

I CAN CONTROL RESOURCES

Chapter 161 - 152: Release: New Mission (Super Divine Artifact)

The speech was over, and the students were all getting up to leave.

Lin Ying led the members of the Hunt God Team over to Gao Neng's group. He glanced at Gao Neng, hesitated for a moment, then said, "See you on the battlefield."

Gao Neng was speechless.

'This plot is all wrong!'

'They're rushing things!'

'If even he understood this, how could the Military Department not?'

"Gao Neng, you and your friends did well today." Gui Zian seemed to have noticed their arrival and commented casually as he passed by.

"Teacher, was that a list of names for those going to the battlefield?"

"Not exactly."

"Not exactly?"

"What are you thinking, kid? That was a list for a battlefield observation group. An instructor will be taking you. You didn't actually think the Military Department's reform was just sending you to your deaths, did you?" Gui Zian glanced at Gao Neng, a strange look on his face.

'So the kid isn't completely fearless after all.'

'At least he's afraid of dying...'

...

Gao Neng didn't care if it was for observation or just a drill.

As long as he was on a battlefield, there would be danger. An instructor was supposed to make it safe, but was that really the case? Was there no danger at all just because an instructor was present?

To put it bluntly, even instructors died on the battlefield.

Gao Neng hadn't spent the entire past half-month just blindly training with Gui Zian. He'd also taken a lot of time to read books in the library.

Now that he knew the direction the reforms were taking...

...learning about the battlefield ahead of time was essential.

Otherwise, he could end up on the battlefield one day and not even know what killed him.

'I really have to go to the battlefield. What am I going to do?' Back in his dorm, Gao Neng subconsciously mimicked Fang Tangtang's habit of rolling back and forth on the bed.

'What if something goes wrong?'

'What if the instructor gets killed?'

'What if the Demon Race or the Barbarian Race suddenly launches a large-scale attack?'

'There were too many 'what-ifs'.'

Gao Neng didn't dare to think about it any further.

His first mission had actually been completed the moment he walked out of the training room. Now, he was what you might call a minor tycoon.

He had over a thousand Energy Pills on him.

According to his original plan, those thousand-plus Energy Pills would have been enough to last him three months. During that time, he was going to cultivate in seclusion until he reached the Tier Three Late Stage... no, until he reached Tier Four!

'Externalizing Magnetic Core Energy!'

'A whole new realm!'

But now, his plans had been forcibly changed.

'Maybe I can ask Bald Shark to let me withdraw?' The thought flashed through his mind, but he quickly dismissed it. 'That would be so humiliating. Even Fang Tangtang and the others are brave enough to go. Why should I be the one to chicken out?'

'Then again, speaking of Fang Tangtang...'

'She has that form-fitting Soft Armor for protection!'

'With that thing, of course she dares to go. At the very least, her safety is much more assured.'

'Unless...'

'Should I go and strip that Soft Armor right off her?'

'It probably... wouldn't fit me anyway.'

'If only I had some Soft Armor to protect my body. I could wear my Energy Armor on the outside and the Soft Armor underneath... Add the defense boost from my Life Form Transformation... Perfect!' Gao Neng had instantly zeroed in on the solution. But where could he get a set of form-fitting Soft Armor like that?

'Fang Tangtang is rich!'

'She wears that Soft Armor all the time, so it can't be cheap.'

'Wait.'

'Wait a minute, don't I have a system?'

'What if I issue a quest to get some super-defensive Soft Armor?'

Gao Neng had a pretty good idea of how this stupid system worked after its upgrade. He could issue his own quests and even set the rewards.

The stupid system would then set the objectives based on the quest he created.

'It's just a piece of form-fitting Soft Armor. It's still a mundane item, not comparable to a skill from the lucky prize wheel, right? The quest for it can't possibly be more dangerous than going to the battlefield... can it? Probably not... right?' Gao Neng carefully weighed his options. Deep down, he was a little hesitant.

'Should I do it or not?'

'With Soft Armor, I'd be much safer on the battlefield.'

'But to get the Soft Armor...'

'...I'd have to take another risk. Like getting screwed over by this stupid system.'

'What should I do?'

Gao Neng continued to roll around on his bed. For his second-stage magnetization, he hadn't actually chosen his torso; he'd chosen his legs. The main reason at the time was that it would make him faster.

'As for my torso...'

'I figured that with Life Form Transformation, it would be more than enough for sparring matches in the training rooms.'

'But now I'm suddenly being sent to a battlefield.'

'Protecting my torso is crucial!'

'You can survive a broken leg, but how do you survive getting your torso run through?'

'Soft Armor, Soft Armor... If only I had some Soft Armor!'

The thought took root in his mind and began to sprout.

「Half an hour later.」

Gao Neng got up from the bed.

He opened the system's Attribute Panel.

Vitality: 689/745

Stamina: 350/382

Energy: 1350/1480

These were his new Vitality, Stamina, and Energy values after reaching Tier Two. Each had increased by about 100 points.

But right now, Gao Neng's gaze wasn't on these numbers.

Instead, it was fixed on the "Issue Quest" button.

He tapped it.

'What should I name the quest? The name determines the quest's general direction, so I need to be extremely careful... And there's another question. Should I aim for the materials, or for the finished Soft Armor?' Gao Neng weighed his options.

He did have crafting abilities.

What he was missing was a schematic for super-quality Soft Armor. If he got the schematic, the only thing left would be the workmanship.

'It's Soft Armor, so if the workmanship is a little shoddy, no one will see it anyway, right?'

He had a 100% success rate.

He definitely wouldn't waste any materials; failure wasn't a possibility.

'But would that be too much of a hassle?'

'If I just get the Soft Armor directly...'

'...that would be pretty convenient.'

'But if I set the reward as a complete set of super-defensive Soft Armor, the stupid system will probably increase the difficulty, making it even more dangerous.'

'Which path should I choose?'

(A 5,000-word Chapter! Please subscribe!)

Chapter 162 - 153: This Play Is Absolutely Solid

'Play it safe... Don't get carried away!' After careful consideration, Gao Neng decided to set the quest reward as the materials and a manufacturing schematic for a Super Soft Armor.

It was a little more troublesome, but once he had the schematic, he could keep manufacturing Soft Armor, which was a benefit in itself.

The quest reward was set.

The next step was to figure out what the quest should be.

Gao Neng once again considered a quest to catch a mouse, but he quickly shook his head. 'The Crap System isn't stupid. Who knows if, after I post a quest to catch a mouse, this "mouse" will turn out to be the minion or son of some super monster?'

That was just suicidal!

'I need to post a risk-free quest.'

'And it absolutely can't involve any fighting or killing. That's too brutal. I'm still just a kid who needs to grow up slowly.'

'What if I open a studio?' Gao Neng had actually had this idea for a while. His daily trips to the Manufacturing Academy to audit lectures were, in fact, preparations for his grand plan to get rich.

His second attribute gave him a 100% success rate. It would be a waste not to use it for manufacturing.

And once he had a studio, he could start taking clients...

Clients would provide the materials.

He'd be responsible for the manufacturing and profit from the labor charge?

A good business model.

Gao Neng had saved up a total of 1.3 million Alliance Coins, which was enough to buy some manufacturing tools.

Once the studio opened...

...he was absolutely confident he could make money. If he couldn't turn a profit with a 100% success rate, then no other studio could possibly stay in business.

'Opening a studio...'

'How could the Crap System mess with him on this?'

Gao Neng thought it over and concluded there wasn't much room for the system to cause trouble. 'It can't possibly make me serve 1,000 clients in a single day, right?'

'Alright, post quest: Open a studio! Quest Reward... one complete set of materials for a Super Soft Armor, including the manufacturing schematic...' Gao Neng thought for a moment and made a slight modification, adding a note in parentheses after "Super Soft Armor": (quality no less than the one Fang Tangtang wears!).

At this point...

Gao Neng felt it was pretty much foolproof.

But just as he was about to click "Post," he paused.

'What if the Crap System really does make me serve 1,000 clients a day?' Even though Gao Neng felt it was unlikely, he couldn't let his guard down.

After a moment's hesitation...

He changed the quest name to: "Open a studio that doesn't need to operate for now."

'Perfect!'

'If I can't complete the quest even with this, I'll be damned!'

'Post!' Gao Neng clicked.

"DING! Quest submission failed!" a mechanical voice announced.

'Failed?! Why did it fail? I thought you said I could post quests freely!' Gao Neng was indignant. 'This rule is ridiculous!'

"Hint: The concept 'doesn't need to operate for now' is too vague. A more precise time frame is required."

'So that's why... The system can't determine the specific time frame for "doesn't need to operate for now," so I need to specify it? That actually makes sense.' Gao Neng subconsciously prepared to revise the quest.

'Ten days?'

'A month?'

'Wrong!'

'If the system just waits a month and then tacks on a requirement to serve 1,000 clients a day, won't I still face the same problem?'

'I can't specify a time...'

'Absolutely not!'

Gao Neng felt he couldn't let the system lead him by the nose. He had to be in complete control. This quest was supposed to be a lifeline, not a death sentence.

'I have to play it safe.'

So the question became: How could he clearly express the concept of "time" without actually specifying a number of days?

'I've got it!' Fiendishly clever as he was, Gao Neng only needed a moment to come up with a solution. He revised the quest name once again.

Open a studio that will be open for business whenever Gao Neng feels like opening it for business.

'Foolproof!'

'This is absolutely foolproof!'

'The studio's operating hours will be determined by my own thoughts, which successfully solves the problem of a vague "time" concept. Plus, the system has absolutely no room to play any tricks with this now, right?'

Gao Neng mentally patted himself on the back.

'Who would believe I'm not a genius for coming up with an idea like this?'

'I can post it now...'

'This move is airtight!'

'But I still feel like there's one tiny little problem...'

'But what could it be?'

Gao Neng fell into thought once more. A moment later, his eyes finally lit up.

'Right, the hint!'

'Before the system evolved, it actually had a 'Quest Hint' function. Even though it's evolved now, that function should still exist, right?'

'A quest to open a studio with business hours I control, plus a system-provided quest hint...'

'If I can't even complete a quest like that... I might as well just die!'

Gao Neng modified the quest again, adding another parenthetical note to its name: (The system will automatically provide a hint.)

'Hahaha... I'm not just a super-genius, I'm a peerless one!' This time, Gao Neng was brimming with confidence and hesitated no longer.

He clicked "Confirm."

The motion was as smooth as flowing water... Airtight!

"DING! Quest submission successful."

'It succeeded? Hahaha, I knew it! As long as there's a concept of time, it goes through! All the materials for a Soft Armor with quality no less than Fang Tangtang's, plus the manufacturing schematic... I got it all, just like that! This is a massive win!' Gao Neng burst out laughing. Then, he heard a series of mechanical sounds.

"Quest Name: Open a studio that will be open for business whenever Gao Neng feels like opening it for business. (The system will automatically provide a hint.)"

"Quest Description: An empire begins with a studio of one's own. The Host's talent is like the most brilliant star in the sky; it cannot be concealed. Go forth, reveal your brilliance, and be unstoppable!"

Chapter 163 - 153: This Is a Sure Thing

"Mission Completion Condition: Within three days, raise the studio's valuation to over 100 million Alliance Coins."

"Mission Reward: One full set of materials required for a Super Soft Armor, including the crafting blueprint. (The quality will be no lower than the one Fang Tangtang is wearing!)"

"Mission Penalty: A negative balance of 100 million Alliance Coins. P.S. The system will forcibly liquidate all of the host's assets until the 100 million Alliance Coin debt is paid off."

"..." Gao Neng was a little stunned.

'This damn system...'

'It's just something else!'

He never would have imagined that the damn system would pull a stunt with the studio's valuation. And for a hundred million, no less!

'Am I supposed to rob a bank?!'

'Where the hell am I supposed to get a hundred million?'

'Besides, the main thing is, I'm just opening a studio. Do studios even have a concept like 'valuation'? Isn't that something only companies have?'

'Don't companies only get valued when they go public?'

Gao Neng didn't get it. His high school curriculum... definitely hadn't covered this.

'What do I do? The penalty for failure is a negative balance of 100 million Alliance Coins?! How am I supposed to live after that?' Gao Neng's face wasn't just dark; it was practically green.

'Right, there's a hint...'

'Where's the hint?!'

'Damn system, if you dare to screw me out of my hint, I'll bash my head against a wall and die!'

"Mission Hint: Across a thousand mountains and rivers, there's always a bond. So how about calling a loli cute? Would that be okay?"

"That's it?" Gao Neng's eyes widened.

'What the hell kind of hint is that?!'

Although he had long since been mentally prepared and had been through many storms and setbacks, this time, he just couldn't take it anymore.

'Across a thousand mountains and rivers, there's always a bond, is that it?'

'In that case, how about I just call you a damn idiot? How's that?'

'Wait!'

'A cute loli?!'

'Right, that Fang Tangtang girl is loaded. She's a true tycoon. And most importantly, her family seems to be in the business of selling things.'

As this thought struck him, Gao Neng rolled over, threw on his clothes, and strode out the door.

The lights were on upstairs.

That meant Fang Tangtang was there.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

"Who... is it?" Fang Tangtang's lazy voice came from inside.

"It's me, Gao Neng!"

CREAK.

The door opened.

Fang Tangtang appeared before Gao Neng, wearing a green frog onesie. Her big eyes blinked, full of confusion.

"Wow, Tangtang, you're so cute!" Gao Neng immediately praised her loudly.

"???" Fang Tangtang.

"I said you're... really super-duper cute!" Seeing no reaction from Fang Tangtang, Gao Neng remembered the mission hint and said it again.

"Gao Neng, you're not... thinking of..." Fang Tangtang finally reacted, instinctively taking a step back, her face filled with terror.

"Thinking of what? I just said you're super-duper cute!" Gao Neng was a little confused.

"Ah, Gao Neng, this is too sudden... I... I, Death God Fang Tangtang, can't possibly accept you! Besides, you already have Sister Ning'Er. I can't be the other woman! If Sister Ning'Er finds out... she definitely won't be friends with me anymore! Even though you're handsome, I, Death God Fang Tangtang, am loyal to my friends! You know I could never do anything to betray Sister Ning'Er..."

"..." Gao Neng.

"Gao Neng, just give up! I, Death God Fang Tangtang, won't accept your confession so easily! Unless... you declare your love for me for 999 consecutive days, and write a diary entry for me every day. Each entry must be over 1,000 words long to express the sincerity of your feelings..."

"Write a diary my ass!" Gao Neng was truly speechless.

'What in the world is going on inside this girl's head?'

'A damn diary, of all things!'

"Huh? You don't like writing diaries? Then you can make me breakfast instead. Make me breakfast every day for 999 days, and it has to be something different each time. No repeats..."

"Shut up! I'm not here to confess!"

"Not confessing? Then why were you declaring your love for me just now?"

"When did I declare my love? I just said you were cute! What the hell does that have to do with declaring love?" Gao Neng had to hold himself back, barely resisting the urge to grab Fang Tangtang and spank her again.

"Oh? It wasn't a declaration of love? You scared me, Death God Fang Tangtang, half to death! So, why did you come looking for me?" Fang Tangtang let out a sigh of relief and patted her flat chest.

"Do you... have money?" Gao Neng hesitated for a moment before finally asking.

"Money? Of course I do! I, Death God Fang Tangtang, am nothing but money! Are you so broke you have to sell your Merit Points? Fine, name your price! I, Death God Fang Tangtang, will buy them all!"

"One hundred million?"

SLAM!

The door slammed shut.

"Fang Tangtang, get back here!"

"Gao Neng, you're trying to extort me! I'm telling you, no way!"

"I'm not extorting you, and I'm not selling Merit Points! I just want to ask a question, is that okay?" Gao Neng felt truly exhausted. If he hadn't been forced into this corner, he would never in a million years have come to Fang Tangtang.

"What question?" Fang Tangtang opened the door again.

"Do you know how a studio's valuation is calculated?"

"Studio valuation? Why are you suddenly asking about that?" Fang Tangtang gave Gao Neng a strange look.

"Just tell me if you know or not."

"Of course I know. A studio is different from a company. It doesn't require registered capital, so there's no capital verification process. But in other ways, it's the same as a company; it can have a corporate account. If you want to get a valuation... it's actually harder than for a company. Because a studio can't go public, its valuation is generally based on patented product technology or on its capital!" Fang Tangtang explained.

"Patented product technology?" Gao Neng's brow furrowed. He didn't have anything like that. Besides, applying for a patent wasn't something you could get done in a day or two. "How is a capital-based valuation calculated?"

"A capital-based valuation means if you have a hundred million in your studio's account, then your studio is valued at a hundred million. Isn't that simple?"

"!!!" Gao Neng.

'So damn simple!'

'But isn't that just stating the obvious? If you have a hundred million in the account, of course it's valued at a hundred million. The problem is, what if you don't?'

Gao Neng suppressed his frustration and asked again, "If the account doesn't have a hundred million, is it impossible to get a valuation of a hundred million?"

"You don't have a hundred million? Then it can't be a solo studio. It would have to be a partnership. For example: you, as one of the studio's shareholders, contribute 50 million and hold 50% of the shares, while another person contributes technology in exchange for their stake. That way, even though the studio account doesn't have 100 million, it could, in a sense, be considered to have a valuation of a hundred million," Fang Tangtang said after a moment's thought.

'That's not too far off...' Gao Neng fell silent for a moment.

He figured he could forget about the first option, the solo studio model.

Getting a hundred million into an account in three days... he'd love to, but the problem was that it was completely impossible, wasn't it? Where on earth was he supposed to get a hundred million?

In that case...

'It seems like the partnership model is the only option left, then?'

'A partnership?!'

Gao Neng's gaze fell on Fang Tangtang again. He seemed to be getting what the system meant. It wanted him to open a studio in partnership with Fang Tangtang, right?

"My dear, cute Tangtang, have you ever thought about opening a studio?" Gao Neng put on a smile, trying his best to keep it pure of any other intentions.

"Why would I open a studio? My grandpa is the chairman of the Celestial King Group. My family has more money than we could ever burn. What would I open a studio for? Am I bored and looking for trouble?"

"To start your own business! It's great, you can earn lots of money!" Gao Neng encouraged.

"No, earning money is my last resort. My grandpa said that if I can't stay at the military academy for the full four years, he'll make me go back and inherit his trillion-dollar family fortune. Do you have any idea how tragic that would be?" As she spoke, a bleak and terrified expression appeared on Fang Tangtang's face.

"..." Gao Neng.

'That truly is tragic!'

'My dear classmate, Fang Tangtang!'

(Author's Note: The update is late due to some issues, and I can't stay up to write another Chapter... because it's already 3 a.m. This Chapter is 4,000 characters, and the last one was 5,000, which is 9,000 characters combined. But I'm not going to count this as three Chapters' worth. I'll still consider myself one Chapter behind for today... I'll make it up before the end of the month. No objections, right?)

Chapter 164 - 154: The Bet and the "Alien Spy

'So it's true, people really are different.'

Things had reached this point, and Gao Neng understood that his plan to get Fang Tangtang to join him was going to be quite difficult. Because Fang Tangtang was not short on cash.

"I'm done with the questions. Is there anything else?" Seeing that Gao Neng was silent, Fang Tangtang prepared to close the door.

"Wait, about registering a studio, can you help with that? I mean, if I want to register a studio, do you know a way to get it done immediately?"

"Oh, that's easy. Normally, it takes at least seven or eight days to register a studio. But who am I? I'm Death God Fang Tangtang! I can get it registered instantly with just one phone call!" As Fang Tangtang said this, a smug look reappeared on her face.

"Then how about you help me register a studio?"

"Sure. Fifty thousand Alliance Coins!"

"Is this a robbery?!"

"Business is business. I, Death God Fang Tangtang, am only charging you fifty thousand Alliance Coins for my connections. You should consider it a bargain." Fang Tangtang tilted her head up proudly.

"Forget it. I won't ask you." Gao Neng decided to give up.

He wasn't stupid. Fifty thousand Alliance Coins for a simple registration procedure was out of the question. Worst-case scenario, he could just ask Shen Ning'Er or Shen Fei for help. They probably wouldn't charge him.

"Wait, are you really starting a studio?" Seeing that Gao Neng was about to leave, Fang Tangtang immediately stopped him.

"Yeah."

"A studio needs an office, and you'll have to rent a place off-campus. Aren't we about to head to the battlefield? Why are you starting a studio now?" Fang Tangtang was a little curious.

"It's precisely because we're going to the battlefield that I need to open a studio. So I can make some weapons, armor, and equipment for myself." Of course, Gao Neng couldn't tell her the truth.

"You know how to make weapons and armor?"

"Of course. Why else do you think I'm always running over to the Manufacturing Academy?" Gao Neng nodded as if it were the most obvious thing in the world.

"Then can you make an Electromagnetic Cannon?"

"I can."

"Hahaha... Gao Neng, you're full of it! My Electromagnetic Cannon, Death God Fang Tangtang's, is worth fifty million Alliance Coins. You think you can make one?"

"Believe it or not!"

"You can really make an Electromagnetic Cannon?"

"Of course!"

"You said it. So, how about we make a bet?"

"A bet? What do you want to bet?"

"Let's bet all your Merit Points. If you can build an Electromagnetic Cannon, I'll find investors for your studio. How about it?"

"For real?"

"Of course, it's real! My word, Death God Fang Tangtang's word, is my bond!" Fang Tangtang said, patting her flat chest.

"But I remember you said the cost of one Electromagnetic Cannon is fifty million Alliance Coins... I don't have that right now, so what do I do?" Gao Neng thought of a new problem.

"That's simple. I have it! I have all the manufacturing materials. I can lend them to you, interest-free. But if you fail to build it, you'll owe me fifty million Alliance Coins, and you'll have to give me all of your Merit Points, no questions asked. So, what do you say? Do you dare to take the bet?"

"Fang Tangtang, you've got a pretty dark heart!" Gao Neng finally understood. This couldn't even be called loan-sharking; it was blatant robbery.

"'There's no business without some shrewdness.' That's what my grandpa taught me." Fang Tangtang grinned. "Didn't you say you could make it? Then what's there to worry about?"

"Fine, it's a bet! But I have one condition."

"Name it."

"If I can build the Electromagnetic Cannon, you have to get my studio valued at over one hundred million. Meaning, you must make an additional investment based on a one-hundred-million valuation for my studio. How about it?" Gao Neng stated his condition. There was no need to keep this system quest a secret.

"An additional investment based on a one-hundred-million valuation?" Fang Tangtang's brow furrowed slightly as her eyes scanned Gao Neng from head to toe.

One hundred million wasn't a huge amount for her, but for a studio with only one worker, it was definitely an extraordinarily high valuation.

'Can Gao Neng actually build it?'

'If he can't... then I'll make a killing!'

'But what if he succeeds?'

'If he does succeed...'

'A studio that can build an Electromagnetic Cannon... a valuation of one hundred million doesn't seem that excessive, does it?'

"Fine. It's as you say. As long as you can build an Electromagnetic Cannon, I'll have someone make an additional investment in your studio based on a one-hundred-million valuation!" Fang Tangtang agreed after a moment of thought.

"Then let's start now?" Gao Neng's eyes lit up.

"Now? It's too late... Let's talk tomorrow! Besides, I don't have the materials for the Electromagnetic Cannon on me right now. I'll call you tomorrow morning. That's it, bye-bye!"

BANG!

The door slammed shut again.

Gao Neng was helpless, but what Fang Tangtang said was true. It was almost nighttime. Where would he get the materials to build an Electromagnetic Cannon now?

...

「The next morning, at six-thirty.」

Gao Neng got out of bed, washed up, and made two breakfasts. Then, he headed straight upstairs.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

He knocked for a full fifteen minutes.

Only then did Fang Tangtang, rubbing her sleepy eyes and wearing green frog pajamas, open the door. However, upon seeing the breakfast in Gao Neng's hands, she let him into the room.

By the time Fang Tangtang had lazily washed up and eaten breakfast, it was already eight o'clock.

And that was only because Gao Neng had been relentlessly rushing her.

After that, Fang Tangtang led Gao Neng straight to the school gate.

It was then that Gao Neng noticed a familiar black hover car parked at the gate, and standing beside it was an old man in a Tang suit.

This was the second time Gao Neng had seen this old man.

The first was on the day Fang Tangtang came to register at the military academy.

"Tangtang, this must be the captain of your Invincible Team, Gao Neng?" The old man in the Tang suit smiled warmly upon seeing Gao Neng.

"Mhm, is everything ready?" Fang Tangtang tilted her head up.

"All ready. Get in the car." After speaking, the old man in the Tang suit opened the back door, gesturing for Gao Neng and Fang Tangtang to sit in the rear.

He, in turn, got into the front passenger seat.

A middle-aged man was driving, and he didn't say or ask much throughout the journey.

As for the old man in the Tang suit, he introduced himself. "Guan San," an easy-to-remember name. He was a butler for the Fang Family.

Once in the car, Fang Tangtang propped up her legs, pulled out the snacks that had been prepared, and started munching away, fully embracing her foodie nature.

Gao Neng also casually ate a little.

Then, he looked out the window.

It was his first time in a hover car, so he was still a bit curious.

The hover car traveled above the normal road surface, but not too high—about ten meters off the ground.

The last time Gao Neng had come, it was already night, so he hadn't gotten a clear view of the route. This time, he finally got a real look at the City of Hope's appearance.

A newly built metropolis.

There were Public Security Bureau officers patrolling everywhere.

It looked like there was a... pursuit?

Huh?!

There really was a pursuit.

From the hover car, Gao Neng could see it clearly. A girl with short, silver hair was sprinting down the street, and behind her were three or four Public Security Bureau officers.

"Stop!"

"Report, report... a suspicious girl without an ID card has been spotted. Silver hair, blue eyes. She's in the East Thirteenth District. The target is very fast, requesting backup!"

"..."

"Silver hair, blue eyes?" Gao Neng opened the window, just in time to hear the voice from below. His gaze immediately fell on the sprinting girl.

Just then, the girl leaped up, landing on the roof of a house less than three meters away from Gao Neng.

Gao Neng got a clear look at her.

She had a head of short, silver-white hair, a pair of deep blue pupils, and a snow-white miniskirt. A faint smile, however, played on her lips.

She didn't look the least bit nervous.

Most importantly, Gao Neng realized the girl was also looking right at him. Those deep blue pupils gave him an extremely familiar feeling.

"If Mom hadn't told me not to hurt humans, I could kill a hundred of these scumbags!" the girl seemed to mutter to herself.

Gao Neng's expression changed slightly.

It was the first time he had seen this girl, but for some unknown reason, he sensed a familiar aura from her.

Just as he was thinking, the girl had already darted swiftly into a small alley.

The hover car continued forward.

The distance between them gradually increased.

Soon, Gao Neng could no longer see any trace of the girl.

"Gao Neng, what are you looking at?" Fang Tangtang poked her head over.

"Catching a fugitive? I think they said she didn't have an ID card." Gao Neng thought for a moment before replying, but he couldn't shake a strange feeling in his heart.

"Then she's a spy. Some of the alien races look very similar to humans. They alter their appearance to infiltrate the City of Hope and gather intelligence. It's a very common thing."

"Alien races?"

"Mhm. But generally speaking, the alien spies who sneak into the City of Hope aren't too powerful. It's hard for the strong to conceal their auras, and if they're exposed, they'll certainly die. But it's relatively better for the weak. Their auras aren't strong, making it hard to find them in a crowd. And even if they are exposed and killed, it's not considered a big deal."

"So that's how it is." Gao Neng nodded, understanding a little better now. The weaker ones could blend in with ordinary people, making it easier to gather intelligence.

...

「Half an hour later.」

The hover car came to a stop.

Guan San was the first to get out of the passenger seat. Then, he opened the back door and gave Gao Neng a smiling nod.

Gao Neng got out of the car and saw a giant "monster" standing before him.

It was an enormous, octopus-like structure. At its center was a massive circular building, from which eight metal-built corridors extended. Each corridor connected to a smaller circular building, creating a truly extravagant sight.

'Celestial King Group?'

Gao Neng's gaze fell on the three large golden words at the very top, and he felt a little shaken.

"My family has twenty manufacturing plants like this one, corresponding to twenty military districts of various sizes. This is the oldest one. It's actually built pretty ordinarily, but my grandpa likes it here," Fang Tangtang said casually.

"..." Gao Neng was speechless.

Damn!

Chapter 165 - 155: You Have to Say It When You're This Awesome

...

From Guan San's introduction, Gao Neng began to understand the layout of the Celestial King Group's buildings.

The massive circular building in the very center was the R&D center, primarily responsible for technical research and overcoming difficult problems. It was the core department.

The eight smaller circular buildings on the outside were eight different manufacturing plants, each running an assembly line with its own specialized division of labor.

Led by Guan San and Fang Tangtang, Gao Neng entered the central R&D center.

As soon as they walked in, two female receptionists in professional attire greeted them. They guided the three to a private elevator, which took them directly to the eighth floor of the research center.

"Alright, you two may go," Guan San said, waving a hand at the two receptionists.

"Yes, President Guan!" The two receptionists immediately withdrew.

Guan San then personally led Gao Neng and Fang Tangtang toward an office in the center, its entrance flanked by two guards. A metal plaque hung above the door.

Chairman's Office.

The two guards saw Fang Tangtang and Guan San and opened the door without announcing them.

Gao Neng walked inside.

Before him was a reception room filled with all sorts of sculpted models. The walls were adorned with calligraphy and ancient paintings by famous masters.

A middle-aged man dressed in white was also standing in the reception room.

With just one glance, Gao Neng sensed a powerful aura from the man. It was a unique presence, different from that of a soldier—it felt much more bloodthirsty.

"Uncle Bai, is Grandpa inside?" Fang Tangtang was quite polite to the middle-aged man.

"The Master is waiting for you inside." Uncle Bai forced a smile for Fang Tangtang, then nodded at Gao Neng before opening the inner office door.

This time, Gao Neng and the others didn't need to go in.

Because an old man with graying temples had already walked out. It was hard to judge his age from his appearance alone, as his complexion was quite ruddy.

However, based on Fang Tangtang's age, Gao Neng guessed the old man was around sixty or seventy.

"Grandpa, Tangtang missed you so much."

"Did you miss me, or did you just want an excuse to run out and play? Sigh... you're getting more and more mischievous. I thought military academy would have tamed you a bit!" the old man chided affectionately. Then, his gaze shifted to Gao Neng. "You must be Gao Neng, right? Tangtang has mentioned you. Very good. It's great to see such drive in a young man!"

"Hello, Grandpa Fang!" Gao Neng greeted him.

"Mm, 'Grandpa Fang' is good. It feels close. How about some tea first?"

"Okay." Gao Neng didn't stand on ceremony.

After being brought here, he had already guessed that Fang Tangtang wanted the Celestial King Group to invest in him. However, he hadn't expected to be brought directly to the chairman of the Celestial King Group, Fang Yuan.

"Heh heh, let's have some black tea, then. Guan San, go brew that packet of black tea Old Jiang gave me last time," Fang Yuan said with a gentle nod.

"Yes, Master."

After some pleasantries.

The black tea was soon ready.

Gao Neng picked it up and took a sip. He didn't know anything about tea, but after tasting it, he found it didn't have much flavor. 'But Fang Tangtang's family is so rich, the tea has to be good, right?'

"How is the tea?" Fang Yuan also took a sip, then looked at Gao Neng with a smile.

"To be honest, I don't know much about tea, but I don't think it tastes very good." Gao Neng shook his head, seeming a bit blunt. But he truly couldn't taste what was so special about it.

"Hahaha... Interesting. I didn't expect Tangtang's judgment to be so sharp. Guan San, bring another pot of tea," Fang Yuan said, his laughter clearly much happier this time.

"Yes, Master."

A moment later, a new pot of black tea was brought in.

"Little Neng, try this one," Fang Yuan said, his form of address changing.

"Mm." Gao Neng nodded again and took another sip. This time, the tea was much better, with a faint, fresh aroma. "This one tastes much better."

"Good. In that case, I'll dispense with the pleasantries and get straight to business. I hear from Tangtang that you can build an Electromagnetic Cannon?" Fang Yuan wasted no more time and went straight to the point.

"I can," Gao Neng answered truthfully.

Although he had never done it before, he had a 100% success rate. Saying he couldn't would be a lie. 'One has to be honest. If I'm awesome, I have to say I'm awesome.'

'Otherwise, it's just being hypocritical.'

"If that's the case, then let's put it to the test. The Celestial King Group primarily manufactures equipment for the Military Department. Generally, it takes three senior Manufacturing Masters about ten days to half a month to process and complete one Electromagnetic Cannon. Since you'll be building it alone... I'll give you two months."

"Two months?" Gao Neng's brow furrowed slightly.

"Is that too short? Hmm... you're still young, so you should be given some room to grow. Let's make it three months. As long as you can build it, I'll do as Tangtang said and invest 80 million in your workshop for an 80% stake," Fang Yuan said after a moment's thought.

"Grandpa Fang, you misunderstand. I don't think it's too short. I think two months is a bit too long..." Gao Neng said with a wry smile, shaking his head.

"Too long?" Fang Yuan was taken aback for a moment. "Don't tell me you can build it in one month?"

"Even a month is a bit long. I think we'll know the result in about three days," Gao Neng explained.

"Three days?!"

"Yes. If I build an Electromagnetic Cannon within three days, you invest in me. But I don't want 80 million... because..."

"Little Neng, wait a moment. Did you just say you can build an Electromagnetic Cannon in three days?!" Fang Yuan cut him off before he could finish.

'I should be able to, right? I want to try.' In his heart, Gao Neng wasn't 100% sure either. Although the second page of his system stats said 100%, he really didn't know how to calculate the specific time required. 'But since we've made a bet, I have to give it a shot, don't I?'

'Besides, I can manifest energy.'

'With energy manifestation, I should be faster than some senior engineers, right? After all, I can manifest some parts directly.'

"..." Fang Yuan fell silent.

It wasn't just him. Even Guan San, who was standing to the side, was giving Gao Neng a strange look. At the very least, the trust from before was gone.

As for Fang Tangtang, she couldn't help but stand up.

"Gao Neng, what nonsense are you spouting? How could you possibly build an Electromagnetic Cannon in three days? It'll be fine if you can just build it in two months!"

"Well..." Hearing this, Gao Neng had already figured out the problem. 'Under normal circumstances, it's impossible to build an Electromagnetic Cannon in three days, right?'

'But I don't have two months to dilly-dally!'

'I only have three days!'

'No...'

'I only have two and a half days left!'

"Grandpa... Gao Neng doesn't really know much about manufacturing yet. He just crashed a few classes at the Manufacturing Academy. But he can manifest energy, so his speed at manifesting parts should be a bit faster than a normal person's." Fang Tangtang spoke up again, a hint of a wheedling tone in her voice as she looked at Fang Yuan.

"Heh heh, alright, alright. Young people are always a bit hot-headed. It seems I was being a bit short-sighted. He can manifest energy? That's really something... In that case, one month!"

"Grandpa Fang, you can give me as much time as you want, but in three... no, two and a half days, I will build an Electromagnetic Cannon for you. But I have one condition. I can't give you 80% of the shares. The most I can give is 49%. I must have controlling interest in this workshop. That's the only way," Gao Neng replied, gritting his teeth.

"..."

Silence.

Fang Yuan's gaze was fixed on Gao Neng's face. After a moment, he smiled. "It's good for a young man to be greedy. However, 80 million for only 49% is a bit..."

"Grandpa Fang, you misunderstand my meaning. I meant I'll give you 49%, and your investment is actually..." Gao Neng felt that Fang Yuan might have misunderstood something.

"It's fine. 49% it is. Guan San, go get the partnership agreement," Fang Yuan said with a wave of his hand, showing no intention of haggling with Gao Neng.

"Yes, Master." Guan San nodded, quickly entered the office, and returned a moment later with a share investment agreement.

"Here is the share investment agreement. 80 million Alliance Coins, not a single coin less. As for the percentage of shares, you can decide whether it's 49% or 20%. But I have one condition: you have to add another person to the list of partners." Fang Yuan produced the investment agreement and pointed to a clause.

"What condition?"

"Just have Shen Ning'Er join as a shareholder," Fang Yuan said directly.

"Shen Ning'Er?"

"That's right. Vice Commander Shen's granddaughter, Shen Ning'Er. We all know about your relationship with her. As long as you can get her to join your workshop, forget 80 million—I'll even invest 100 million!"

"Grandpa Fang, you..." Gao Neng wasn't stupid.

Fang Yuan's meaning was already crystal clear. He didn't believe Gao Neng could build an Electromagnetic Cannon in two and a half days. The investment wasn't for him; it was for Shen Ning'Er.

"Gao Neng, you just need to get Shen Ning'Er to sign this agreement. As for the money, we can transfer it to you immediately..." Guan San added, seeing that Gao Neng was silent.

"That won't be necessary, Grandpa Fang. I came here to earn the Celestial King Group's investment through my own abilities. As for any cooperation between you and Ning'Er, I don't want to get involved. Also, if you don't trust my abilities, don't worry about it. It's no problem if you don't invest in me." Gao Neng stood up.

He wanted to complete the mission.

But he couldn't complete the mission this way.

'If worst comes to worst...'

'If I can't complete the mission, I'll just be 100 million in debt.'

'I'll just have to be more careful on the battlefield, kill enemies, and earn merit. It's not like there are no other options. Who knows, a corpse might fall from the

sky—I might just stumble upon the body of an alien Strongest and make a few hundred billion.'

'A man has to have a dream, after all!'

"Grandpa! Didn't we have a deal? The bet was whether Gao Neng could build an Electromagnetic Cannon... By doing this now, you're making Tangtang very angry! How could Sister Ning'Er possibly sign this kind of agreement? It's just a matter of a few tens of millions. So stingy! Hmph!" Fang Tangtang couldn't sit still any longer, her lips pouting slightly.

"Hahaha, alright, alright. You can have these tens of millions to make friends, how about that? Fine, if you don't want to sign the agreement, we won't sign it. Guan San, take Gao Neng to handle the paperwork and transfer the funds directly." Seeing Fang Tangtang's expression, Fang Yuan finally broke into a smile. He waved his hand again, signaling for Guan San to take Gao Neng away.

"Gao Neng, let's go." Fang Tangtang finally brightened up and pulled on Gao Neng, ready to leave.

"Wait. I can't accept this 80 million like this!" Gao Neng didn't move.

"Why not? Grandpa has already invested in you. You've won the bet, and your Merit Points... I don't want them anymore, okay? Let's go, Gao Neng!" Fang Tangtang didn't understand.

"I want to earn this investment with my own strength, not through connections... Grandpa Fang, I want to try. If I can't build the Electromagnetic Cannon in two and a half days, I won't take a single cent of this 80 million," Gao Neng said, shaking his head.

"You really want to try?" Fang Yuan's brow furrowed.

"Yes. I believe I can do it," Gao Neng said with a serious nod.

"Fine. We'll do it your way. Two and a half days. I'll have someone prepare the materials for you. If you have any requests or need assistants, you can ask." Fang Yuan didn't seem to want to discuss it further, but he still didn't refuse Gao Neng.

"I only have one request."

"Oh? And what's that?" Fang Yuan picked up his teacup and took a sip.

"Can you give me a manufacturing blueprint for the Electromagnetic Cannon?" Gao Neng stated his request. Without the blueprint, he couldn't use his skill...

'So, this really was a request.'

Chapter 166 - 156: The 2nd Attribute Is Really Strong

PFFT!

Fang Yuan spat out the mouthful of tea he had just taken.

'Are you f*cking kidding me?'

If he hadn't been a worldly man with vast experience, Gao Neng's words would have been enough to make him cough up a mouthful of old blood.

To think he was asking for the manufacturing schematics for an Electromagnetic Cannon?!

'You're a War Academy freshman who doesn't even have the manufacturing schematics. Who gave you the courage to claim you could build an Electromagnetic Cannon in two and a half days?'

Fang Yuan truly couldn't wrap his head around it.

It wasn't just Fang Yuan.

Even Guan San and Uncle Bai, who were standing to the side, were utterly speechless. 'Didn't this kid seem perfectly honest when he was drinking tea just now?'

'How did the whole vibe suddenly change...'

'You said you could manifest energy, that you didn't need a month, insisting you could build it in two and a half days.'

'Fine, we went along with it.'

'But what the hell is this about suddenly asking us for the manufacturing schematics?'

The faces of both men were dark.

"Give me the manufacturing schematics, and I really can build it in two and a half days!" Gao Neng had actually guessed that his request was a bit much.

But without the manufacturing schematics...

He really didn't know how!

"Gao Neng, you are... infuriating!" Fang Tangtang's face was flushed crimson. 'This is so humiliating! To think I was bragging so much about him on the phone last night.'

'Grandpa, even that Senior Manufacturing Master from your Celestial King Group can't do it...'

'An Electromagnetic Cannon? My classmate Gao Neng can build one!'

'Don't believe me?'

'Then let's make a bet. If I lose, I'll never mention leaving the military academy again!'

As Fang Tangtang recalled her words from the phone call, she felt as if she had been slapped hard across the face several times, her cheeks burning with a fiery pain.

She had genuinely believed that Gao Neng could build an Electromagnetic Cannon.

Otherwise, she wouldn't have brought Gao Neng directly to Fang Yuan. After all, an hour of Fang Yuan's time was valued in the hundreds of millions.

Fang Yuan said nothing more, but his expression had clearly soured.

As Fang Yuan's butler, Guan San naturally saw what was on his mind. There were some things Fang Yuan couldn't comfortably say, but it was no problem for him to say them.

"Gao Neng, you see, it's been a while, and the Chairman has another meeting to attend. How about we schedule another time, after you've had a chance to familiarize yourself with the manufacturing process for the Electromagnetic Cannon, and then you can come back to build it?" After speaking, Guan San glanced discreetly at Fang Yuan.

"I understand... Grandpa Fang, I'm sorry to have disturbed you!" Gao Neng glanced at Fang Tangtang, then at Fang Yuan and Guan San. He struggled internally for a moment before finally nodding.

"Wait!" Fang Yuan spoke again, his brows knitted so tightly they formed a deep furrow. He seemed to be wrestling with a difficult decision. "Gao Neng, to be honest, your performance today has not been very good. However, for Shen Ning'Er to have taken a liking to you, perhaps you truly possess some talent that I, Fang Yuan, cannot see. I can let you give it a try."

"Let me try?"

This time, it wasn't just Gao Neng who was surprised.

Guan San, Uncle Bai, and Fang Tangtang were also so stunned they were at a loss for words.

'Letting someone who doesn't even have the manufacturing schematics try to build an Electromagnetic Cannon? If word of this got out, no one would believe it.'

However, the person who said it was Fang Yuan.

The Chairman of the Celestial King Group.

As such, there could be no questioning his decision.

"Yes. Based on the skill level of our Celestial King Group's Senior Manufacturing Masters, the success rate for building an Electromagnetic Cannon is generally between 54% and 69%. I will give you three sets of materials in total. As long as you can build one, I'll give you the 80 million investment. As for the shares, we'll go with your proposal of 49%. But I have one condition!"

"Please state it, Grandpa Fang!" Gao Neng nodded.

"Before you manufacture the Electromagnetic Cannon, I need you to first create two items: an 'Electric Saber' and a suit of 'Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor.' These are both basic pieces of battlefield equipment. At the same time, I will have two Manufacturing Masters create them alongside you. As long as you have the advantage in terms of time, I will give you the chance to build the Electromagnetic Cannon. How about it?"

"Can you provide the manufacturing schematics for these two items?" Gao Neng asked after a moment of thought.

"..." Fang Yuan was speechless.

'You don't even have the manufacturing schematics for the Electric Saber and Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor either?!'

'Then what in the world have you ever manufactured?!'

'Doesn't the Manufacturing Academy teach you how to make such basic battlefield equipment? Any third-year student with even a little knowledge should basically know how, right?'

"Gao Neng, if I may be so bold, how many items have you successfully manufactured before? Or rather, what do you specialize in manufacturing?" Guan San couldn't hold back any longer.

"Well... I've never manufactured any items before. As for what I specialize in... I think I'm good at everything," Gao Neng said, once again speaking the honest truth after some thought.

The first-year curriculum at the Manufacturing Academy was all foundational courses. He had only attended a few classes, and they had only covered the structure of blades—long sabers, short sabers, greatswords...

As for schematics, they hadn't gotten to that part yet.

So, he really hadn't manufactured anything before.

"Guan San, take him down. Let him look at the manufacturing schematics for the Electric Saber and the Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor, and then... just have Zhuo Bing and Zheng Hai compete with him." Fang Yuan waved his hand dismissively. He was mentally exhausted.

"Master... have Zhuo Bing and Zheng Hai compete against him? Is that really necessary?" Guan San thought for a moment. He truly felt this was like using a sledgehammer to crack a nut.

"Consider it a 'friendly exchange'." Fang Yuan naturally knew it wasn't necessary, but he felt that putting some appropriate pressure on Gao Neng might be a good thing.

Besides, for Gao Neng to have come this far, regardless of his talent, his ability to learn must be extremely strong. Perhaps he could pick up a few techniques from Zhuo Bing and Zheng Hai.

That way, this trip wouldn't have been a complete waste for him.

Hearing this, Guan San said no more. Fang Yuan had made it very clear: this 'exchange' was to give Gao Neng a learning opportunity.

"Gao Neng, come with me."

"Okay, thank you, Grandpa Fang." Gao Neng nodded, but he stopped at the door and turned back. "Grandpa Fang, I think you only need to prepare one set of materials for the Electromagnetic Cannon."

PFFT! Fang Yuan sprayed out the tea he had just sipped. This time, he was so exasperated he actually laughed. 'Are you sure you're not here just to be a clown?'

Of course, he didn't say this out loud, merely giving Gao Neng a cordial wave.

"Show us what you've got, young man!"

...

Gao Neng and Fang Tangtang followed Guan San out.

As they entered the Third Manufacturing Plant, he seemed to understand the purpose of that metal corridor. It was a heavily guarded security checkpoint.

It was likely designed to prevent Manufacturing Masters from bringing in or taking out materials without authorization.

However, Gao Neng, Fang Tangtang, and the others didn't need to be inspected. The corridor's door opened directly, and the three of them entered the Third Manufacturing Plant.

Immediately, two men came out to greet them.

One was in his thirties, the other in his forties, and both had a gleam in their eyes.

Zhuo Bing, the number one Intermediate Manufacturing Master in the Celestial King Group. His skill was comparable to that of an average Senior Manufacturing Master, and coupled with his youth, his potential was limitless.

Zheng Hai, a Senior Manufacturing Master in the Celestial King Group and the concurrent Technical Director of the Eastern Capital's Third Manufacturing Plant. He had been Zhuo Bing's sponsor when he joined the company and was also considered his master.

Both men had already received their orders.

The young miss of the Fang Family had arrived with a classmate of hers. The two of them were responsible for receiving them and engaging in a 'deep exchange' with this classmate.

'This is a heaven-sent opportunity.'

'Not only is the Chairman personally paying attention, but it's also a chance to make a good impression on the Fang Family's young miss. She's the future heir to the Celestial King Group!'

"Director Zheng, did you bring the manufacturing schematics for the Electric Saber and the Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor?" Guan San asked in a low voice upon seeing the two men.

"I did," Zheng Hai nodded, glancing at Zhuo Bing.

Zhuo Bing immediately stepped forward and handed two stacks of manufacturing schematics to Guan San, while also stealing a glance at Fang Tangtang and Gao Neng.

'This kid is really handsome!' That was Zhuo Bing's first impression of Gao Neng. But he quickly added another thought: 'Too bad he's all show and no go.'

"The manufacturing schematics... there's no problem with them, right?" Guan San's eyes narrowed.

"Rest assured, President Guan. I, Zheng Hai, may not be the best at other things, but I have some confidence in my technical skills. I wouldn't stoop to tampering with something like this," Zheng Hai said in a serious tone.

'A guy who has never even seen the manufacturing schematics...'

'...comes here to compete with us.'

'If I still needed to tamper with the schematics to win, then I, the Technical Director, should really just resign.'

"Good. Are the materials ready? If they are, let's begin!" Guan San nodded. He had already called Zheng Hai on the way over and told him that although this was called an 'exchange,' it was primarily meant to be a teaching session.

That being the case, the likelihood of Zheng Hai tampering with the schematics was indeed low.

After all, these kinds of schematics...

Zheng Hai could probably draw them with his eyes closed.

"Everything is ready. In fact, we've prepared two extra sets of materials for Mr. Gao. Miss Fang, President Guan, Mr. Gao, this way, please!" Zheng Hai said with a smile.

...

「Fifteen minutes later.」

A crowd had gathered around the manufacturing table in the Third Manufacturing Plant.

At the table, Zhuo Bing and Gao Neng stood facing each other. In front of both of them were piles of ores and tools needed for manufacturing.

Gao Neng actually had slightly more materials than Zhuo Bing.

The Electric Saber!

The concept actually originated from surgical procedures.

It used high-frequency vibrations to generate an electric arc, which in turn produced a sharp cutting edge.

The principle of a battlefield Electric Saber was quite similar to that of a surgical one, but the area of the arc on the blade's edge was larger. Not by much, though. It was usually about the length of a palm and was mainly made into a short weapon for close-quarters combat, as the high-frequency vibrations consumed a great deal of energy.

As for its use on the battlefield...

There were two methods.

One was for ordinary people to pre-charge it with electrical energy. This allowed them to wield considerable power in a crisis, which led to its widespread promotion within the Military Department.

The other method was for Energy Warriors to supply the energy themselves. However, short weapons were generally only suitable for combat between low-rank individuals. Once a Warrior reached the mid-ranks or higher, the energy

from their magnetic core could be projected outward, forming an energy field around their body and greatly reducing opportunities for close combat.

Therefore, Electric Sabers were not a common sight in the military academies.

Gao Neng was now carefully studying the manufacturing schematics. As his eyes scanned the pages, a series of constantly shifting and assembling images seemed to form in his mind.

'The second attribute...'

'It really is powerful!'

Zheng Hai had been standing by his side for five minutes already.

But he wasn't anxious at all. Although the Electric Saber was an ordinary short weapon, its manufacturing requirements were extremely precise. It was impossible to understand the schematics in less than an hour.

Just as he was thinking this...

He saw Gao Neng look over at him and give a slight nod.

"Alright, I'm done reading. We can start now."

Chapter 167 - 157: I Just Want to Be This High-Profile

"That fast?!" Zheng Hai froze for a moment. He then glanced at Guan San, his expression seeming to say, 'President Guan, isn't this guy a bit too arrogant?'

'He finished reading the manufacturing schematics in just five minutes?'

'Is he sure he's not just messing with us?'

It wasn't just Zheng Hai. The other Manufacturing Masters in the area, including Zhuo Bing standing opposite Gao Neng, were also momentarily stunned.

Guan San, however, was already getting used to it. He said nothing more, merely giving a slight nod. Regardless of the situation, Gao Neng was Fang Tangtang's classmate.

"Gao Neng, are you sure you want to start now?" Zheng Hai prompted again.

"I'm sure."

"Very well. Begin!" Zheng Hai finally gave the order.

As soon as the order was given, Zhuo Bing sprang into action.

He was also an Energy Warrior. While his energy extraction wasn't particularly fast, his proficiency was extremely high.

His movements were exceptionally fluid.

He knew precisely which type of ore to extract first and in what quantity. His control was impeccable. In just a short while, two pieces of ore had turned a dull, grayish-white.

Gao Neng, on the other hand...

...was a bit more brutish.

He simply pressed his hand on several ores, and energy burst forth like a torrential spring.

"Such incredible talent!"

"So this is a genius from the Eastern Capital Military Academy?!"

"In terms of pure extraction speed and volume, Gao Neng has the absolute advantage."

"Talent alone is useless. A strong talent is only good for combat. Being a Manufacturing Master isn't just about talent; it's about precision and proficiency!"

The surrounding Manufacturing Masters broke into a heated discussion.

Gao Neng paid them no mind. He extracted all the energy needed for the Electric Saber in one go, moving at top speed. Then, he began using his Spiritual Power to shape it.

He had actually considered being a bit more low-key. After all, his second attribute was a 100% success rate, which was more than a little abnormal.

In the end, however, he dismissed the idea.

The reason was...

He needed to be irreplaceable!

In any company, there are two types of people: those who are replaceable, and those who are irreplaceable.

Take, for instance, a general office clerk or a receptionist. These roles are on a relatively low technical level, and it's easy to find suitable candidates in the job market.

As such, the salary for these positions generally won't be very high.

Moreover, they must strictly adhere to company rules; otherwise, they risk being fired.

But irreplaceable people are a different story.

For example, marketing staff who control key client accounts, or technical personnel who have mastered core technologies. These people enjoy much higher salaries and a greater degree of freedom.

To put it bluntly, the company cannot function without them!

What Gao Neng needed to do now was make Fang Yuan recognize his ability. That being the case, he had to showcase what made him unique.

'You want someone to genuinely invest in you, yet you also want to play it low-key...'

'How is that possible?'

It's like going to negotiate for funding. The other party already approves of your abilities and business model, but then you turn around and say, "Luck. Heh, our success is basically all down to luck."

'Isn't that just foolish?'

No one invests in people who succeed on pure luck!

On the battlefield, you need to be discreet.

But when it comes to technical skill, being discreet will only make people look down on you. They'll think your value isn't high enough and that you can be replaced at any time.

Gao Neng also considered the risk of exposing something.

'But what could he possibly expose?'

'Who would suspect he's carrying some ridiculous system? Who would ever guess he has a 100% success rate attribute? If he were relying on an external object, like a treasure, he might lay low.'

'But he's relying on an attribute from his system...'

'What's there to be afraid of?'

To put it bluntly, Gao Neng had backing now. If someone really wanted to drag him off to be dissected for research, they'd have to get past the Eastern Capital Military Academy and Shen Ning'Er first.

'This time, I'll go all out and be as flashy as I want! Let's see... who's better than me!' With his mind made up, Gao Neng's hands moved even faster.

Energy materialization.

It allowed him to perfectly manifest the images in his mind.

Therefore, unlike Zhuo Bing, he didn't need to use many manufacturing tools. He simply materialized all the components for the Electric Saber in one go.

CLINK! CLANK!

With a series of metallic clatters, at least twenty small parts of varying sizes piled up on the manufacturing table.

The sight left the surrounding Manufacturing Masters utterly stunned.

"Energy materialization!"

"Oh my god, he really knows how to use energy materialization?!"

"Using energy materialization to create parts... that's not something an ordinary person can do."

The Manufacturing Masters were envious. If they could also perform this technique, their own manufacturing speed would be so much faster.

But they had chosen the path of a Manufacturing Master precisely because their innate talent wasn't good enough. Under such circumstances, hoping to learn energy materialization was truly wishful thinking.

Zheng Hai's brows furrowed as well.

In terms of talent alone, Gao Neng was absurdly gifted. But whether the parts he created could actually be assembled—that was the real question.

'Can they even be assembled?' Zheng Hai wondered.

Fang Tangtang and Guan San were also staring intently at Gao Neng. They both understood the subtleties of the manufacturing process. Just because you could make the parts quickly didn't guarantee success.

Gao Neng didn't look at his surroundings. He picked up the manufacturing schematics in front of him again, checking them against the parts he had just created to see if anything was missing.

This action made Fang Tangtang, who had just begun to regain her confidence in him, scowl once more.

'I thought he said he finished reading it?'

'Why is he looking at it again?'

Guan San was also at a loss for words. 'As expected, he's still not familiar enough with the process,' he thought.

Gao Neng studied the schematics for two or three minutes before putting them down again. The Electric Saber wasn't overly complex to build, but it wasn't

simple either. Normally, the parts would still require some polishing after being created.

After confirming nothing was missing, he thought for a moment and decided to symbolically pick up a tool and do a bit of polishing. 'Can't make it look *too* easy, right?'

He spent ten minutes polishing.

By this time, Zhuo Bing had finished manufacturing more than half of his parts.

Gao Neng decided not to wait any longer.

He began the assembly.

He controlled the parts directly with his Spiritual Power. Uneven joints? Not a chance. With his perfect manufacturing process and his control over energy manipulation, on the manufacturing table, small parts could be seen dancing in the air. In just the blink of an eye, a short-bladed Electric Saber dagger was fully assembled.

"Done." Gao Neng finished and presented the Electric Saber to Zheng Hai.

"D-Done? D-Don't you need to check it?" Zheng Hai's expression flickered. He was clearly stunned, but he didn't immediately take the Electric Saber.

Instead, he shot a furtive glance at Zhuo Bing.

He was still making parts!

"Oh? Should I check it again, then?" Gao Neng knew, of course, that it needed to be checked. But with his 100% success rate, he didn't really need to test it.

Still, he had to put on a show.

Gao Neng infused energy into the Electric Saber. Instantly, arcs of electricity crackled across its surface.

He swung the blade down.

The test stone on the manufacturing table split in two, the cut perfectly smooth.

...

Silence.

Then, a thunderous uproar of astonished cries.

"It actually worked?!"

"Success on the first try?! How is that possible... This is his first time ever making an Electric Saber! He'd never even seen the schematics for it before!"

"Is this what talent looks like? Is the gap between us and a genius really that huge?"

The surrounding Manufacturing Masters were all dumbfounded.

Zhuo Bing was already considered a genius among them, but in front of Gao Neng, he seemed as helpless as a child.

One side was already finished.

The other was still making parts...

"I-I-I... My speed is... is pretty fast..." Zhuo Bing was starting to panic. He remembered what Director Zheng had told him when he called him over.

It was supposed to be an exchange, a teaching moment.

The only condition was: failure was not an option!

And now?

He had failed!

What's more, he had lost to Gao Neng on his very first attempt at making an Electric Saber. He couldn't believe it. No matter how he looked at it, he couldn't accept it as reality.

"This Gao Neng... it can't be his first time making an Electric Saber!"

"Exactly! He only looked at the schematics for five minutes. How could he possibly have memorized all the parts and then succeeded on his first try?!"

"I've got it! He's doing it on purpose... pretending it's his first time! In reality, making Electric Sabers must be his specialty!"

The surrounding Manufacturing Masters began to speculate again.

Guan San's brow twitched as well. A similar thought had occurred to him: perhaps this wasn't Gao Neng's first time making an Electric Saber.

But he couldn't voice such thoughts.

Fang Tangtang, however, knew better.

Gao Neng had only learned energy materialization a little over half a month ago. Since then, he had spent almost all his time training with her. Where would he have found the time to practice making Electric Sabers?

Unless he had learned it back in the Forgotten Land.

But that was even more impossible.

The educational standards in the Forgotten Land were notoriously poor. How could anyone there have taught Gao Neng how to make an Electric Saber? The possibility was practically zero.

"Gao Neng, I knew you were the best!" Fang Tangtang cheered at the perfect moment. Gao Neng had won, and she had finally regained some face.

Hearing Fang Tangtang's words, Zheng Hai's expression was grim and uncertain.

In the end, however, he gritted his teeth.

"Mr. Gao, your skills are exquisite. We underestimated you. We wholeheartedly concede defeat in the Electric Saber contest. However, the upcoming Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor is considerably more complex. It has a great many parts and will likely take a significant amount of time. Would you care to get something to eat first and resume the competition this afternoon, Mr. Gao?"

"No need. I'm fast enough. If Director Zheng isn't hungry, we can start right away." Gao Neng shook his head. Having succeeded on his first try, he was feeling on top of the world.

He had little interest in such foreplay.

He had come to the Celestial King Group this time to build an Electromagnetic Cannon. An Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor was a trivial matter he could handle in minutes.

Since he was going to be flashy, he had to adopt a flashy attitude. He wouldn't just beat Zhuo Bing and Zheng Hai; he would crush them so completely they'd be left speechless.

Chapter 168 - 158: This Guy Is Really a Monster

In the end, Zheng Hai didn't say anything more.

The materials for the Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor were quickly prepared. The two men once again stood on opposite sides of the manufacturing table. The difference was, this time, the one standing before Gao Neng was Zheng Hai.

The technical director of the Third Manufacturing Plant.

Meanwhile, Gao Neng, as usual, picked up the manufacturing blueprints for the Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor and began flipping through them page by page.

Time ticked by, second by second.

Zheng Hai watched this scene, his expression flickering. He was tempted to start first. After all, if he lost this round with the Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor, the Third Manufacturing Plant would truly be disgraced.

But to start while his opponent was still reading the blueprints...

It seemed a bit dishonorable.

Zheng Hai was torn.

He had already figured it out. Gao Neng could use energy materialization, making him much faster at manufacturing parts. Zheng Hai's main advantages were his experience and proficiency.

If Gao Neng made a mistake manufacturing the parts, or fumbled the assembly, then he could naturally win the competition.

'But what if he doesn't make any mistakes?'

'Impossible!'

'Even the most skilled Manufacturing Master is bound to make a mistake when creating something as complex as a full-body battle armor. There's no reason he wouldn't slip up...'

'But what if...?'

"Director Zheng, you don't have to wait for me. You can start first. After all, I'm faster at making parts than you are. Your advantage lies in your familiarity with the blueprints. If you give that up, I'd be the one getting a bargain," Gao Neng said with a slight smile, glancing at Zheng Hai's conflicted expression.

"How arrogant!"

"That's just outrageously arrogant!"

"Director Zheng, show him the real skill of our Third Manufacturing Plant!"

Hearing this, the surrounding Manufacturing Masters all flushed slightly.

Zheng Hai took a deep breath, glanced at Guan San, and finally gritted his teeth.
"Since Mr. Gao has put it that way, I won't be polite!"

As his voice fell, Zheng Hai got to work.

Compared to Zhuo Bing, Zheng Hai's movements were clearly more practiced. With his left and right hands, he drew two completely different streams of liquid energy from the ore.

"Look, Director Zheng is using both hands!"

"Manufacturing two parts at the same time! He's our Third Manufacturing Plant's technical director, all right."

"If only I could be as amazing as Director Zheng one day... Sigh. A shame. I'll probably never reach that level in my lifetime."

The surrounding Manufacturing Masters cheered at the appropriate moment.

Gao Neng, however, wasn't too surprised.

'Home-field advantage.'

'We're competing in the Third Manufacturing Plant. If the people here didn't cheer for Zheng Hai, there'd be no point in him being the technical director anymore.'

He continued to study the blueprints.

The structure of the Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor was far more complex than the Electric Saber's. There were a total of thirty-four pages of blueprints, each covered with diagrams of parts, both large and small.

The notes on their functions and positions were incredibly detailed.

Moreover, there were numerical labels like 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7... and the last few pages detailed the assembly process according to these numbers.

Normally, it would take at least half an hour just to read through the blueprints once. As for memorizing the entire structure, that would probably be impossible in less than half a month.

Of course, one could also read and assemble at the same time...

But doing so would naturally slow one down considerably.

Gao Neng wasn't in a hurry. He took his time reading.

'Hasn't he started yet? It seems he's never made an Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor before...' Zheng Hai thought, inwardly sighing in relief as he watched Gao Neng, who was still studying the blueprints.

His advantage lay in his familiarity with the construction and size of every part, and with the entire assembly structure. He had manufactured no fewer than a thousand sets of Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor with his own hands.

If Zhuo Bing had lost due to the speed of part manufacturing...

...then how could he possibly lose?

The Electric Saber had a total of 27 parts.

Its manufacturing difficulty could be considered D-rank at most.

But the Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor had a total of 305 parts. If even one of them was faulty, completing the armor's assembly would be impossible.

Although both were considered basic equipment, the manufacturing difficulty for this one reached B+ rank.

'There's no way I can lose!'

Time flowed by again...

「Fifteen minutes later.」

Zheng Hai had already produced 53 parts.

This manufacturing speed was at least a third faster than Zhuo Bing's. Furthermore, based on his experience, at least 90% of these parts should be up to standard.

'There's no way I can lose now, right?'

'I'm already performing way above my usual level!'

Just as he was thinking this...

Gao Neng set down the blueprints.

'Finished reading in just fifteen minutes? That's so fast. Normally, you couldn't get through it in under half an hour. What a genius... Still, even so, he's probably only read it once, right? When it comes to making the parts, he'll probably have to keep picking up the blueprints to check...' Zheng Hai was slightly startled. The part he was halfway through crafting suddenly developed a small crack.

'Dammit!'

Zheng Hai cursed inwardly and tossed the faulty part aside.

'Calm down...'

'I have to stay calm!'

'I have an absolute advantage right now. There's no way I can lose to Gao Neng. After all, he's just a freshman who's barely started university.'

'How can he compare to a veteran Manufacturing Master like me, with over twenty years of experience?'

Zheng Hai did his best to calm himself.

But the scene that followed made it rather difficult for him to remain calm.

Because Gao Neng once again revealed his wild side. His hands swept over a pile of ore, and a massive surge of energy gushed out.

'What a f—... What a strong talent! At least 80% to 90% efficiency! And with that control over his Spiritual Power... a decent opponent. Too bad he's just a rookie!' Sweat began to bead on Zheng Hai's forehead.

But he clenched his jaw, his hands becoming rock-steady, no longer making mistakes like before. He quickly finished crafting the part in his hands.

But just as he completed it, he heard a series of clanging sounds...

Gao Neng had also begun manufacturing parts.

The difference was...

...he was making seven or eight parts at once.

"..." Zheng Hai finally understood how Zhuo Bing had felt earlier.

'This is so fucking ridiculous!'

'Using a killer move like energy materialization just to make parts...'

'It's just bullying!'

'Calm. I need to stay calm.'

'I still have the advantage. He made seven or eight parts in one go. Logically, he should have to go back and check the blueprints again now.'

Zheng Hai constantly tried to console himself.

Then, he heard another series of clangs.

Another five or six parts of varying sizes appeared in a pile in front of Gao Neng. Moreover, after the parts landed, they were arranged neatly in the order of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7...

"Do you have to be this fast?! Do you have to be so damn fast?!" Zheng Hai's eyes went red. He had spent fifteen minutes making over fifty parts.

And Gao Neng?

In half a minute, more than ten parts had appeared.

'Stay calm...'

'Zheng Hai, you have to stay calm!'

'You have over fifty parts. You still have the advantage...'

Zheng Hai forced himself to be calm, but his back was already unconsciously soaked with sweat. Never before had he felt such immense pressure.

In fact, it wasn't just him.

The surrounding Manufacturing Masters also felt a powerful aura erupting from Gao Neng. It was like watching a king who ruled over the factory.

With a wave of his hand, several parts appeared.

Another wave...

...and a few more parts appeared.

"Elder Guan, what do you think now?" Fang Tangtang's face was blooming with a smile, as if she had completely forgotten her own bet. Her gaze turned to Guan San.

"His speed is fast... but being a Manufacturing Master isn't just about speed. If the parts don't fit together, they have to be remade. Plus, it's easy for problems to arise..." Guan San shook his head lightly, but he subconsciously wiped a drop of sweat from his forehead.

Because, even he had to admit in his heart.

Gao Neng's speed was damn fast!

"CLANG CLANG CLANG!"

"CLANG..."

"..."

Amidst the surrounding chatter,

Gao Neng's speed at materializing parts only grew faster. One by one, the parts condensed in mid-air like raindrops before falling onto the manufacturing table.

More and more, and more and more...

「Five minutes later.」

Gao Neng had already made over 60 parts.

And Zheng Hai, likewise, had over 60.

"Keep it up, Director Zheng. I'm about to catch up to you," Gao Neng said, pausing. He then casually flipped through the manufacturing blueprints in front of him.

"..." Zheng Hai's face was dark.

He had started manufacturing fifteen minutes early and thought he had an absolute advantage. But after a short five minutes, that advantage had been completely erased.

'We're even?!'

'Son of a bitch...'

'This guy is a real monster!'

"Alright, I'm starting again. Take your time, Director Zheng, no need to rush," Gao Neng added consolingly when Zheng Hai didn't respond.

Then, he resumed manufacturing.

After looking at the blueprints, his speed was even faster than before. With a wave of his hand, ten parts dropped down.

Zheng Hai's eyes nearly popped out of his head.

He was the technical director of the Third Manufacturing Plant. He had manufactured over a thousand sets of Anti-Magnetic Battle Armor and was as familiar with each part as if it were his own child.

As such, he certainly wasn't blind. He could tell whether the parts in front of Gao Neng were qualified or not.

'They're all qualified!'

'These parts... they're all perfectly acceptable products!'

'He made over 70 parts in one go...'

'And they're all qualified.'

'That's the most terrifying part, isn't it?'

'Am I going to lose? Am I really going to lose...? No, there's still the assembly. If he's not familiar with it, assembly is the hardest part!' Zheng Hai's mind was in turmoil, but he kept trying to psych himself up.

'I can't lose.'

'How can I possibly lose?!'

The speed of Zheng Hai's part manufacturing began to accelerate unconsciously. His hands constantly picked up various tools to hammer at the parts.

He started to focus completely on his work.

He no longer watched Gao Neng's every move.

This was a necessary skill for a mature, high-level Manufacturing Master: focus, imperviousness to external influences, and refusing to be led by the opponent's rhythm. He possessed all these qualities.

'Calm!'

'I'm in top form today.'

'I can perform beyond my usual level. If I can't beat him in speed, I'll compete on quality. And if my quality isn't enough... No, my quality can't be lacking. As a last resort, I can bet on success rate?'

'Could he possibly succeed at assembly on his first try?!'

Chapter 169 - 159: My Trump Card Is Just That Badass

...

「Half an hour later.」

A pile of more than 170 parts sat in front of Zheng Hai.

This allowed him to breathe a slight sigh of relief. He reached up and wiped the sweat from his forehead. 'With this level of focus, my speed is incredibly fast, isn't it?'

As he thought this, his gaze drifted unconsciously to the other side of the room.

That one glance...

...was almost enough to make him fall to his knees.

Because Gao Neng was already assembling the anti-magnetic battle armor.

"Wh-when did he finish making all the parts?!" Zheng Hai felt as if he'd been struck by lightning. His gaze turned dull and vacant.

'He finished making all the parts?!'

'Not only did he finish the parts, but he's already almost halfway done with the assembly?'

'Does he have to be so ridiculous?'

'Can't he leave me even a sliver of a chance?'

Zheng Hai's heart ached with bitterness. Gao Neng's speed was so terrifying it didn't seem human. How could anyone be this fast?

He had never seen anything like it.

Even with Energy Materialization, it should be impossible!

'What in the world is going on?'

Zheng Hai couldn't figure it out.

In truth, it wasn't just him. The surrounding Manufacturing Masters were also trapped in a state of shock, unable to pull themselves out of it. They had all personally witnessed Gao Neng complete the fabrication of every single part.

It was too fast!

parts, without a single moment of rest in between.

Moreover, he had finished manufacturing all of them five minutes ago.

In other words, Gao Neng had finished making 305 parts in just over half an hour. To call his speed monstrous would not be an exaggeration in the slightest.

If not for the fact that the two were focused on their competition, they would have long since cried out in astonishment.

'The assembly... can he succeed?' This question was on the minds of all the Manufacturing Masters.

Guan San and Fang Tangtang were wondering the same thing.

Gao Neng, however, wasn't thinking about any of that. He was now deeply appreciating the usefulness of his second magnetic core. He could achieve 400% focus without having to sing.

'If not for this...'

'...I probably would have had to start singing 'Three Hundred Nursery Rhymes' again.'

He imagined it: Zheng Hai making parts while he himself was over here singing loudly. The mental image... was just too beautiful to behold.

'I'll just slow down the assembly a little. It's a guaranteed win anyway.' Gao Neng's hands moved ceaselessly, putting the battle armor together, while he used his Spiritual Power to directly control and assemble the smaller parts.

In truth, he could have been even faster.

But he felt there was no need to crush the man's spirit like this. After all, what he'd done was enough.

His enhanced focus made his learning ability faster than ever. In the minds of Zheng Hai and the others, he had at most looked at the manufacturing schematics only once.

But in reality, he had read through them three times.

Images from the diagrams flashed continuously through his mind as Gao Neng's hands flew, grabbing parts and fitting them into place. Cutting through the

complexity like a sharp knife through a tangled mess, he smoothly completed a full set of anti-magnetic battle armor fifteen minutes later.

And this was the result of him deliberately slowing down.

If he had gone at his maximum speed, he estimated he could have been about five minutes faster.

"Phew..." Gao Neng let out a breath. 'That felt great.'

Meanwhile, the surrounding Manufacturing Masters stared wide-eyed at the set of anti-magnetic battle armor sitting on the manufacturing platform, rubbing their eyes again and again.

It wasn't a trick of the light.

There really was a set of battle armor on the manufacturing platform.

A complete set.

Furthermore, besides the armor itself, there wasn't a single spare part left over. This meant that during his manufacturing process, Gao Neng hadn't wasted a single bit of material.

"He finished?!"

"He really finished? In less than an hour, he completed a full set of battle armor!"

"From fabrication to assembly... Just who is he?"

This time, the Manufacturing Masters were truly and utterly stunned.

Regardless of whether Gao Neng's assembly was successful or not, even if it failed, just reaching this stage was enough for his strength to earn everyone's recognition.

As for Zheng Hai...

...his expression was stiff.

In fact, the moment he saw Gao Neng begin the assembly, he had already stopped what he was doing. His gaze had been fixed on Gao Neng's hands, hoping to see him make a mistake.

But in the end, from start to finish, right up until the battle armor was completely assembled...

...for the entire fifteen minutes...

...Gao Neng's movements hadn't just been flawless, they hadn't even paused for a second. It was like watching someone stack building blocks, and in a moment, the whole thing was finished.

"Mr. Gao, I... I've lost..." Zheng Hai sighed.

"Director Zheng, he hasn't even tested the armor's performance yet! Assembled so quickly... there's no way this armor is functional, right?" Zhuo Bing, who had been standing to the side, sounded unwilling to accept the outcome.

"Shut up, Zhuo Bing. A loss is a loss. You've built anti-magnetic battle armor before. Can't you tell?" Zheng Hai's eyes narrowed.

"I... I..." Zhuo Bing was speechless.

"This set of armor is perfectly constructed. Every part is up to standard, and the assembly is flawless. Even at my peak, this is the best I could possibly do. What's more, Mr. Gao did it in less than an hour!" Zheng Hai turned his gaze back to Gao Neng and spoke with sincerity.

"Director Zheng's skill is beyond question, and your ability to accept defeat so gracefully is admirable. I believe that with you as the technical director, the Third Manufacturing Plant will go far." Gao Neng didn't offer any phony platitudes about it being a fluke or just good luck.

A win was a win.

Besides, he had won through his own ability. What was there to be modest about?

Still, Zheng Hai's direct concession surprised him a little. At the very least, it proved that Zheng Hai was a man of decent character, magnanimous enough to accept others' strengths.

"Mr. Gao, I have a question I'd like to ask..."

"Let's skip the questions. The path I walk may not necessarily be a good fit for you, Director Zheng. You just need to walk your own path well, and that will be enough." Gao Neng naturally knew what Zheng Hai wanted to ask.

Chapter 170 - 1159: My Trump Card Is Just That Awesome

Technique? Completely unnecessary.

All that mattered was a talent that steamrolled over everything.

But would he ever say that out loud?

"Hahaha, alright. Everyone's been busy for over an hour, and it's getting late. Gao Neng, why don't we take a break?" Guan San spoke up with a smile.

"Of course. Whatever you say, Elder Guan," Gao Neng nodded.

'He knows, of course, that Guan San is going to report to Fang Yuan. After all, Fang Yuan wasn't present during his competition with Zheng Hai and the others.'

"Hahaha, let's go, Gao Neng!" Fang Tangtang laughed, skipping gleefully to his side. She grabbed his arm and began to lead him out.

"Take care, Miss. Take care, Mr. Gao!" Zheng Hai said, bowing respectfully.

The surrounding Manufacturing Masters were all equally respectful.

Gao Neng had demonstrated his capabilities.

Even though Gao Neng had shown no intention of explaining anything to them, in the world of technical arts, strength equated to status and respect.

What's more, Gao Neng was only eighteen. An eighteen-year-old genius Manufacturing Master—the very idea was beyond their comprehension.

Gao Neng didn't say much else.

He followed Fang Tangtang out of the Third Manufacturing Plant, down a corridor, and back into the research center building. From there, he was led into a private dining room.

'Are they treating me to a meal?'

'If we're eating, Fang Yuan should be coming, right?' Gao Neng glanced at the door. He had the patience to wait now.

...

「Twenty minutes later.」

The door to the private room was pushed open.

Fang Yuan walked in with a hearty laugh, followed closely by Guan San, who also wore a faint smile.

'Based on my calculations, it should've taken Guan San forty minutes to an hour to make his report, but Fang Yuan showed up in just twenty. So... this is the benefit of being high-profile.'

"Interesting, very interesting... So young and promising. Gao Neng, I hear from Guan San... you put that kid Wang Hai in a rather awkward spot, eh?" Fang Yuan said the moment he walked in.

"Naturally," Gao Neng replied with a serious nod.

"Naturally?" Fang Yuan faltered for a second, apparently not expecting such a reply, but he quickly recovered.

'Looks like this kid isn't just arrogant; he's also unpredictable. Shouldn't you be a little more modest?'

It wasn't that Gao Neng wasn't humble.

It was just that he knew if he acted humbly, Fang Yuan would press his advantage and ask him exactly how he had so easily defeated Zheng Hai and the others.

'Could he tell Fang Yuan that? Not a chance!'

"Haha, you remind me of myself back in the day!" Fang Yuan said, finding a new topic after composing himself. He gave Gao Neng a long, meaningful look.

"However, there's something I don't quite understand."

"Grandpa Fang, everyone has their secrets, don't they?" Gao Neng knew exactly what Fang Yuan wanted to ask, but with this question, not answering would be more effective than answering.

'A little mystery... Sometimes, you have to put on an act. Otherwise, if you lay all your cards on the table, why would they still invest in you?'

"Secrets, eh? Hahaha... You're right. Let's not talk about it, then. Let's eat," Fang Yuan said, not pressing the matter further. He began to order.

"Dad, Gao Neng has already proven his abilities. You can invest in him now, right?" Fang Tangtang chimed in at the perfect moment.

"Haha, let's eat first," Fang Yuan said with a wave of his hand.

"No need to rush. Let's stick to the original agreement: we'll talk about the investment after I've built the Electromagnetic Cannon." Of course, Gao Neng knew exactly what Fang Yuan was thinking.

Since he couldn't get a verbal answer out of Gao Neng, how could a shrewd businessman like Fang Yuan give up so easily?

If he couldn't get an answer, the best solution was naturally to watch Gao Neng build an Electromagnetic Cannon with his own eyes. If he still couldn't figure anything out after that, then no matter how reluctant he was, Fang Yuan would be out of options.

"Fine. Then we'll do as we said: you have two and a half days to build one Electromagnetic Cannon." Fang Yuan nodded. If it hadn't been for today's display, he might have just given Gao Neng the money and sent him on his way.

But now that things had come to this, he couldn't just hand it over.

"That won't be necessary. I've just warmed up, so two days will be plenty," Gao Neng said, shaking his head. After all, half a day had already gone by.

"Two days..." The corner of Guan San's mouth twitched.

'You've got some nerve! This is the Celestial King Group, one of the top arsenals in the City of Hope, and you're just a first-year military academy cadet. Not an ounce of humility in you.'

Then again, Gao Neng really did have the right to be arrogant.

On this point, even Guan San couldn't say much.

...

The meal took an hour.

After the meal, Fang Yuan left immediately, dragging Fang Tangtang along with him.

Guan San, meanwhile, led Gao Neng to the third floor of the research center. This was the core area of the Celestial King Group: the Manufacturing Blueprint Research, Development, and Storage Center.

"President Guan, Mr. Gao."

"Yes. Get a copy of the manufacturing blueprints for the Number 3 Electromagnetic Cannon for Mr. Gao."

"Of course. Mr. Gao, please follow me." The beautiful receptionist nodded and led Gao Neng toward the blueprint storage area.

Guan San, however, didn't follow them.

As the two of them walked, one in front of the other, a flicker of curiosity sparked in Gao Neng's mind.

"Electromagnetic Cannons have different models?"

"Yes. Depending on the caliber, the Electromagnetic Cannons are divided into Special No. 1, Special No. 2... as well as No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3. The Number 3 is suited for personal combat; it's lightweight and portable," the receptionist explained, sneaking another glance at Gao Neng. 'He's so handsome,' she thought with admiration. 'Way more handsome than those tech nerds... It would be wonderful if I could see Mr. Gao all the time.'

"Could you give me a more detailed breakdown?"

"If you're interested in the Electromagnetic Cannons, Mr. Gao, I can give you a detailed explanation, but... I'd need to make a phone call first," the receptionist said, hesitating slightly.

"That's fine," Gao Neng nodded. 'It makes sense that she'd need to get approval from a superior for something involving technical details.'

Instead of making the call immediately, the receptionist first led Gao Neng to the file storage room and retrieved a copy of the manufacturing blueprints for the Number 3 Electromagnetic Cannon.

Gao Neng took a quick look...

'Holy cow!'

At least 200 pages of schematics.

It was a thick stack, almost like a book.

However, these were all manufacturing blueprints, so they were a bit different from a book.

"Please wait a moment, Mr. Gao. I'm going to make a call." The receptionist had no intention of rushing him out; after all, she'd already heard that he was Fang Tangtang's classmate.

Furthermore, word of what happened at the Third Manufacturing Plant this morning—about a genius Manufacturing Master—had already spread throughout the Celestial King Group.

She saw no need for excessive caution.

However, the receptionist didn't go far.

Bored, Gao Neng let his gaze wander over the shelves, which were labeled with all sorts of manufacturing blueprints for Electromagnetic Cannons.

An entire cabinet full.

'Huh? A Number 4 Electromagnetic Cannon?' Gao Neng recalled that the receptionist hadn't mentioned this model in her introduction. 'Wasn't Number 3 supposed to be the smallest? Why is there a Number 4?'

Curious, he picked it up for a look.

This set of blueprints was noticeably thinner, with probably fewer than 100 pages. The design also looked much more compact.

Gao Neng remembered the Electromagnetic Cannon Fang Tangtang had was very big and bulky...

But this one was much more streamlined.

'This one looks a bit simpler. Two days... wouldn't I have a better chance of success if I build an easier one?' Gao Neng mused. 'Either way, I'm building an Electromagnetic Cannon. I never specified it had to be the Number 3, right? Since there's a simpler Number 4 right here, why not build that one instead?'