HAHAHA! Breeder Su, you're too polite. There's no need for such formality between us. Besides, the Qintian Monitor isn't quite as you described. I don't even get a holiday for the New Year, and I'm swamped with thorny issues every day!"

Huang Tianbing's hearty laughter came through, leaving Su Ping baffled.

Swamped? It doesn't look like it! You, who had the time to chat with an AI for over half a month, exchanging tens of thousands of messages, call that swamped?

But Su Ping couldn't be bothered to think too much about it, nor would he bluntly criticize. Still, nominally speaking, wasn't this man his superior?

He said with a smile and politeness, "As a Special Inspector of Secret Realms for the Qintian Monitor, and thus a member, if you need anything, Director Huang, you can also turn to me."

However, these words seemed to strike right at Huang Tianbing's heart, and he quickly took the opportunity. "With you saying that, Su Ping, I can rest easy. There's actually a difficult matter that ordinary people can't handle. Only you could accomplish it for the Qintian Monitor."

Su Ping's eyelid twitched. He strongly suspected the Chief Supervisor of the Qintian Monitor had been waiting for him to say just that.

However, Su Ping wasn't the kind of person who was different to someone's face than behind their back; he replied directly, "Please, just tell me. If I am able to help, I certainly won't refuse."

Others might not know, but Su Ping was aware that he had indeed gained many benefits from the Qintian Monitor.

Even the fact that he had reached Elite Peak so quickly, less than a year since his awakening, was largely due to having absorbed numerous decommissioned Secret Realms using his Space Absorption ability.

Huang Tianbing on the phone breathed a sigh of relief and finally asked a question that he hadn't dared to ask while chatting via the support backend: "Su Ping, do you possess an Ability or Pet Beast that can destroy Secret Realms?"

This question didn't surprise Su Ping much.

Originally, Su Ping naturally wouldn't casually reveal his Space Absorption ability. He didn't know if others were aware that such a Space Characteristic even existed.

However, this ability was quite unique. Naturally, the fewer people who knew about it, the better.

But now, having reached his current status and connections, it didn't seem like a big deal for Su Ping to reveal a bit about it.

And since he was absorbing those dilapidated Secret Realms so openly, it was normal to be noticed.

He nodded. "That's correct."

"If that's the case, could you do the Qintian Monitor a favor and accompany the other Qintian Monitor members into an unstable Secret Realm? Once the 'survey data' from that realm is retrieved, could you conveniently destroy that realm as well?"

That's it? Su Ping had thought it was something more significant. He had been worried about not finding a Secret Realm to absorb.

The last time he absorbed that strange Flame Secret Realm, he had directly obtained an entirely new Space Characteristic, the Fire Cultivation Realm. Although it was barren, the Flame Fruit it produced had given him a taste of the benefits of the Beastmaster Space.

"No problem. Just tell me the specific time and information about that Secret Realm."

This time, Huang Tianbing truly relaxed completely.

Chapter 538: Huang Tianbing: I'm Your Pen Pal!_3

It's truly rare to find a young genius with such a formidable background and significant cultivation achievements who still maintains a low profile and isn't arrogant.

"It's like this: you know the situation with our Qintian Monitor. Collecting data on Secret Realms is one aspect, but after we're done with each Secret Realm, it will continue to linger for some time. It's said that after the 'data' has been taken, a large part of the energy supply is cut off. However, the Secret Realm's disappearance can still take over a year, or as little as a few months. During this period, there are some special cases where the Secret Realm's own energy intensity is extremely high. Moreover, because it has existed for a relatively long time, the space that appears is still very unstable. In such cases, it would be fine if the Secret Realm hadn't been explored. But once it's explored and the Secret Realm data is taken, the space might shatter, leading to spatial disruption that affects the real world! Therefore, some of these types of Secret Realms haven't been developed due to the lack of corresponding measures and certainty. The Tidal Secret Realm on Yanxun Island, about twenty nautical miles from the shore of West Dragon Lake, is one such case."

Huang Tianbing said a lot, and Su Ping nodded along. Having joined the Qintian Monitor and absorbed so many Secret Realms, he had gained a further understanding of them. However, upon hearing the name of this Secret Realm, Su Ping's heart stirred slightly.

The Tidal Secret Realm? A Water Element Secret Realm? Su Ping's eyes shone brighter. He happened to need to absorb Water Element Space Characteristics to mitigate the Fire Element energy imbalance in his Beast Taming Space. Of course, it was uncertain whether absorbing an ordinary Secret Realm could condense Water Element Space Characteristics. That fiery Secret Realm, born from a strange Flame Phoenix amidst the Hundred Birds Facing Phoenix phenomenon, was particularly unusual.

"What type of Secret Realm is this? Is it a Heritage Secret Realm, or..."

"A common type of Secret Realm. But rest assured, you just need to be responsible for entering it with us and then destroying the Secret Realm. There won't be any other dangers, and if anything happens, the people from Qintian Monitor will protect you!"

Su Ping nodded. This indicated that it wasn't a Heritage Secret Realm like Yu Liangqing's. It was just a leftover Beast Taming Space after a Beast Tamer's death, not having been properly arranged. But that also made sense; such an energy-chaotic Secret Realm was unlikely to be a Heritage Secret Realm that a Beast Tamer had meticulously prepared. With that in mind, Su Ping nodded again.

Sensing Su Ping's silence, Huang Tianbing thought Su Ping might not be quite convinced and explained further, "Moreover, this Secret Realm's energy is chaotic. Perhaps because it's relatively ancient, the upper limit of the Energy Realm it can accommodate is only Monarch Level. Those above Monarch Level cannot enter! In short, rest assured!"

Snapping back to reality, Su Ping replied with a slight smile, "Great! Just let me know in advance when to set off!"

Huang Tianbing was overjoyed. A matter weighing on his mind was finally settled. More importantly, with this first cooperation established, there would surely be a second. With Secret Realms appearing more frequently in recent years, and various peculiar ones emerging more often, Su Ping's help would simplify things considerably.

Thinking this, Huang Tianbing collected himself and quickly said, "As for the date, the situation on Yanxun Island is quite severe, so it's best to act as soon as possible. How about three days from now? Furthermore, the Qintian Monitor has always been very generous to its own people! After this is done, there will be a reward of two thousand internal Qintian Monitor points. Additionally, as a special consultant, you can pick one item directly from what this Secret Realm yields. How about that?!"

Upon hearing this, Su Ping's eyes brightened again.

Chapter 539: Trip to the Eastern Sea! The Tidal Secret Realm!

The biting wind brushed against Su Ping's cheeks, carrying a unique salty and fishy scent. This was Su Ping's first time in the east of Jianghai Province, which was also the easternmost location of Linzhou City. It was different from the position of the Legion's space vortex; the Legion's spatial vortex was situated in the northeast of Linzhou, while this place was due east. In fact, it wasn't very far from the Heart of Myriad Spirits in the eastern suburbs of Linzhou—only a little over twenty kilometers.

The soft sand and the relatively neat, though unmaintained, grass and trees suggested that this place had once been inhabited. Indeed, that was the case. West Dragon Lake abutted the Eastern Sea, even bordering it directly. However, due to certain incidents, this area had gradually become deserted. Above the vast expanse of the lake, the early morning light reflected on the rosy clouds, making the sparkling water look extremely beautiful. The lovely beach added to the picturesque scene...

It's just that it's a bit too far from the Heart of Myriad Spirits... Su Ping thought, then reconsidered. Well, actually, it isn't that far...

He smacked his lips.

The woman beside him glanced at the boy. When this little brat was in the Linhai Secret Realm in Magic Capital, he was always smacking his lips like this,

she recalled. Who knows what mischief he's up to now?

Su Ping, however, returned to his senses and looked helplessly at the woman. "Senior Sang, is it really worth you personally accompanying me just to do Qintian Monitor a favor? I've seen Yanxun Island. Beyond the bounds of West Dragon Lake and into the Eastern Sea, it's only twenty to thirty nautical miles."

Indeed, when Qin Erlong, Zhu Hong, and Sang Sheng first heard Su Ping was preparing to go out to sea, their initial response had been a firm no. However, they had relented slightly upon learning it was related to the boy's Realm progression. But this time, Sang Sheng had decided she would also make the journey.

The woman snorted lightly. "Eagle Country across the ocean and Sakura Country on the islands have never ceased their covetous designs on us. It's an unspoken truth that both sides covertly assassinate the other's talented new Beast Tamers. Now that you've appeared in the Cultivation Contest, you're bound to attract attention. Although such incidents have lessened in recent years due to our mutual increase in strength, it's better to be safe than sorry!"

Su Ping was startled. He recalled learning from the Hall Skill introduction about Nie Chuan, a Beast Tamer from Dragon Nation. Nie Chuan was the creator of the Super-Rank Skill Haina Baichuan and had died precisely from such an assassination. At this moment, Su Ping somewhat understood the woman's concern.

"Alright, it's only a day's journey, perhaps even just half a day. I'm idle at home anyway, so accompanying you on this trip is no big deal. Don't overthink it."

Su Ping nodded. Concerning his own safety, he naturally had no complaints.

"I've told them we'll meet directly at Yanxun Island. The Qintian Monitor's people are already waiting there, so we can head straight over."

Sang Sheng nodded; she decided against having Aunt Qin use the Cloud Soarer. Instead, she summoned a lotus platform, not particularly huge, but still several meters long.

"The Cloud Soarer will draw attention once it flies off the continent and over the ocean. Let's take this instead."

The lotus slowly unfolded, and Su Ping stepped onto it, intrigued. However, Sang Sheng clearly had no intention of explaining this artifact to him. Once they were both seated, a glow shimmered from the lotus, and it shot swiftly across the water's surface, leaving a large trail of spray in its wake. Riding a lotus at high speed was undoubtedly a first for him.

But Sang Sheng seemed unconcerned with Su Ping's amazement and began to discuss serious matters, saying, "I have reported to the Holy Dragon about the video and what you and Xiao Xue witnessed."

Huh? Su Ping suddenly snapped back to attention. The image of the peculiar Flame Phoenix still occasionally surfaced in his mind.

However, despite combing through numerous records and pieces of information, he had found no trace of it and could only pin his hopes on Sang Sheng.

Yet, the outcome was somewhat disappointing. Sang Sheng continued, "The Holy Dragon isn't entirely sure about that creature either. He said he would need to review some materials to be certain. But regardless of the final outcome, it will be difficult for you to grasp. Besides, the Holy Dragon has ordered that no one—not you, not anyone else—is to divulge even the slightest detail about this matter."

Su Ping's brows furrowed.

Sensing Su Ping's dissatisfaction and confusion, Sang Sheng added, "This is a significant matter. Even I don't have the authority to know the true inner workings. If you want to learn more of this secret, you must focus on improving your strength! However..."

After a pause, the woman continued, "That Flame Phoenix... it's highly probable it appeared thousands of years ago! Because the Holy Dragon mentioned complaining about it once back then."

Thousands of years ago? Su Ping's frown didn't lessen; in fact, he had suspected as much even before Sang Sheng said anything.

His primary speculation stemmed from the Darkflame Ancient Raven's situation. Why could a Darkflame Ancient Raven, a species extinct for several centuries, successfully evolve in that small valley? He had previously suggested to Ye Zhou that it was likely because the Energy concentration in ancient times, or some other atmospheric Energy component, differed from that of the modern era.

Chapter 540: Journey to the Eastern Sea! The Tidal Secret Realm!_2

It was similar to how a decrease in past oxygen content led to the extinction of large animals; the same principle applied here. And the Darkflame Ancient Raven's emergence was likely linked to the appearance of that bizarre flame, as well as the equally peculiar aura of that Secret Realm.

Could that Secret Realm contain some leakage of energy from Ancient Times? Was that why, in that Secret Realm's cavern, one of the Flame-Eating Crows that nested there underwent atavistic evolution to become a Darkflame Ancient Raven?

These were the connections Su Ping had been speculating over these days. Moreover, he was now quite confident in his theory. Otherwise, he wouldn't have advised Ye Zhou to research in this direction.

Su Ping paused for a moment and then continued to ask, "What did that person say?"

"Um..."

Upon mentioning this, Sang Sheng showed a somewhat embarrassed expression in front of Su Ping for the first time.

"Nothing much," she said, tidying the hair at her temples. "Just some reflections on the profoundness of history."

Su Ping gave Sang Sheng a strange look. It isn't that simple, is it?

Of course, it wasn't that simple. That person's complaints had been riddled with curses unsuitable for most ears. Previously, Sang Sheng had heard that Su Ping idolized that person. To avoid tarnishing that image in Su Ping's mind, she felt it necessary to gloss over the details.

Su Ping didn't bother to think further.

But now, I seem to be certain of one thing! If even that person paid such close attention to it, could it be said that the Fire Phoenix—an entity formed from the Fire Element that embodied the 'Hundred Birds Facing Phoenix'—was a Legendary Level Pet Beast?

Tsk tsk. Su Ping had no other notions, and the thought of trying to tame it as a Pet Beast was something he had never even considered. Such a creature, especially a Legendary Pet Beast potentially reviving after thousands of years, was clearly not something a human could tame.

It was one thing to dream, but in the future, I could boast about this to others. How about that? I'm someone who has witnessed the birth of a Legendary Level Pet Beast with my own eyes, aren't I?

Amusing himself with these thoughts, Su Ping was suddenly taken aback. Something had occurred to him.

He then closed his eyes and looked toward his Beast Taming Space.

Within his Beast Taming Space, on the red soil that was previously distinct, flames now burned spontaneously, emitting vastly different temperatures and heat. The other details didn't matter; Su Ping paid no attention to those perpetually burning flames.

But after revisiting these previous deductions today, a very valuable speculation had struck him.

If my guess is correct, and the atavism of ancient species' Pet Beasts was due to an energy in the atmosphere during Ancient Times that isn't present in modern times... then the leaking aura within that special Secret Realm where the Fire Phoenix's Elemental Flame appeared was enough to make the original Flame-Eating Crow undergo atavistic evolution into a Darkflame Ancient Raven. So, might my Beast Taming Space, since I've used the Space Absorption ability, also contain this kind of energy? How is this energy formed, and how long can it last?

Although Su Ping knew he didn't have the time or energy to delve deeper into this area for the time being, the idea, once it surfaced, still led him to quite a bit of speculation.

Fortunately, as the lotus accelerated, these whimsical thoughts gradually faded away.

After leaving the bounds of West Dragon Lake, he arrived above the Eastern Sea with lightning speed. Simultaneously, Su Ping activated his locator and determined the direction. Eventually, he reached Yanxun Island—the location Huang Tianbing had mentioned—not far from the coast nearest to the Eastern Sea.

By this time, the island and its surroundings were already under martial law; surrounding ships and Water Element Beast Tamers were forbidden to approach.

The approach of the giant lotus naturally attracted the gazes of several figures observing from the island's edge. Among them was Huang Tianbing, who had made a special trip from the Imperial Capital for this occasion. After all, this was a significant figure. Though not exceptionally powerful himself, his status and position were undeniable. Besides, to promote future cooperation, it was good to meet in advance.

However, Huang Tianbing's cheeks soon stiffened slightly. The aura released from the lotus above made no attempt at concealment.

An Emperor Level Peak Luo Water Fairy Lotus. A Plant-Type Pet Beast with Emperor Level potential.

The Pet Beast was one thing, but more importantly, it was the other figure accompanying Su Ping on the lotus platform that truly mattered.

Any familiar words Huang Tianbing had been about to utter were swallowed back immediately. He hurriedly said with utmost respect, "Qintian Monitor Huang Tianbing, greets Lord Sang Sheng!"

Sang Sheng nodded without paying Huang Tianbing any mind. She looked at Su Ping and asked knowingly, "This is the place, right?"

Su Ping replied with a smile, "Director Huang, you even made the trip yourself?"

Huang Tianbing forced a smile. He had never expected this young troublemaker to have invited such a prominent figure. But those present were astute. Huang Tianbing immediately understood: Lord Sang Sheng's personal presence conveyed a clear attitude and message—nothing could happen to Su Ping! If Su Ping lost even a single hair, it would be his, the Chief Supervisor's, responsibility.

At that moment, Huang Tianbing, who had been considering tackling the challenges in other Secret Realms with Su Ping, suddenly felt his enthusiasm wane.

"Since Su Ping himself is taking action, I naturally had to come personally. This is Yanxun Island, and the Tide Secret Realm is right here. Lord Sang Sheng, please take a look."

The group arrived at the center of the small island. A spatial vortex resembling an underwater whirlpool was located there. However, this spatial vortex was different: a crack ran across its surface, from which streams of watery vapor bubbled out.

Sang Sheng nodded. "A crumbling spatial vortex. It indeed needs to be dealt with promptly. Who are the individuals selected to enter?" Her gaze swept over them.

Director Huang quickly stepped aside, revealing the individuals behind him. They tensed slightly under Sang Sheng's gaze.

"Reporting to Lord Sang Sheng," Director Huang said, "these are elites from the Qintian Monitor, all Monarch Level Beastmasters with extensive experience exploring Secret Realms. You can rest assured."

Sang Sheng ignored him and looked at them. "I have only one requirement: Su Ping must not come to any harm inside the Secret Realm. If any of you suffer losses while protecting him there, I will compensate you fully upon your return. If, however, the opposite occurs, the consequences will be more than you can bear!"

"Yes!"

After receiving a satisfactory response, Sang Sheng then turned back to Su Ping, who was about to speak, and handed him a green seed. "Su Ping, take this. If you encounter danger, activate it. It will ensure your safety and extract you from the Secret Realm."

Su Ping accepted it, a sense of familiarity stirring as he looked at the item. He glanced at Director Huang, who wore a helpless, bitter smile after hearing Sang Sheng's cold words, and then at the other silent Monarch Level Beastmasters from the Qintian Monitor.

Su Ping actually had something he wanted to say. My Space Absorption ability can actually be used without me entering the Secret Realm. Although the efficiency would be reduced, the effect of destroying the Secret Realm's Origin would be the same. However, with the conversation having come this far, Lord Sang Sheng's instructions, and the Qintian Monitor's complete assurance of my safety, it seems a waste of sentiment not to go in, doesn't it?

Moreover, Su Ping was indeed very curious about what the interior of such a Secret Realm would be like. Furthermore, this Secret Realm would be an excellent platform for the Paperman of the Five Elements Paper Diagram's first combat experience in the wild.

For these various reasons, Su Ping eventually nodded. He followed the few taciturn, no-nonsense Qintian Monitor investigators to the spatial vortex, which was densely covered with dampness and vapor. Then, one by one, they slowly entered.