

## I CAN CONTROL RESOURCES

### Chapter 221 - 198: Prince... Don't Die

"A conspiracy?!"

The news sent a shockwave through the armies of more than twenty races, and every face changed.

"Dammit! They made us come all this way just to sic us on the Human Alliance! Are they openly making fools of us?! We will not let this go!"

"Charge in!"

"We demand justice!"

"Queen, what do you have to say for yourself now? The Celestial Race's Sixth Prince has admitted it. You conspired together to humiliate us, and you're still standing here putting on a false front?"

The princes had been suspicious from the start. They had chased them all the way from Elf City to the Celestial Race Royal City, and now their suspicions were confirmed. How could they not be furious?

"The Dark Night Elf Clan knew nothing of this!" Elf Queen Una's face was as cold as frost. She truly never expected the Sixth Prince, Mueller, to expose the whole affair.

'This is really going to tear the heavens asunder!'

'Doesn't he know the consequences?'

'The fury of more than twenty races... Forget her Dark Night Elf Clan; even the Celestial Race and the Dark Night Elf Clan combined couldn't withstand it, could they?'

Elf Queen Una had originally intended to stop the situation from escalating, but now she found that not only was it beyond her control, she could barely protect herself.

The princes were truly enraged.

They had traveled a thousand leagues for the sake of "romance," only to be shown the extraordinarily beautiful Seventh Princess, which gave them hope.

But now, that hope was shattered.

As the saying goes, the deeper the love, the deeper the wound...

Their hearts broke in an instant.

Although they were wary of the Elf Queen's power and didn't dare to make a move against her...

...they had no such reservations about a mere Sixth Prince of the Celestial Race. After all, they were all princes of their own races, and several among them were even the next in line to be Clan King.

"Dammit! I'm going to get justice, whether you all join me or not... do as you please!" a hideous-looking prince was the first to explode with rage.

"All of you, get him! Seize the Sixth Prince!"

"Kill!"

He quickly found followers.

At that moment, their rage finally translated into action.

Under the princes' orders, the army of several thousand, formed from twenty different races, finally made their move.

Among these thousands of troops, the weakest were at Tier Four. Moreover, Tier Five and Tier Six warriors made up the majority, and there was no shortage of high-tier combatants.

An army this terrifying, even without any teamwork, was still a dreadful force.

BOOM!

The Hill Giant Race was the first to attack.

A seven-meter-tall, high-tier giant charged forward, slamming into the main gate of the Celestial Race Royal City and shattering it to pieces.

The Beast Race, the Northern Cave Race... they all scrambled to pour inside!

Then, the Winged Race dived down from the sky.

SCREECH!

They immediately stopped the Guard Army on the walls of the Celestial Race Royal City from firing their arrows. They tore through the Guard Army's formations with their sharp talons, buying time for the other races to storm the gate.

The riot had officially begun.

"You can't attack the city... you can't! Sixth Prince Mueller, you... what have you done?!" Elf Queen Una's face was pale. Although she hadn't taken action, she was standing with the armies of the various races.

Most importantly, she didn't understand. This plan was clearly proposed by the Celestial Race, so why was it ultimately ruined by one of their own?

'Where did it all go wrong?'

'And my Seventh Princess, is she safe right now?'

"Her Majesty the Queen, should we help?" a Great Elf asked.

"Help? Who do you want to help?!"

"The Celestial Race, of course... We and the Celestial Race..."

"Silence! Our objective is to rescue the Seventh Princess. She is in the Sixth Prince's palace right now. Remember our mission—it is the Seventh Princess, understand?" Elf Queen Una's gaze turned cold. It wasn't that she didn't want to help, but at a time like this, how could she possibly help the Celestial Race?

"Yes!" The Great Elf immediately understood Elf Queen Una's thinking. To sit on the mountain and watch the tigers fight—it was indeed the best strategy for now.

...

「Inside the Sixth Prince's palace.」

With the High-tier Lizardmen joining the fray, the first floor had been completely wrecked. Forget silencing the Lizardmen by killing them; the Sixth Prince could barely protect himself.

"Insolent, low-class lizards! You dare run rampant in my palace?! Send the signal! Have the Great Angel Corps rush over as reinforcements!" Sixth Prince Mueller ordered as he retreated.

"Yes, sir!" a guard immediately responded.

The signal was sent!

A brilliant starlight flared to life above the palace.

Almost at the same instant the starlight appeared, a beam of white light shone in through one of the palace windows, and a middle-aged man entered from the doorway.

The Commander of the Great Angel Corps, Huo Gu.

A high-tier Angel!

"Huo Gu greets His Highness, the Sixth Prince!"

"Quickly, Commander Huo! Kill these Lizardmen! Leave none alive!" Seeing the Great Angel appear, the Sixth Prince's expression finally relaxed a little.

"As His Highness the Prince commands!" Huo Gu didn't ask why.

The Great Angel Corps existed to protect the Royal Race of the Celestials. With the Sixth Prince's life in danger, he naturally took action without hesitation.

The light of his bright battle armor shone brilliantly.

The moment Huo Gu attacked, the High-tier Lizardman was suppressed.

This was a racial advantage.

The other races were collectively called the Hundred Races, but in reality, there weren't actually that many. Furthermore, they were divided into major and minor races.

For example, the Hill Giant Race was a branch of the Barbarian Race.

And the Lizard Race was a branch of the Beastman Race.

Of course, now that the Lizard Race had its own Strongest—a lizard that had evolved into a fire dragon—they could no longer be dominated by the Beastman Race.

The same was true for the Hill Giant Race.

Once a Hill Giant became one of the Strongest, the Hill Giant Race split off from the Barbarian Race, gaining their own territory and Royal City.

However, although the Hill Giant Race and the Lizard Race had separated from the Barbarian and Beast Races, there was still a huge gap between them and the Celestial Race.

The Celestial Race was a true major race, and a particularly powerful one at that. Even among high-tier individuals, the difference in combat strength was immediately obvious.

Huo Gu fought the high-tier Lizardman for less than five exchanges.

The high-tier Lizardman was slammed into the wall.

He almost couldn't be pried off.

"Send for help! Send for help from His Highness the Fourth Prince! The Celestial Race has deployed the Great Angel Corps! Tell His Highness the Prince to send reinforcements at once!" the High-tier Lizardman roared.

BOOM!

A ball of fire shot out from the palace.

The Lizardman had sent the signal.

A fiery red lizard quickly coalesced in the sky.

Outside the Royal City, when the Lizard Race's Fourth Prince saw the fiery red lizard in the sky, his expression changed drastically. He naturally recognized it as a call for help.

"Damn it! How dare the Celestial Race bully my Lizard Race as if we have no powerful warriors!" the Fourth Prince raged.

The Lizard Race had always been a branch race, only achieving its current development after so many years. He was not about to lose a high-tier Lizardman Warrior here for nothing.

So, after seeing the signal, he hesitated for a moment before finally crushing a bone tablet in his hand.

**BOOM!**

An ancient aura surged into the sky.

Meanwhile, the battle above the Royal City had intensified with the arrival of the Great Angel Corps. Casualties on both sides were skyrocketing.

The Great Angel Corps was incredibly strong in combat.

But the Allied Army of more than twenty races had the advantage in numbers.

After several exchanges...

Three Great Angels fell in pools of their own blood.

These were all high-tier elites of the Celestial Race, their true ace army.

Of course, even more had fallen from the racial armies. A full six high-tier warriors died on the spot.

The princes' fury finally prompted a reaction from the White Tower.

SWISH!

SWISH!

Several figures shot out from the White Tower like beams of white light illuminating the night. They were majestic, they were sacred, and they radiated a powerful aura.

"Stop!"

A furious roar echoed between heaven and earth.

A majestic aura pressed down from the distance.

The armies of the races were all stunned.

They could all sense the aura of the experts emerging from the White Tower. Those three figures were not ordinary high-tier beings, but were at the King realm within the high-tiers.

Tiers Seven and Eight were called high-tier.

And Tier Nine...

...was called the King realm!

The Celestial Race King had appeared!

No matter how furious the racial armies were, they still instinctively stopped fighting.

They had come to demand justice.

Not to exterminate the Celestial Race.

Besides, if it really came to extermination, their suitor army was far from sufficient. After all, the Celestial Race still had a Strongest presiding over the White Tower.

"Stop!"

"I'd like to see what the Celestial Race King has to say for himself."

"Our clan's elite warriors died in battle in the Celestial Race Royal City today. You must give us a satisfactory answer."

The princes all stepped forward.

Their gazes were all fixed on the three figures flying over from the sky.

Three beings at the King realm.

It was clear just how formidable the Celestial Race was.

But just as all eyes were focused on the Celestial Race King, a blood-curdling scream suddenly rang out.

The sound came from a corner of the Celestial Race Royal City. It was a very secluded spot, a good place to hide and avoid the crossfire.

And the one who had screamed was...

...none other than the prince of the Winged Race.

The Winged Race possessed the innate ability to fly. In the air, their power was greatly enhanced, but when they were on the ground, their strength was quite ordinary.

The Winged Race prince who had come to propose marriage was ordinary in appearance, and his strength... was also ordinary.

He was only at the Tier Three Late Stage.

He was even a little weaker than the Seventh Princess.

So, when the elites of the Winged Race joined the battle, he had obediently found a hidden spot to hide, because the Great Angel Corps could also fly.

He had no reason to fly into the sky just to get himself killed.

"Is that the Winged Race's prince?!"

"What?"

"It's that damnable Earth-Digging Angel! He... he actually took the opportunity to kill the Winged Race's prince?!"

The other princes' faces changed dramatically when they saw the fallen Winged Race prince.

If it were just a conflict between the two sides where some guards or even elites died, it wouldn't be a big deal. After all, friction between the different races was common.

But now, a prince had been killed...

The meaning was completely different.

"Ah, Your Highness! Your Highness! Shameless Celestial Race, give us back our prince's life! The Winged Race will never rest until you are destroyed!" The

Winged Race elites who had just stopped fighting were instantly overcome with grief. They could no longer remain calm, because the prince they were supposed to protect was dead, which meant they would be put to death as well.

## Chapter 222 - 199: Strongest, Charge

A chill ran down the backs of the princes from the other races as well. Originally, they had relied on their status, believing that even if war broke out, the Celestial Race wouldn't dare to kill them.

But the death of the Winged Race Prince served as a warning.

The Celestial Race truly dared to kill a prince.

They were in danger as well. The Celestial Race King had arrived, bringing the total number of King-level beings to three—a force their current power could not stand against.

Since that was the case...

They had to go all out.

There was nothing to hesitate about!

"BOOM!"

Following the Lizard Race's Fourth Prince, another ancient aura shot up into the sky.

And then, a third, a fourth, a fifth, a sixth...

One aura after another rose up in succession.

This caused the expression of the Celestial Race King, Mu Ying, who had just arrived on the Royal City's walls, to change drastically. He naturally knew what these ancient auras signified.

'But the problem is, I just got here!'

'I don't even know what happened.'

"Stop! What do you think you're doing?! This is Celestial Race territory! I will not tolerate your insolence here!" Celestial Race King Mu Ying possessed immense authority; he was one of the top experts among the King-level beings.

In the past, no one would have dared to refute his words.

But today...

He found himself having to repeat what he'd said.

"Don't listen to his nonsense! He just killed the Winged Race Prince! The Celestial Race's sinister intentions are now clear for all to see! If we want to survive, our only option is to secure the evidence! Otherwise, it will be too late once the evidence is destroyed!" a voice immediately shouted.

"Nonsense! When has my Celestial Race ever needed to destroy evidence for its actions? Who dares to slander the king of my Celestial Race? Step forward!" Celestial Race King Mu Ying didn't speak again, but a Great Angel beside him did.

It was the Legion Commander of the Great Angel Corps.

His gaze swept over the crowd below, incomparably cold.

However, if even Celestial Race King Mu Ying couldn't control the scene, how could a mere Legion Commander possibly manage it?

The princes were all reminded by the words that voice had spoken. Yes, the most urgent task now was to rush into the Sixth Prince's palace, rescue the Seventh Princess, and seize the Sixth Prince.

Otherwise, without evidence, even if they sent out distress signals, they wouldn't have justification on their side. At that point, the Celestial Race could turn the tables and claim they had wantonly attacked the Celestial Race Royal City.

"Mu Clan King, it's not that we are being unreasonable. If you want to stop this battle, you must hand over the Sixth Prince and the Seventh Princess first!"

"That's right! Hand over the Seventh Princess and the Sixth Prince!"

"Hand them over, quickly!"

The princes roared.

But just then, a bloody light shot out from the Sixth Prince's palace.

The High-tier Lizardman had finally been killed.

The Great Angel Huo Gu, with his formidable strength, had slain the High-tier Lizardman, fulfilling the Sixth Prince Mueller's command.

"AHH!! My Lizard Race swears to be irreconcilable enemies with you Celestial Race!" The Lizard Race's Fourth Prince's eyes were bloodshot. The corpse of the High-tier Lizardman flying out meant that all the other Lizardmen had also been brutally killed.

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Underground.

Gao Neng held his breath with all his might.

He had really gone all-in this time. After entering the Sixth Prince's palace, he had put down the Seventh Princess, then ran to another hidden corner and dug another hole.

This was what had made the Lizard Race certain that the Sixth Prince was the real culprit.

And then, he had snuck back under the Royal City. While everyone's attention was on the Celestial Race King, he risked everything to use a Sword Drawing Technique to kill a weakling prince and loudly fanned the flames of their fury. If, after all this, the Allied Army of races still went to attack the Human Alliance, it would be truly unbelievable.

'I've rendered a great service! A huge service!' Gao Neng didn't hesitate any longer; he turned and ran. As for whether the two sides would fight until the world turned upside down, he couldn't be bothered to care.

Quit while you're ahead.

If he kept playing this game and got caught, it would be all over.

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「City of Hope.」

In the Eastern District Fortress, an old man with his eyes closed suddenly snapped them open. They were an extremely peculiar pair of eyes, as if they weren't human eyes at all, but were composed of some special substance.

"The other races are rioting! What's going on? There should have been two more years..." the old man roared, and then shot out of his seclusion chamber into the sky.

It wasn't just the Eastern District Fortress.

Similar events were happening in other parts of the City of Hope.

"Those old geezers from the North District actually left!"

"They're heading toward the Eastern District! What are they trying to do?!"

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"What's with those old geezers from the South District? Are they abandoning their posts?"

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"This is bad! Those guys from the West District have all run off to the Eastern District! What in the world is happening in the Eastern District?!"

...

One voice after another rang out.

Then, the old man from the Eastern District who had burst through his roof received a series of messages.

The ones from the North District are coming! Be careful!

The ones from the South District are coming! Be careful!

The ones from the West District are coming! Be careful!

"..." The Eastern District old man's face was as cold as frost. "What happened? Li Tiannan, you old coot, what the hell did you do in the Elf Race's territory?!"

...

「Outside the Celestial Eagle Camp, in the territory of the Dark Night Elf Clan.」

「Within a valley.」

Li Tiannan opened his eyes. A few birds perched on his body quickly flew away.

'I didn't do anything?!' Li Tiannan felt terribly wronged. He was only responsible for holding the line and hadn't even made a single move. 'What could I possibly have done?'

"You old coot, and you still say you didn't do anything? Do you know how many old geezers are rushing your way right now? At least ten of them!" an angry voice cursed in his ear.

Li Tiannan was frustrated.

He really hadn't done anything.

Of course, he could also feel the unusual auras at this moment.

From the south, the north, the west...

And from the Beast Race territory to the east.

Auras were truly coming over.

There were at least a dozen of them, and he was extremely familiar with all of them.

'Something big has happened!' Li Tiannan's expression changed dramatically. Without any hesitation, he soared into the air, landing like a stream of light at the entrance of a command room in the Celestial Eagle Camp.

The Vice Commander in charge, Major General Chen Yichuan, who was in the command room, shot to his feet. His gaze turned to the command room's entrance, his expression extremely tense.

"Sir... what brings you here?"

"What brings me here? Don't you have any idea?" Li Tiannan's gaze darkened.

'Didn't we agree to only attack up to the second line of defense?'

'What on earth has Chen Yichuan done?'

'Why are a dozen or so Strongest all rushing here at the same time out of nowhere? Are they planning to pull off something big?'

'The problem is...'

'I'm alone right now!'

'Do you know what being alone means?'

"Elder Li, this... I don't understand. Weren't you resting in the valley? Besides, I didn't call for you." Chen Yichuan was in a state of genuine confusion.

He couldn't sense the auras of the Strongest.

Besides, he really hadn't done anything...

Other than sending ten squads into Dark Night Elf City to gather some information, what else had he really done?

"A dozen or so old coots are on their way!"

"Old coots? Sir... you couldn't possibly be talking about those from the other races..."

"That's right. The Strongest of the other races!" Li Tiannan nodded.

"This... This makes no sense. I only sent a few squads to scout for information. Could it be... that these squads stirred up some trouble?" This was all Chen Yichuan could think of.

"What kind of trouble could a few squads cause? Besides, the Dark Night Elf Clan doesn't have any Strongest. There's no way these Strongest would make a move for a minor clan like the Dark Night Elves, unless..."

"Unless what?"

"Would you believe me if I said I can't think of anything?" Li Tiannan truly couldn't figure it out. When had a dozen or so Strongest from other races ever gathered together like this? Nothing like this had happened in over a decade.

"Uh... so what should we do?" Chen Yichuan didn't dare to argue.

"Wait and see! That sword from the Beast Race... just passed by. It seemed to be heading for Dark Night Elf City. Did something happen in Dark Night Elf City? No... he bypassed it and went to the Celestial Race Royal City!"

"The Celestial Race Royal City? But we don't have anyone in the Celestial Race Royal City. We only sent people to three of the Elf Race's cities... Could this be a misunderstanding?" Chen Yichuan was utterly astonished.

"The one from the Winged Race passed by too!" Li Tiannan didn't answer Chen Yichuan. However, his forehead was already beaded with sweat.

He had entered the Eastern District Battlefield all alone.

And in the Eastern District...

a full five Strongest had now gathered.

Not only that.

The Strongest from the other districts were still rushing over. If these dozen-plus Strongest were to gather, it would be a monumental event.

Most importantly, if these dozen or so Strongest suddenly turned on him, he, alone... would probably not even have a chance to fight back.

"I'm leaving first. This matter is too important. I must return to the City of Hope immediately to discuss how to handle this!" Li Tiannan was too embarrassed to admit he was afraid of dying.

But he really was afraid...

If it were just a matter of going deep into the Eastern District, he wouldn't be afraid.

Because the number of Strongest in the Eastern District wasn't too high, and some of them couldn't leave their posts. As long as he didn't make a move, those Strongest wouldn't either.

Of course, even if they did fight, he could still escape.

It was a sort of tacit understanding.

But now things were different.

With a dozen or so Strongest gathering on the Eastern District Battlefield, there was no room for any tacit understanding. After all, if these Strongest really decided to act, they could take him down at any time.

'Can't wait any longer.'

'I have to run! Now!'

"Elder Li, you're leaving just like that? Then what about us..." Chen Yichuan never got to finish his sentence, because Li Tiannan had already flown away.

Just as he had arrived.

He had come quickly, but he left even faster.

This time, Li Tiannan was truly running for his life. If he were truly surrounded by a dozen or so Strongest from the other races, his old life would be forfeit.

"Vice Commander Chen, who was that just now?" a Colonel asked as he walked out of the command post.

"Elder Li," Chen Yichuan replied casually.

"Elder Li... Could it be that person from the Military Department's past..."

"Yes, it's him. The legend of the Military Department, 'Ghost Eyes Li Tiannan'!" Chen Yichuan nodded.

"I never thought Elder Li would be the one protecting us from the shadows... But why did Elder Li leave in such a hurry? It almost looked like... he was fleeing for his life?"

"Shut up! How could Elder Li possibly be fleeing for his life? He's gone to the City of Hope to discuss critical military intelligence!" Chen Yichuan's tone turned cold, but inwardly, he sighed...

'Elder Li, you ran off so quickly... is it really okay to just leave us here like this?'

## Chapter 223 - 200: Drastic Change, a Qualitative Leap

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「Celestial Race Royal City.」

The Celestial Race King Mu Ying's face was ashen.

The first to descend was a sword that fell from the sky. It plunged into the Celestial Race Royal City. A figure appeared with it, seated calmly on the hilt.

The Beastman Sword Saint!

"ROAR!"

The Beast Race army cheered and fell to their knees in unison.

"Ancestor, the Celestial Race and the Dark Night Elf Clan conspired to deceive us! We ask that you uphold justice for us!" the Beast Race Prince also knelt. The Beastman Sword Saint had stood for nearly a century without dying; he was a true blade.

The second to arrive was one of the Winged People.

He possessed a pair of golden wings, and his eyes shone with a golden light. His mere presence exuded an immense, oppressive aura.

The members of the Winged Race fell to their knees.

"Ancestor, the Prince was killed by the Celestial Race!"

"As the Prince's guards, you failed to protect him. You all deserve to die!" the Winged Person said, his tone glacial.

"We can die, but please, Ancestor, you must avenge the Prince and find the murderer!"

"Six Wings! I'm here! Are you not coming out?!" The Winged Person ignored the kneeling Winged Race Warriors and let out a long, piercing cry.

The cry rang out.

The guards on the walls of the Celestial Race Royal City all covered their ears as blood trickled from their mouths and noses.

"Insolent! If it weren't out of respect for the Beastman Sword Saint, do you think a bird like you is worthy of making me appear?" A light shone from the top of the white tower.

A sacred hymn began to sound.

It was as if countless Angels were chanting.

The cry from the Winged Person was instantly suppressed. Then, a phantom image appeared above the white tower—the figure of a Celestial God.

Soon, the image solidified.

A middle-aged man stood floating in mid-air.

And behind him, astonishingly, were six wings as white as snow—a Six-winged Angel of the Celestial Race.

"Ancestor!"

The members of the Celestial Race bowed in salute.

Even the Celestial Race King, Mu Ying, knelt on one knee.

"Six Wings, you killed my clan's Prince. What is your explanation for this?" The Winged Person's face turned cold, but he showed no intention of attacking immediately.

"There are still old friends on the way. Bird Wings, it won't hurt to wait a moment, will it?" The Six-winged Angel did not approach the Royal City's walls, but simply stood quietly above the white tower.

"Hmph!" The Winged Person snorted lightly.

The Beastman Sword Saint, however, remained silent, sitting peacefully on the city wall.

Soon, a third figure arrived.

Then a fourth, a fifth...

In the end, thirteen had come.

Thirteen of the Strongest stood above the Celestial Race Royal City, their presence extraordinary.

"Heh heh, I didn't expect so many old friends to visit at once. My Celestial Race is truly overjoyed. Since you've come as guests, please, join me in the white tower for a cup of wine. As for other matters, we can leave them to the younger generation to handle." The Six-winged Angel spoke again. At the same time, a beam of white light shot out from the top of the tower.

"VMMMM!"

A floating bridge of light materialized in the sky.

It stretched all the way to the gates of the Celestial Race's city.

"Drink? Six Wings, you've got some nerve. The Winged Race lost a Prince, and you think you can dismiss us with a cup of cheap wine?!" the Winged Person spoke again, showing no intention of stepping onto the bridge.

The other Strongest remained equally unmoved.

All thirteen of the Strongest stared at the Six-winged Angel above the white tower.

"It seems you haven't come as guests, then?" The Six-winged Angel chuckled.

"Mu Liu... it's rare for old folks like us to gather. If you truly wish to invite us for a drink, you ought to show some sincerity," the Beastman Holy Sword chuckled as well.

"Sincerity?" Mu Liu's gaze turned slightly cold. The phantom image behind him appeared once more, but this time, it radiated a brilliant golden light.

Like a true Celestial God, it emanated an unparalleled majesty.

"This matter must be resolved. Come out on your own!"

"BOOM!"

Two figures shot out from the Sixth Prince's palace.

One was the Sixth Prince, but he was currently bathed in blood. The one carrying him was Huo Gu, Commander of the Great Angel Army.

The two figures landed on the city wall.

Huo Gu knelt on one knee.

"Is this enough?" Mu Liu asked again.

"Mu Liu's style hasn't changed a bit in decades!" The Winged Person gritted his teeth. He looked like he wanted to say more but ultimately remained silent, merely turning his head to the side, his expression grim and cold.

"I've said it. All who come are guests. And since you are guests, please, enter the white tower for a cup of wine. If you don't... then in a couple of days, I, Mu Liu, will visit your territories for a drink. How about it? Everyone... will you grant me this honor?" As he finished, Mu Liu gestured again toward the floating bridge of light.

"Hahaha, you old undying bastard, you sure talk a lot. Since it's come to this... I'll do you the favor and have a drink!" the Beastman Sword Saint suddenly laughed. He then strode onto the floating bridge.

The other figures exchanged glances and, one by one, also stepped onto the bridge.

No one spoke another word.

Even the Winged Person eventually gritted his teeth, stepped onto the floating bridge, and walked into the white tower.

As for the Sixth Prince Mueller on the city wall, his face was pale.

"Ancestor! Father! I really didn't do anything, I swear! I didn't try to steal the bride! I was framed! They framed me!"

"Shut up!" The Celestial Race King Mu Ying raised his hand and slapped him across the face. Then, his gaze shifted to the Elf Queen. "Queen Una, since this matter originated with my Celestial Race, it should be concluded by my Celestial Race. The Seventh Princess is a witness, so she will remain as a guest of the Celestial Race for the time being. What are your thoughts?"

"Very well." Elf Queen Una nodded.

"The Princes of the other races may enter the city to rest. My Celestial Race has always been a sincere host. As for the rest of you... make camp outside the city walls," the Celestial Race King Mu Ying announced.

## **Chapter 224 - 200: Sharp Transformation, A Qualitative Leap**

The Princes from the other clans exchanged glances. With their ancestors' protection, they now felt safe enough to enter the city, unafraid of any tricks the Celestial Race might pull.

Saying no more, the twenty-plus Princes filed into the city.

"Father, I really didn't do it! I didn't do anything! Father, you have to believe your son... I'm truly innocent!" Atop the city walls, the Sixth Prince was still shouting at the top of his lungs.

But no one paid him any mind.

Only a wall of spears pressed in around him.

"Your Highness, Sixth Prince, just keep kneeling peacefully. Once the ancestors have concluded their discussions, the Clan King will handle this himself."

"I really didn't abduct the bride... I truly didn't..." The light in Sixth Prince Mueller's eyes dimmed; he could already foresee how this incident would be resolved.

But he couldn't accept it.

He had truly done nothing at all...

...

「As the Celestial Race "gathering" began,」

eight elders were also assembled inside the Eastern District Fortress of the City of Hope.

Aside from "Ghost Eyes" Li Tiannan and "Celestial Eye" Zhang Dingmou—who was stationed at the Eastern District Fortress—the other six had all hurried here from across the City of Hope.

Right now, all eyes were fixed on Li Tiannan, as he was the one who had just returned from the Elf Race's territory in the Eastern District.

"A military exercise, ten four-man scout teams, and that's it." Li Tiannan knew what everyone wanted to ask, so he got straight to the point.

"That's it?"

"That's it."

"Thirteen of the Strongest gathered in the Celestial Race Royal City... Something like this hasn't happened in over a decade. I fear it's not as simple as it seems!" Celestial Eye Zhang Dingmou spoke up after a moment of silence.

"Some time ago, Chen Yichuan brought back intel that the alien races possess a 'Seed of Resurrection' that allows for early revival," Li Tiannan added. "Perhaps this is related?"

"The Seed of Resurrection? You can't be suggesting... that the alien races are planning to attack ahead of schedule?"

"It's not entirely out of the question."

"..."

The entire room fell silent.

The possibility of an early attack is something any normal strategy would consider. However, the aliens' twenty-year cycle had become such an established fact. Who would have given this matter a second thought?

Besides, if this turned out to be true, humanity's fate would be truly grim.

It would mean that the Strongest of the alien races had already completed their cycle ahead of schedule. All of humanity's original plans would be in shambles, leaving them completely unable to stand against the alien races.

"Regardless, with thirteen alien Strongest gathered with the Celestial Race, we must prepare for the worst-case scenario!" Zhang Dingmou spoke up again.

"What are your thoughts, Elder Qin?" All eyes turned to the most senior elder present.

"If we're truly preparing for the worst, then we only have that one plan left..."

"Must we truly resort to this? Five hundred million people... how many can we even save? This is the land that gave us life, the land that raised us! I absolutely refuse to leave!"

"I won't leave either!"

"Even if I have to die, I'd rather die here than out there!"

"Right!"

"Since no one is willing to leave, we're back to square one. We can't rely on us old geezers anymore; our only hope lies with the younger generation!"

"Are you talking about the reform, Elder Wang?"

"Yes. The only thing we can do now is buy as much time as possible. But if the aliens attack ahead of schedule, then the reform must also be pushed forward. We can't keep delaying this; it has to happen now!"

"But isn't the reform already underway?"

"Only within the Military Department."

Everyone fell silent once more.

The Military Department had proposed the reform, a plan that was put forward a long time ago. Yet, even now, its progress remained slow. The resistance was simply too great.

"Gentlemen, we're all old..." Elder Wang spoke again.

"Fine. Since it's come to this, I have no objections. You all decide."

"I have no objections either."

"None."

...

"This isn't a matter of having objections; it's a matter of mandatory execution! This is a life-or-death situation. What's the point of bickering over resource allocation now?" Li Tiannan's gaze turned cold.

Silence again.

"You old fools, the aliens are already making their move! How much longer are we going to wait? Until they're breaking down our gates?" Elder Wang spoke up again.

"Even if we go through with the reform, what about the slots? It's easy to talk about pooling resources, but who gets those slots? We can't just ignore that question, can we?"

"That's right. The agreement was for the Military Department to lead the way. You've had your head start, so what are the results? Have you even finalized your own slots yet?"

"The slots for the 'seeds' have always been decided by fair competition. What's there to argue about?"

"Fair? Is there such a thing as absolute fairness? At the very least, we have to consider their background and character, right? What if we pour all these resources into a traitor? Everything would be ruined!"

"Enough. Let the younger generation handle the matter of the slots. What are we old men arguing for?" Elder Qin finally interjected.

"Elder Qin, you mean...?"

"The Military Department, the major clans, and... the descendants of us old men—each will put forth some candidates. As for whether those candidates are ultimately chosen, that will depend on their own merits!"

"What Elder Qin suggests... is one way to do it. I have no objections."

"Let's do as Elder Qin says."

"Then how do we allocate the selections?"

"The Military Department, the major clans, and the descendants of us old men will each nominate 200 people to start. How you choose them is your business! But in the end, the number of final slots is fixed. You should understand what I mean!"

"Two hundred people?! The Military Department has hundreds of thousands of soldiers... How many do their clans even have...?"

"Elder Wang!" Li Tiannan shook his head.

"Fine! Since Elder Qin has spoken, the Military Department has no objections!"

"We have no objections either."

"No objections."

"Alright, then it's settled. We old men will make another trip out. These are turbulent times. We can't just leave that group of people stranded in the Dark Night Elf Clan's territory..." As he spoke, Elder Qin's gaze fell upon Li Tiannan.

"Let's go!" The others stood up one by one.

"Thank you," Li Tiannan said with a smile.

"Don't be so formal, Old Li. If fifty high-tier fighters were truly lost to the Elf Race, it's not just a loss your Military Department couldn't bear—the entire Human Alliance couldn't afford it!"

"And a thousand elites!"

"Haha, very well. Then let's go bring those one thousand elites home!"

"..."

...

「On the outskirts of the Dark Night Elf Royal City.」

Gao Neng, who had been moving stealthily, finally came to a halt.

The explosive energy rampaging inside his body had gradually subsided. He could feel his body undergoing some kind of extraordinary metamorphosis.

'It seems this Spring of Life does more than just boost my energy.' Gao Neng found a suitable spot and poked a small hole for air.

He peered through the small hole.

A forest.

Nothing but green... and more green!

He couldn't get his bearings at all.

Moreover, he had no idea which garrison on the second defensive line the Human Alliance army had captured. He could guess the first, but he had no clue about the second.

'Fang Tangtang said the Military Department would be in the Elf Camp for three days. It's already the middle of the night, so there's no rush to find the main force. It's probably better to find a place to focus on this metamorphosis.' Gao Neng knew that an opportunity for metamorphosis was incredibly rare. If he missed this one, he might never get another chance.

He settled down and began to carefully focus on the feeling.

Just as Fang Tangtang had said.

Lin Ying had transformed just from eating a single Elf Fruit.

Treasures could change a person.

'And he had drunk at least a whole barrel of the Spring of Life.'

'And not only that, he had also kidnapped the Seventh Princess of the Elf Race. He still had her Space Necklace on him. Could there be things like Elf Fruits inside?'

Thinking of this...

Gao Neng felt a surge of excitement.

'The haul this time was truly massive. My strength has successfully broken through to Tier Three, and it feels like I'm at least at the Tier Three Mid Stage, maybe even on the verge of reaching the Late Stage.'

'I just wonder if this metamorphosis could push me all the way to Tier Four in one fell swoop?'

'Tier Four!'

'A qualitative leap!'

## Chapter 225 - 201: Eating 380 Million in One Go

'Once I reach Tier 4, I'll dominate everything!' Gao Neng was incredibly eager to reach the fourth tier. After all, once he did, he could project energy from his magnetic core without relying on a power-up. His hidden talent would finally be unleashed to its full potential.

A 100% hidden talent.

What did that mean?

It meant he could extract any form of energy element.

The result would be that no matter where he was, his surroundings would become his "domain," and all energy elements would fall under his control.

"Let's see what's in this Space Necklace first!" Gao Neng took out all the treasures he'd looted from the Seventh Princess and immediately checked the space inside the necklace.

He quickly saw a pile of women's things.

There were all sorts of styles.

Lace, see-through, strawberry-patterened, monster-themed, black stockings, white stockings, short skirts...

"..." Gao Neng was speechless.

'You've got to be kidding me.'

'This is pointless!'

'I rob the Seventh Princess and all I get is a pile of outfits?'

'They're not my size. I can't wear them.'

'Maybe I should find a chance to let Fang Tangtang try them on... or maybe Shen Ning'Er?'

Gao Neng thought that was a pretty good idea.

'But surely it can't just be a pile of outfits, right?'

He didn't give up and continued to search. Then, he found a longbow, the very one the Seventh Princess had been using. It should count as a treasure.

'Finally, a bow...'

Aside from that, there were some pill bottles—red, green, purple... He didn't know their specific effects, so he set them aside for now, guessing they were some kind of Healing Medicine.

"Wait, what's this?" In the very depths, Gao Neng saw three items. Two of them were fruits.

One white fruit, and one red fruit.

The last item was a bottle of water, crystal clear and shimmering with a golden light.

Gao Neng quickly took all three items out. He opened the bottle of water first, and an extremely familiar aura wafted out.

"This bottle contains the Spring of Life! Just as I thought, the Seventh Princess had the Spring of Life on her. I can save this for later!" Gao Neng was overjoyed.

'Then these two fruits...'

'Could they be the fruits from the Elf Tree?'

'Why is one white and the other red?'

'Why are they different?'

'Maybe... I should try eating them? But what if they're poison? One bite and I'd be a goner...' Gao Neng was tempted, yet hesitant.

At the same time, he felt a special aura constantly emanating from his body. This aura formed threads that wound around him.

Green threads.

'Is my transformation about to begin?' As he waited, another idea struck him. He remembered the useless system had a "recycle function."

He had activated this function while mining in the underground factory in the Forgotten Land. If he remembered correctly, the recycle function could appraise an item's name and value.

"System, appraise this longbow for recycling!"

"DING! One mid-grade longbow from the Dark Night Elf Clan. Value: 2.56 million Alliance Coins. Do you wish to recycle?" the mechanical voice quickly rang out.

'So it really can appraise value. 2.56 million? It's just a mid-grade longbow... It seems the Dark Night Elf Clan's weapons are scaled to one's strength. The Seventh Princess is too weak; even if she had a high-grade bow, she probably couldn't draw it. When I think about it that way... it makes sense.' Gao Neng didn't dwell on it. Since it was just an ordinary bow, exchanging it for Alliance Coins was a good deal.

"Recycle!"

"BEEP. One mid-grade longbow recycled. 2.56 million Alliance Coins acquired."

'Not a bad function. With this... I've made back the one million I spent on the Flying Earth Dragon's evolution, plus an extra 1.56 million. After a quick calculation, I now have 3.6 million Alliance Coins.' Gao Neng felt pretty good about it. Now, it was time to formally appraise the two fruits.

"System, appraise this red fruit for recycling."

"DING! One 'Immortal Fruit' from the Elf Tree. Value: 150 million. Do you wish to recycle?" the mechanical voice rang out again.

"One hundred and fifty million?!" Gao Neng's eyes practically glazed over. 'That much money? That's hundreds of times better than that crappy bow! It's just too exaggerated.' After a moment's thought, he asked again, "System, what exactly does this Immortal Fruit do? How can it be worth so much?"

"The recycle function can only appraise an item's value. It cannot answer the host's boring questions. The host may consult the encyclopedia on his own."

"In that case, dear system, where can I find this encyclopedia?" Gao Neng cursed 'useless piece of crap' in his mind, but kept a smile on his face.

"The system encyclopedia can be unlocked for 500 million Alliance Coins. Do you wish to unlock it?"

"Unlock my ass! I'm broke! Now appraise this white fruit." Gao Neng felt that, for a curse, that was actually quite civilized.

'Five hundred million for an encyclopedia.'

'You might as well just rob me!'

"DING! One 'Soul Fruit' from the Celestial Race. Value: 230 million. Do you wish to recycle?" the mechanical voice quickly rang out again.

"Two hundred and thirty million?! I'm rich!" Gao Neng suddenly felt like he'd hit the jackpot. Just by robbing one Seventh Princess, he'd made hundreds of millions.

This haul was definitely worth it.

A massive profit.

Just like that, his net worth was in the hundreds of millions.

'Well then, time to eat!'

Gao Neng had no intention of recycling them.

The more valuable something was, the better it had to be. It definitely wasn't poison. Since that was the case, he'd just eat them all in one go, especially since he was in the middle of a transformation.

'Let's see if I can turn into a Super Saiyan Warrior!'

'And then...'

'Save the world!'

"Here I go!" Gao Neng bit into the red fruit. 'When you've got good food, you start with the cheaper stuff. That way, things only get more and more delicious.'

'If you eat the best one first, and the next one isn't as good, it ruins the experience.'

Gao Neng was a man who understood how to live.

He took a large bite. The moment the red fruit entered his mouth, an explosive sensation of pleasure washed over him.

This was definitely no ordinary fruit!

Or rather, it couldn't even be called a fruit. It was more like a condensed ball of special energy. As soon as that energy entered his body, it went straight into his internal organs.

He had never felt anything like it before.

Another bite!

He devoured the whole thing in one go.

The feeling was incredible.

Gao Neng could feel his internal organs undergoing some sort of reconstruction, and this process was constantly spreading, threatening to envelop his entire body.

Then, he wiped his mouth. Although he felt a little full, he could still eat more.

Without further hesitation...

He ate the white fruit.

This time, Gao Neng instantly felt as if he were about to fly into the heavens. It was a tremor that originated from his very soul, as if his entire spirit was being enveloped by a ball of warm energy.

'In less than a minute, I've eaten 380 million. What a rush!' Everyone had always mistaken Gao Neng for being a cheapskate, but was he really?

He wasn't stingy at all. He'd just eaten 380 million worth of goods and didn't feel the slightest pang of regret.

'When you're alive, you've got to treat yourself well.'

'What's 380 million?'

'As long as I get stronger, there'll be 3.8 billion waiting for me in the future.'

\*BURP!\* He let out a satisfied belch. Gao Neng was about to check the value of the Seventh Princess's belt and other items, but the green threads around him were growing more and more numerous.

They had already wrapped him up like a cocoon.

And because the feeling was so incredible, he started to feel sleepy. Drowsiness washed over him, and he allowed the green energy around him to wrap him up, thicker and thicker...

...

「Dark Night Elf Clan, Celestial Eagle Camp.」

Chen Yichuan was pacing back and forth inside the command post. Li Tiannan hadn't said much when he arrived, but the shock of his news had left Chen Yichuan's heart pounding.

'More than a dozen Strongest from other races gathered at the Celestial Race Royal City?'

'This is no small matter!'

It meant that his elite unit was dangling right in front of a predator's jaws. If they so wished, they could devour his forces in a single gulp.

Although the Strongest generally wouldn't attack those of lower tiers...

'But what if they did?'

If his fifty high-tier experts were wiped out, it would be a cataclysmic disaster for the Military Department. Ten of them wouldn't be enough to atone for such a failure.

'No, I have to order a retreat immediately!' Chen Yichuan gritted his teeth.

The Military Department's mission was important.

But no mission was more important than the lives of those fifty high-tier experts. As the military Commander for this operation, he had a duty to ensure their survival.

'But if we retreat now, will we attract the attention of those Strongest?'

Chen Yichuan didn't actually believe these Strongest were here for his elite unit. If that were the case, they wouldn't have waited this long.

So, it was highly likely these Strongest had another objective.

'If I don't move...'

'Perhaps these Strongest won't even notice my unit, and we can get through this safely. But the moment I make a move, they might notice us.'

'That would make things even worse.'

'Move?'

'Or stay put?'

This was the first time Chen Yichuan had felt so indecisive since becoming a vice commander.

'If only Elder Li hadn't left...' At this thought, Chen Yichuan instinctively walked out of the command post and glanced in the direction Li Tiannan had disappeared.

As he looked, he saw several black dots in the sky.

Eight people!

They were flying rapidly toward him.

"Strongest! Eight of them?! We're finished... They're really here!" Chen Yichuan's face drained of all color, and sweat poured down like rain. He was so terrified he could barely move.

It was only when the figures drew closer...

'Elder Li?!'

'And Elder Wang!'

"They're our own! Human Strongest, eight of them!" Even as a vice commander in the army, Chen Yichuan had never seen so many of the Human Alliance's Strongest gathered in one place.

This was because the Human Alliance's Strongest were almost always in seclusion or focused on their cultivation.

Unless an unsolvable crisis occurred...

...the Strongest rarely made public appearances.

Of course, there was another reason Chen Yichuan had so little contact with the Strongest: very few of them within the Human Alliance were actually affiliated with the Military Department.

After all, besides the Military Department, humanity had other powers.

For example: Sects!

This was a power that had existed among humans since ancient times. This force was extremely mysterious, and after the Great Cataclysm, the power of the sects had grown even stronger.

In addition to these, there were also some reclusive, powerful families.

As far as Chen Yichuan knew, these reclusive families weren't large in number, but when it came to the sheer quantity of Strongest they produced, they were second to none.

'Is a war about to break out?' Chen Yichuan watched the eight Strongest draw closer and closer. Suddenly, a bold idea popped into his head.

# Chapter 226 - 202: Metamorphosis

## Complete, Super Strong

And just then, Li Tiannan and the others arrived.

"Yichuan, prepare to retreat." After landing, Li Tiannan wasted no words. He came from a Military Department background and was naturally direct.

"Retreat? Aren't we going to war?" Chen Yichuan was slightly taken aback.

"What war?! The alien races sent thirteen Strongest this time. Add the two from the Celestial Race, and that's a total of fifteen Strongest. How are we supposed to fight that?" Li Tiannan was also stunned for a moment.

'What is he thinking!'

There was one thing he was too embarrassed to say.

The Celestial Race had two Strongest, and neither of them were ordinary. On top of that, the Beast Race's Sword of Ultimate Strength was also present this time.

Just those three alone would be difficult to deal with.

Not to mention the Strongest from the other races.

"That many? Then, Elder Li, Elder Wang, for you to come all this way... I understand. We'll withdraw the troops immediately!" Chen Yichuan's eyes narrowed slightly before he came to a realization.

"Yes, and be quick about it. Retreat to the City of Hope at once, before they arrive. As for this mission, it's temporarily canceled. There are more important tasks ahead," Li Tiannan nodded.

"The reform?" Chen Yichuan hesitated for a moment before asking in a low voice.

Li Tiannan glanced back. Only after seeing Elder Qin and the other Strongest give a slight nod did his expression turn solemn.

"This will be made public soon, so it's not much of a secret. This reform will no longer be limited to the Military Department. The sects and aristocratic families will be joining in as well!"

"They agreed?! ...Yes, this subordinate understands!" Chen Yichuan's face lit up with joy. He truly hadn't expected this matter to be settled so quickly.

After all, it had been several years since the Military Department first proposed this plan.

But the reform plan had been a subject of endless debate.

It never led to any results.

Even now...

The reform was only being temporarily implemented within the Military Department.

And that was only because the Military Department's stance was firm, forcing the Federation Government to make concessions. Otherwise, it would have been impossible to implement at all.

But now?

Li Tiannan was actually saying they had agreed!

What did this mean?

It meant that the Strongest had reached a consensus. In that case, not even the higher-ups in the Federation Government could oppose it any longer.

The reform...

It was really happening!

"Regarding the alien race gathering, have you received any new intelligence on your end?" Li Tiannan patted Chen Yichuan's shoulder, a faint smile on his face.

'If not for this sudden gathering of the alien Strongest...'

'The reform plan probably wouldn't have been finalized so early. It's... rather ironic, really. Humanity's reform is being pushed forward by the alien races?'

"No, the ten squads we sent out haven't returned yet... Oh, right. If we withdraw our forces now, those ten squads will probably be in some danger," Chen Yichuan shook his head.

"We can't worry about that now. Leave a message for them and tell them to return directly to the City of Hope." Li Tiannan was naturally aware of this.

But they couldn't possibly wait here for three days.

It was too dangerous.

"Mm, that's all we can do." Chen Yichuan didn't make any demands. This didn't mean he was cold-blooded; there simply was no other solution.

"Withdraw!"

"Withdraw!"

"..."

The military order was given.

The Military Department elites, who had been resting, immediately snapped to attention and began to form ranks.

「Five minutes later.」

The Celestial Eagle Camp was empty.

The Military Department was traveling light this time, carrying no heavy-firepower weapons. They were relying entirely on the fifty high-tier experts, so the retreat was naturally extremely fast.

The route back was just as simple.

First, they would return to the highlands via the same path, then head straight for the Eastern District Fortress.

The eight Strongest carefully guarded the rear.

「A few hours later.」

The Military Department withdrew successfully.

Aside from a few wild monsters, they encountered no other obstacles along the way.

"It seems... the alien Strongest weren't targeting this unit after all!" Li Tiannan let out a sigh of relief. This was a pretty good outcome.

But it also proved that the alien races had gathered for something more important.

'What could it be?'

Li Tiannan couldn't figure it out.

However, by the next morning, he discovered that the Strongest who had gathered in the Celestial Race Royal City had already left, as quickly as they had come.

The territories of the Elf Race and the Celestial Race returned to peace once more.

But as for what had actually happened there...

...very few knew.

...

「In the Dark Night Elf City.」

Four human squads snuck in through four different city gates.

And then...

...they were caught.

In the other two cities, the same thing was happening.

The human Military Department had attacked the Celestial Eagle Camp.

The three Dark Night Elf clans did not send troops to attack as originally planned, nor did they fall into chaos. Instead, they had naturally strengthened their defenses.

The ten human squads were annihilated.

Thus, no one would be reporting the matter of the Seventh Princess's marriage selection to the Military Department.

In the blink of an eye, another day passed.

When the sky brightened once more.

In a remote corner of the Elf Race's territory, a cocoon slowly fell away, and a cascade of beautiful, jet-black hair drifted out.

Fang Tangtang climbed out from inside the cocoon.

She took a deep breath of the crisp morning air and felt an incredible sense of comfort. The blood flowed through her body with a newfound ease.

If the blood in her body was a stream before, now it was a great river.

The meridians throughout her body had expanded by at least threefold.

"I feel so much stronger now, truly strong... My whole body has been completely magnetized. I've reached Tier Three Late Stage at least. I wonder if I broke through to Tier Four?" Fang Tangtang tried to control the power of her magnetic core and release it outward. Then, she felt a stream of energy emerge from it.

Slowly, it seeped out.

Little by little.

It soaked through to the surface of her skin...

And then, it stopped.

"Tier Three Late Stage. I'm just one step away from Tier Four. I can already make my power seep out of my body, but I can't truly project it yet. I guess in another

ten days or half a month, I'll officially step into Tier Four!" Fang Tangtang confirmed her power increase, which made her extremely excited.

'Less than three days!'

She had gone from Tier Two Late Stage to Tier Three Late Stage, and was even close to a breakthrough.

"I, Death God Fang Tangtang, am truly exceptionally talented, beyond the reach of any ordinary person!" Fang Tangtang stretched lazily, and then she saw a pair of deep blue eyes.

"Meow," Gao Xiaomeng called out lazily.

"How strange. I clearly saw you drink from the Spring of Life too, so why didn't you transform? And the energy in your body didn't form a cocoon either. So weird. What kind of cat are you, exactly?" Fang Tangtang had actually been aware of her surroundings during her transformation, which was why she was now even more curious.

Because Gao Xiaomeng had shown no reaction at all.

She was exactly the same as before the transformation.

It felt like she had drunk the Spring of Life for nothing.

"Meow..." Gao Xiaomeng seemed too lazy to bother with her and casually stroked her whiskers with a paw.

"Alright, how could I possibly expect a cat to talk? I'll ask a different question, then. Do you know where Gao Neng is right now?" Fang Tangtang looked at Gao Xiaomeng again.

"Meow." Gao Xiaomeng shook her head, her two eyes looking at Fang Tangtang as if she were an idiot.

"So you really don't know. Could it be that guy Gao Neng wasn't lying to me? You're just an ordinary cat who got stronger after drinking from the Spring of Life... But that's not right. If you drank the Spring, why didn't you transform like I did? Oh... I get it! You're a cat, so you transformed earlier than I did. You transformed as soon as you drank it, while we humans need to 'break out of our cocoons.' I'm such a genius for figuring that out." Fang Tangtang muttered to herself.

In fact, her and Gao Xiaomeng's escape this time had been quite thrilling, because they had been buried underground together.

She didn't know if Gao Neng had done it on purpose.

But what was certain was that not long after she and Gao Xiaomeng had burrowed underground, the Earth Dragon stopped moving. After that, they naturally had to dig their way out on their own.

When they finally managed to claw their way back to the surface, they discovered they had emerged in a wolf's den.

There were so many wolves!

What happened next was simple.

Fang Tangtang and Gao Xiaomeng started killing wolves. Kill, kill, kill... After venting most of the explosive energy in her body, Fang Tangtang finally began her transformation.

And Gao Xiaomeng had stood guard by her side.

"I was transforming for a day and two nights!" Fang Tangtang took out her phone, glanced at the date, and was a little stunned.

She remembered that her transformation had started at night.

But now...

It was already the morning of the third day.

This meant that the Military Department would be retreating today.

"Gao Neng is probably transforming too. If I go looking for him now... I'm afraid there won't be enough time. I should just go back to the fortress and wait for him!" Fang Tangtang quickly made a decision.

Searching for someone on a battlefield, especially someone who was hidden away and transforming, was simply too dangerous. There was no need to take such a risk.

Besides, the Military Department was retreating today.

She couldn't possibly stay on the battlefield any longer.

She had to return to the City of Hope.

"Meow!" Gao Xiaomeng seemed a little dissatisfied.

"We won't be able to find Gao Neng. We can only go back to the City of Hope and wait. Besides, he might have already gone back. We can meet him once we're in the City of Hope," Fang Tangtang coaxed.

"Meow!" Gao Xiaomeng shook her head and then prepared to walk away.

"Hey, don't go." Fang Tangtang scooped Gao Xiaomeng up in her arms. "Gao Neng told you to stay with me, have you forgotten? Besides, I can't just leave a cat like you here. What if Gao Neng goes back and can't find you... Wouldn't he demand compensation from me, Death God Fang Tangtang?"

"MEOW MEOW MEOW!" Gao Xiaomeng struggled a couple of times, waving a paw as if wanting to scratch Fang Tangtang's face. However, just as it was about to touch her skin, it finally stopped.

"Alright, be good now. I'll take you back to the City of Hope and buy you the most delicious cat food, how about that?" Fang Tangtang immediately switched to bribery mode.

"Meow meow!" Gao Xiaomeng shook her head vigorously. Then, she used both paws to make a scissor-like gesture above her head.

"Are you a cow? Oh... wait, you want to eat beef?!"

"Meow!" Gao Xiaomeng nodded rapidly.

"Wow!!! You're actually a cat that was raised on beef!" Fang Tangtang was utterly astonished. She then patted Gao Xiaomeng's head. "Since you like beef, I'll find you the best chefs when we get back and have them cook you the best beef. Don't you worry, besides being beautiful, my greatest strength as Death God Fang Tangtang is that I'm rich! Plus, you helped me kill a lot of wolves this time, so I have to thank you!"

"Meow meow meow!" Gao Xiaomeng's eyes gradually lit up.

## **Chapter 227 - 203: In... Big Trouble**

'So she's a foodie cat!' Fang Tangtang quickly came up with a plan. Then, she led Gao Xiaomeng and started sneaking toward the Eastern District Fortress.

「7:00 PM.」

Fang Tangtang finally made it back successfully with Gao Xiaomeng.

They'd had a couple of minor incidents along the way and even encountered a few "stragglers," but Gao Xiaomeng and Fang Tangtang teamed up to deal with them all.

"What a good cat!" Fang Tangtang was now more convinced than ever that Gao Xiaomeng was great. At the very least, Gao Xiaomeng was incredibly fast and could basically overwhelm any enemy they encountered.

With Gao Xiaomeng around, she could easily create distance and attack from long range.

'So satisfying!'

"Gao Xiaomeng, we've reached the Eastern District Fortress. I'll take you to get something good to eat right now!" Fang Tangtang took out her ID card and submitted it for verification by the fortress guards.

"Meow." Gao Xiaomeng was equally delighted.

Just then, a familiar figure walked over. He was tall and imposing, but most importantly, he had a shiny, bald head.

"Huh? Bald Shark... oh, no, I mean, Uncle Gui!"

"Tangtang, what are you doing here?" Gui Zian had returned to the Eastern District Fortress during the day and was currently resting there.

"I... hehe, I was just passing by. By the way, is Gao Neng back yet?" Fang Tangtang certainly wasn't about to admit that she had secretly gone to the battlefield.

"Gao Neng?" Gui Zian's brow furrowed. Looking at Fang Tangtang's deceptively calm face, a bad feeling suddenly washed over him.

'It can't be that...'

'These two rascals secretly ran off to the battlefield, didn't they?'

"You went to the battlefield?!" Gui Zian's tone sharpened dramatically.

"No... How could I? I just came from... from the military academy. Yeah, I heard you were all coming back, so Gao Neng and I came over to see," Fang Tangtang argued weakly.

"Hmph, your excuses are useless. You're wearing a combat suit, and it's got bloodstains on it. You think you can fool me? Spit it out... Where did you and Gao Neng really go?" Gui Zian's eyes narrowed.

As someone who had spent his life on the battlefield, the scent of blood on Fang Tangtang and her combat suit screamed that she was lying.

"Uhh..." Fang Tangtang was speechless. Then, her eyes darted around and she suddenly shouted, "Wow, Grandpa Shen, you're here too?"

"Grandpa Shen? You mean Vice Commander Shen?" Gui Zian subconsciously turned his head.

But there was nothing behind him.

A question mark flashed over Gui Zian's head. He quickly realized what had happened and, with a single leap, caught Fang Tangtang, who had already fled ten meters away.

"Where do you think you're going?! Tangtang, if you don't explain this clearly, I'm sending you back to your grandfather!" Gui Zian's expression truly darkened.

Too many things had happened on the Eastern District Battlefield.

If Fang Tangtang and Gao Neng had really gone to the battlefield, it was an incredibly dangerous situation. He had to find out the truth immediately.

"Okay, okay... Uncle Gui, let go. I'll tell you, alright? I'll tell you!" Fang Tangtang finally relented, knowing she couldn't escape.

"Start talking."

"It's nothing much, really. It was just three days ago... Before you all went to the battlefield, Gao Neng and I went too... Oh, right! We also discovered something huge happening with the other races. The Dark Night Elf Clan's Seventh Princess is holding a public marriage proposal, and more than twenty other clans came to ask for her hand. Can you believe it?"

"What?! You said the Dark Night Elf Clan is holding a marriage proposal?"

"Yeah, Gao Neng and I saw it with our own eyes. There were more than twenty proposal delegations, all Princes from other races... Did you guys not run into them?"

"Quick, come with me to the fortress command center!"

"I'm not going! I still have to eat, and I have to wait for Gao Neng to come back!"

"Gao Neng isn't back yet? Wasn't he with you?"

"No... Uh, we got separated. He'd just captured the Seventh Princess, and thousands of elite fighters from the other races were chasing us. They were all Tier Five and Tier Six, some even higher... It scared me to death! So, we split up. He was in charge of luring away the pursuers..."

"Are you two trying to get yourselves killed?!" Hearing this, Gui Zian finally exploded with anger. "You two actually dared to capture the Dark Night Elf Clan's Seventh Princess?!"

"We didn't mean to capture her... It's just, we were coming out of the Dark Night Elf City, and that Ancient Elf Tree was so powerful. I almost died at her hands..."

"The Ancient Elf Tree?! What Ancient Elf Tree?"

"The one inside the Dark Night Elf City! We snuck underground and ran right into it. We even drank a ton of the Spring of Life! Uncle Gui, do you know what my strength is now? I'm at the Tier Three Late Stage, and I'm just a hair's breadth away from breaking through to Tier Four. I'll definitely break through within ten days, max!"

"Snuck underneath the Dark Night Elf City... drank the Spring of Life? And reached the Tier Three Late Stage... Tangtang, you... you've really... caused a huge disaster this time! Come with me to the command center, now!"

"Uncle Gui, I don't want to go... Ah, Uncle Gui, let me go! If Grandpa finds out, he'll kill me for sure! Uncle Gui, please don't..." Fang Tangtang struggled.

But no matter how hard she struggled, she couldn't break free from Gui Zian's powerful hands.

As for Gao Xiaomeng...

...she just watched Fang Tangtang and Gui Zian as if they were a pair of idiots. Not only did she not make a move, but she also gave a lazy stretch and burrowed into Fang Tangtang's clothes.

...

Before long, Fang Tangtang was brought to the command center of the Eastern District Fortress.

Chen Yichuan happened to be inside.

It wasn't just Chen Yichuan; the Generals stationed at the Eastern District Fortress were all gathered there at this moment. Seated at the head was an old man.

He was around sixty or seventy years old.

His hair was salt-and-pepper, but his complexion was quite ruddy.

He wore a black military uniform, and on his shoulders were three gleaming gold stars, signifying his rank as an admiral.

He was none other than the current Patriarch of the Shen Family, the Alliance's Vice Commander of the Eastern District, and Shen Ning'Er's grandfather...

Shen Changsheng!

"Vice Commander Shen, Vice Commander Chen, Vice Director Gui says he has something important to report!"

"Something important? Let him in." Shen Changsheng didn't speak, but Chen Yichuan spoke up softly. He knew Gui Zian's temperament.

If it weren't truly something important, he would never barge into the command center and interrupt a meeting.

"Vice Commander Shen, Vice Commander Chen, Division Commander Li..." As soon as Gui Zian entered the command center, he gave a standard military salute and began to greet them one by one.

"Alright, Vice Director Gui, let's skip the pleasantries. Just tell us what's going on."

"I think I might know what's been happening with the other races." Gui Zian's expression was solemn. He then yanked Fang Tangtang out from behind him.

"Fang Tangtang and Gao Neng entered the battlefield without permission, and in doing so, they learned a critical piece of intel: the Dark Night Elf Clan is holding a public marriage proposal!"

"A public marriage proposal?! Give us the details!"

"Alright. I don't know the specifics, but the general situation is this..." Gui Zian nodded, then relayed all the information and intelligence he had gotten from Fang Tangtang.

Meanwhile, Fang Tangtang's fearless, devil-may-care expression had transformed into that of a startled little bird, her face alternating between flushed red and pale white.

'It seems like this time...'

'I've really gotten into trouble, haven't I?'

'But what kind of trouble is it, exactly?'

Fang Tangtang blinked, unable to quite figure it out.

In the command center, after listening to Gui Zian's report, the expressions of the Generals, including Shen Changsheng and Chen Yichuan, all grew extremely complicated.

"Fang Tangtang, is what you said true? Did you and Gao Neng really sneak into the underground of the Dark Night Elf City? And you encountered the Ancient Elf Tree? Moreover, you kidnapped the Seventh Princess?" This time, Shen Changsheng didn't wait for Chen Yichuan to ask, but posed the questions himself.

"Um... Grandpa Shen, Gao Neng and I just happened to end up there. We really didn't plan on going, it's just... the surface was too dangerous, so we chose to travel underground. Also, we were actually trying to deliver a warning! At Wild Battle Mountain, we happened to run into the proposal delegations of the other race's Princes. We knew something might be about to happen, but we didn't run into the main army, so we just... we just..."

"What happened after you and Gao Neng kidnapped the Seventh Princess?" Shen Changsheng didn't interrogate her like Gui Zian had, but continued to ask calmly.

"The proposal delegations were just arriving, and we guessed it might be a conspiracy. That's right, a conspiracy! The Elf Race was probably using the marriage proposal to lure the other Princes over, and then use the Seventh Princess to get those Princes and their delegations to attack our troops!"

"Hmm... what do you all think?" Shen Changsheng looked around at the others.

"If things are as Fang Tangtang says, it's a real possibility. To think... we were nearly tricked by the Dark Night Elf Clan and the Celestial Race working together!" Chen Yichuan nodded.

"Yes, Fang Tangtang and Gao Neng have performed a great service!"

"If it weren't for those two, we likely would have been in real danger... Twenty proposal delegations—if they had truly attacked, it would have been very difficult for us to handle!"

"The worst part would have been a sneak attack from the Celestial Race from behind. If that had happened, we might not have made it back!"

The other Generals nodded in agreement.

"This whole affair is truly a miracle... A pity it's a miracle that can't be replicated. Otherwise, it might have solved our problem of being cut off from intelligence on the other races!" one General said suddenly after a long moment of contemplation.

"Indeed." The other Generals quickly thought of this problem as well.

Going through the underground...

...to sneak into another race's Royal City.

It sounds very easy, but in practice, it's extremely difficult. This is because there's a prerequisite: one's strength cannot exceed Tier Three.

Once someone reaches Tier Four, the energy from their magnetic core can be projected externally, creating fluctuations in the air. This makes their aura very difficult to hide.

This was also why the ten infiltration teams dispatched by the Military Department this time were all composed of Tier Three members. After all, the stronger one was, the more powerful their aura.

As for how Gao Neng and Fang Tangtang were able to infiltrate the Royal City...

The biggest reason was that both of them were at the Tier Two Late Stage at the time. An aura like that was as weak as it could possibly be and was generally very difficult to detect.

Of course, there was another reason: Gao Neng could manifest energy.

Below Tier Three...

...being able to manifest energy, and what's more, to manifest an Earth Dragon that could burrow underground—Gao Neng was likely the only one in the entire Alliance who could do it.

How could that be replicated?

"Fang Tangtang, I have one last question. After you and Gao Neng took the Seventh Princess, he was responsible for luring away the pursuers, correct? Do you know which direction he led them?" Shen Changsheng fell silent for a moment before finally asking the question.

"I know. He ran toward the forest. I thought he was going to lead the pursuers to the second line of defense. Did he not lead them there?"

"To the second line of defense? Are you sure he didn't go to the Celestial Race Royal City?" Upon hearing this, Shen Changsheng's expression changed slightly.

"The Celestial Race Royal City?! Why would he go to the Celestial Race Royal City? His brain isn't broken. Going there would be suicide, wouldn't it? I'm positive he absolutely did not go to the Celestial Race Royal City!" Fang Tangtang replied immediately.

"He didn't go to the Celestial Race Royal City..." Shen Changsheng's eyes narrowed.

Chen Yichuan and the other Generals' faces also darkened. If Gao Neng had really gone toward the second line of defense, then he was most likely in grave danger.

"Why would you guys think Gao Neng went to the Celestial Race Royal City?" Fang Tangtang asked, confused.

"It's nothing. Tangtang, you are dismissed." Shen Changsheng waved his hand.

"Grandpa Shen, what on earth happened? Gao Neng couldn't have... died, could he?!" Looking at the expressions on the Generals' faces, Fang Tangtang suddenly thought of a question she had been ignoring all along.

## **Chapter 228 - 204: Metamorphosis, the Formidable Fruit Ability**

In the back of her mind, Fang Tangtang felt that there was no way Gao Neng could die.

After all, Gao Neng was incredibly fast. Plus, she had given him an Angel's Wings pill, and he could use Earth Dragon Subterranean.

'How could he possibly die?'

But now, she had to face a harsh reality.

Gao Neng was being hunted by thousands of elite warriors from other races, and some of them were high-rank... 'High-rank! Even if Gao Neng is fast, he can't outrun a high-rank warrior, can he?'

A single Angel's Wings pill would only last for ten minutes at most.

'And after those ten minutes were up?'

An image suddenly flashed through Fang Tangtang's mind...

Gao Neng, flying through the sky!

Then, mid-flight, he suddenly plummeted.

Then, he started running for his life. He ran for an hour, then another, and another... He kept running until night fell.

But just then, a heavy drowsiness would wash over him.

Gao Neng's body would begin to be enveloped by threads of green energy. His metamorphosis was starting.

But the pursuers would still be right behind him!

The outcome...

She didn't even need to think about it.

Before Gao Neng's cocoon could even finish forming, his pursuers would catch him. Then, they would slice him in half with a single blow and take back the Seventh Princess.

"Ah... I got Gao Neng killed! It's my fault he's dead... Waaaah... How could he die?!" The more Fang Tangtang thought about it, the more horrified she became. By the end, she was overwhelmed with a profound sadness, not even understanding herself why she felt so heartbroken.

"Vice Director Gui, please take Fang Tangtang to get some rest," Chen Yichuan said with a sigh. In truth, Fang Tangtang's thoughts mirrored their own.

Gao Neng had most likely died for his country on the battlefield.

A second-rank warrior... meant little to the Alliance.

But if that second-rank warrior was a genius—and a genius capable of energy materialization at that—his loss was a true pity.

"What a shame. He had Spiritual Power as a second-rank and could even materialize energy. To die just like that?" one of the generals lamented.

"Hah..."

"..."

"No, he's not dead! Gao Neng can't be dead!" Fang Tangtang screamed, tears streaming down her face, but she was quickly escorted away by Gui Zian.

But a moment later, Gui Zian returned.

"Vice Commander Shen, Vice Commander Chen, Gao Neng is a student at our Eastern Capital Military Academy. I don't think he's dead. If possible, I'd like to go to the battlefield to find him!"

"Absolutely not!" Chen Yichuan refused outright. "Vice Director Gui, we understand how you feel, but do you really think a second-rank warrior could survive being chased by thousands of Elves?"

"He's different!" Gui Zian said, gritting his teeth.

"Regardless, this is out of the question. We've already lost one young genius. Do you want us to lose a high-rank warrior as well? Vice Director Gui, it's not that we're being cruel, but the battlefield is extremely treacherous right now. You absolutely cannot go!"

"I'll just search around the second line of defense. Perhaps he's..."

"Vice Director Gui, this is a military order. Is that clear? You are forbidden to search for him!" Chen Yichuan stood up and took a deep breath, then waved his hand dismissively. "You may leave, Vice Director Gui. What Fang Tangtang told us has been very helpful. We need to continue our meeting."

"..." Gui Zian's fists clenched.

In the end, however, he said nothing more and slowly backed out of the command center's conference room.

Outside the door, Fang Tangtang was looking at Gui Zian, her eyes filled with tears.

"Uncle Gui, I'm sorry... I really didn't know this would happen. Gao Neng has always been so hard to kill. I... Waaaah... I'll never act on my own again!"

"Go get some rest, Tangtang." Gui Zian patted Fang Tangtang's head, his own expression darkening. A genius, lost just like that.

It was a loss for the Alliance.

'One day,' he thought, 'I will get revenge for this!'

"Meow." Gao Xiaomeng let out a small cry. She didn't know exactly where Gao Neng was, but she could sense that he was still alive.

'So...'

'...what are these humans crying for?'

'So boring!'

...

「Time: 10:00 PM.」

Gao Neng finally, slowly, opened his eyes.

He had emerged from his cocoon, transformed!

And what a powerful butterfly he had become. He could feel the torrential power surging within him. His meridians had expanded to three or four times their previous size.

'Is this the power of the Spring of Life? And what about the Immortal Fruit and the Soul Fruit? What do they do...?' Gao Neng carefully took stock of the changes.

He quickly felt the effects of the Soul Fruit.

His Spiritual Power had grown stronger again.

It was at least twice as strong as before!

And it wasn't just his Spiritual Power that had grown. He felt as if his very soul had been reforged, and a strange "mark" had faintly formed within it.

'It feels like... the Sun God state?'

Gao Neng had read many books. In ancient history, there was a state called "Sun God," which meant the soul could transform into a special form to attack.

He didn't know if this counted as achieving the Sun God state.

However, he definitely had a feeling that his Soul Mark could transform into a blade. If he encountered someone with a weaker soul, he could instantly obliterate their soul with a single strike.

'The Soul Fruit is so powerful! But the Immortal Fruit's effect... I can't quite feel it.' Gao Neng could sense the power of the Soul Fruit, but he couldn't perceive any change from the Immortal Fruit just yet.

So, after some careful thought...

...he decided to be a little rough on himself.

He drew his Horse-Cutting Saber and slashed it across his arm.

SCHLICK!

A thin cut appeared.

"Ow, that stings a little!" Gao Neng frowned. He stared at the cut. Based on a literal interpretation, he figured that if the Soul Fruit shaped the soul, then the Immortal Fruit must shape the physical body.

'Does that mean... I'm immortal?'

As he was thinking, he watched the gash rapidly heal. In just a moment, the wound vanished completely, not even leaving a scar.

"Whoa, I've gotten so much stronger! I can self-heal!" Gao Neng was genuinely amazed. The ability to physically regenerate was an insanely powerful skill.

'But wait, with two fruits this powerful...'

'...why didn't the Seventh Princess eat them herself?'

'Weird!'

Gao Neng didn't know that these two fruits were actually a "betrothal gift" from the Celestial Race, given to the Seventh Princess to compensate for the damage their marriage-proposal scheme had done to her reputation.

The Seventh Princess had indeed been planning to eat them.

She just hadn't gotten the chance before Gao Neng robbed her blind.

'Not bad at all. Now, let's see if I broke through to the fourth rank!' Gao Neng was in high spirits. He began to try and release his energy externally.

The energy from his magnetic core slowly flowed out.

Soon, he reached the same conclusion as Fang Tangtang had.

He was just a hair's breadth away from the fourth rank!

His externalized energy could only reach the surface of his skin; he couldn't truly project it yet. But, given enough time, he was confident he could break through soon.

"Just a little bit more. What a shame." Gao Neng climbed out of the hole and looked around. The sky was pitch-black. He checked the time on his phone and saw that it was ten at night.

'Wait!'

'Have two full days and nights passed?!'

'If that's the case, the Military Department's main forces must have already withdrawn, right?'

'So what do I do now?'

Gao Neng carefully considered his next move. He now faced two choices: use the cover of darkness to sneak back to the Eastern District Fortress, or remain on the battlefield.

'Returning seems like a good idea, but... it's so dark. Will I even be able to find my way back?' Gao Neng hesitated. He wasn't at all sure he could navigate his way back at this hour.

More importantly, he remembered that the Celestial Race Royal City should be in utter chaos right now.

The Elf Queen of the Dark Night Elf Clan had led her troops to the Celestial Race Royal City.

All those Princes were there, too!

'Does that mean...'

'...that the Elf Royal City is currently an empty fortress?'

'Maybe I should sneak back for a look?'

'It's risky.'

'But if I'm just taking a peek... it shouldn't be a problem, right? Besides, I have the Flying Earth Dragon now!'

'The difference between becoming a dragon or a worm can be decided in a single moment. I'll go back for one more look. Maybe I can grab some more Spring of Life or some ore to take back. I could give some to Shen Ning'Er then, right? I can't very well say I went to the battlefield and didn't bring her back a single gift, can I?' Gao Neng still had a small vial of the Spring of Life on him.

But he felt it wasn't nearly enough.

This one small vial probably wasn't enough to trigger a metamorphosis.

He'd need at least two or three bottles!

'And if I could maybe grab a few more Immortal Fruits or something, I'd strike it rich.'

'Just one look. It shouldn't be a problem, right? I'll take advantage of the Elf Royal City being empty. If anything goes wrong, I'll bolt immediately!' Gao Neng gritted his teeth. Fortune favors the bold.

His power had soared.

With the Flying Earth Dragon, he could fly into the sky or burrow into the earth to escape. Add to that the quantum leap his soul had taken, and against a fourth-rank... it would be a basic insta-kill!

"Time to go back for a look. As the old saying goes, the scariest thing is looking back!" With his mind made up, Gao Neng once again had the Flying Earth Dragon dive underground.

The night was pitch-black.

But from beneath the ground, he could see a patch of light.

The source of that light...

...was the Elf Royal City!

It was like a beacon in the night, making it impossible to get lost.

...

Inside the Dark Night Elf Royal City.

Elf Queen Una's expression was ghastly. Thirteen of the Strongest had gathered at the Celestial Race Royal City. The final result, naturally, was that the Celestial Race and the Elf Race had to concede.

Even with two of the Strongest on their side, the Celestial Race couldn't possibly make an enemy of all the other races combined.

As for the terms of their concession...

...the Sixth Prince alone shouldered all the blame.

Furthermore, the Seventh Princess was now required to hold a genuine marriage proposal ceremony to prove that the whole affair wasn't a scheme concocted by the Celestial Race and the Elf Race.

To put it bluntly, the Seventh Princess, Wu Dingxiang, had to choose a prince from among the twenty-odd delegations of suitors, and she was absolutely forbidden from choosing anyone from the Celestial Race.

"Oh, Ding Xiang, your mother is useless!" Elf Queen Una's fists clenched. She looked at the large pile of "apology gifts" that the Celestial Race had secretly sent over, but felt not an ounce of joy.

'Without one of the Strongest...'

'...we can only endure this endless humiliation.'

## Chapter 229 - 205: Bug Skill

'Can't I even protect my most beloved daughter?!'

Elf Queen Una found this incredibly hard to accept. She had given birth to the Seventh Princess, Wu Dingxiang, after ascending the throne and had truly raised the girl with her own hands.

'But now, she has to be married off to some faraway land?'

Worse, she would likely have to marry some hideously ugly Prince. On top of that, the Seventh Princess's reputation had already been tarnished by this whole affair.

For instance, rumors were already spreading that the Seventh Princess, Wu Dingxiang, was having an affair with the Sixth Prince...

Given the circumstances, one could easily imagine what the future held for the Seventh Princess, Wu Dingxiang.

'Most importantly, if I marry the Seventh Princess to another race, the Celestial Race might not object now, but what will they think as time goes on?'

'Unless I disown the Seventh Princess forever!'

'Otherwise...'

The Dark Night Elf Clan would be caught in a dilemma.

'Not only will I be at the mercy of the Celestial Race, but I might also be constrained by other races. When that time comes, where will that leave the Dark Night Elf Clan?'

"No, absolutely not!" Elf Queen Una shot to her feet. "My daughter can only marry into the Celestial Race! She absolutely cannot marry into another race!"

"Her Majesty the Queen... I may have a solution to this problem." Just then, a Great Elf standing beside Una finally spoke up.

"What is it?"

"We can propose that the Prince marry into our Dark Night Elf Clan!"

"Marry into our clan?!"

"Correct. Aren't they insistent on marrying the Seventh Princess? Then let them marry into our clan. That way, the Seventh Princess won't have to leave the Elf Royal City, and we won't be constrained by other races!"

"That's impossible. The Princes who have come this time are all from races that possess a Strongest. The only reason they traveled all the way to the Elf Race's territory to propose marriage is because they have their eyes on our 'self-healing ability.' Otherwise, why would they ever condescend to marry a Princess of our Elf Race?"

"Indeed... I'm afraid none of the visiting Princes would be willing to marry into our clan. Doing so would go against their original goal. But we can create a suitor for ourselves!" the Great Elf said again.

"Create one for ourselves? What do you mean?!"

"For example, the Wood Elf Race!"

"The Wood Elves?! You mean the reclusive Wood Elves from the Land of the Far South... who keep to themselves!" Hearing this, a glimmer of light finally appeared in Elf Queen Una's eyes.

"That's right. The Wood Elves are the only branch of our Elf Race that doesn't interact with other races. Moreover, the Wood Elf Race has a Strongest presiding over them. What if, at this very moment, a delegation from the Wood Elves suddenly appeared to propose marriage? And then, captivated by the Seventh Princess's beauty, their Prince agrees to marry into our clan..."

"You want to have someone impersonate a suitor delegation from the Wood Elves?!" Elf Queen Una instantly understood the Great Elf's meaning.

"Yes. Right now, the Celestial Race is being forced to compromise due to pressure from the Strongest of various races. But deep down, they don't want the Seventh Princess to marry an outsider. This gives us an opportunity!"

"Explain the details."

"Alright. We find an elf to pose as a Prince of the Wood Elves. Then we instruct the Seventh Princess to choose this Prince. The Princes from the other races will have no grounds to object. Once this affair has blown over, we can publicly announce that the Prince of Wood Elves has unfortunately passed away. Then, the Seventh Princess can marry the Fourth Prince of the Celestial Race. The Celestial Race will surely agree to this arrangement with pleasure!"

"You mean, a sham marriage?"

"Of course. Although the Seventh Princess will be married to a Prince of the Wood Elves in name only, we can secretly inform the Fourth Prince of the Celestial Race that it is a sham marriage and that there is no physical relationship between them. If the Fourth Prince wants the support of our Dark Night Elf Clan, he will have to do everything in his power to marry the Seventh Princess!"

"Correct. For the future position of Clan King, the Fourth Prince will certainly agree to this marriage. Since you've come up with this plan, I assume you've already made some preparations?"

"Yes, Her Majesty the Queen! I have already found the most suitable candidate for the role in the second main city. As long as you agree, I can have him lead a suitor delegation from there immediately. They can arrive by tomorrow morning to participate in the Seventh Princess's marriage selection ceremony! However, there is one rather troublesome problem..."

"What is it?"

"The Wood Elves' appearance is different from our Dark Night Elves. To pass as a Wood Elf, we'll need to immediately craft a batch of Wood Elf 'skin masks.' I can handle that. But the aura... that's very difficult to hide. As you know, Her Majesty the Queen, the aura of a Wood Elf is different from that of a Dark Night Elf. For anyone whose strength has reached the mid-rank, it will be very difficult to avoid being exposed!"

"That is indeed a problem." Elf Queen Una furrowed her brow slightly. Although they were both part of the Elf Race, their auras were different.

We can say the disguised Prince is weak, only at the third rank.

But what about his Guard Team?

How could fifth and sixth-rank guards possibly hide their auras?

Are you suggesting we give the Prince of Wood Elves a team of third-rank guards? That would be utterly preposterous. The Wood Elf Race would never do such a thing!

"Then have him run into trouble on the way!" the Elf Queen finally said after a moment of thought.

"What do you mean, Your Majesty?"

"On his way here, the Prince of Wood Elves happened to encounter powerful humans. His guards loyally protected their master and all died in battle, but they managed to save the Prince. And this infatuated Prince then traveled a thousand miles alone, finally arriving at the Royal City of the Dark Night Elf Clan. How does that story sound to you?"

## Chapter 230 - 205: BUG Skill

"Her Majesty the Queen is wise. This way, the Prince's sincerity will be clear for all to see, and it will also explain why he was late." The Great Elf's eyes immediately lit up.

"Yes. For Ding Xiang's future, and for the future of the Dark Night Elf Clan, this is our only option..." Elf Queen Una's fist tightened slightly.

"Then I will have him bring his proposal party at once... no, have him rush to the Royal Hall alone! And have him feign a disheveled appearance!"

"Mm."

"This subordinate takes his leave!" The Great Elf departed swiftly.

Elf Queen Una sat back down. There was not much excitement on her face; instead, it gradually grew calm.

She once again pondered the feasibility of this plan.

Finally, she took out a leaf from her person and used her finger to write gently upon it. A moment later, the words on the leaf vanished.

Then, she began to wait...

Anxiously waiting.

At last, words lit up on the leaf again.

"I ask that the Queen proceed with caution. However, if this matter is successful, I, the Clan King, will choose a son from among the Fourth Prince and Fifth Prince in half a year's time to marry the Seventh Princess!"

'It's exactly as I thought!' The Elf Queen's hand trembled slightly, and the heart that had been hanging in her throat finally settled. As long as the Celestial Race agreed, this plan was feasible.

Now, the only problem was to leave the other foreign princes with nothing to say.

To put it more bluntly...

As long as the other foreign princes could not find clear evidence that the Prince of Wood Elves was an imposter on the day of the proposal ceremony, this matter would be a success!

As for the future...

By then, it would \*be\* the future!

What could the other foreign princes possibly say?!

'As soon as the proposal ceremony is over, we'll immediately hold the wedding. We'll have the Prince of Wood Elves and the Seventh Princess 'consummate' the marriage on the spot. That will seal it!' Elf Queen Una quickly came to a decision.

Since he was marrying into the family, it was only natural to dispense with as many formalities as possible.

On this point...

The other princes would have no grounds for complaint.

It was a perfect plan, without a single flaw.

...

...

「Eleven o'clock at night.」

Gao Neng continued to travel underground, but the further he went, the more he felt he had overlooked something. He just couldn't shake the feeling that something was off.

'Am I really that strong right now?!'

'What if I've just gotten a big head?'

'Do I really think I'm invincible just because I have a Flying Earth Dragon?'

'Also, will that Ancient Elf Tree recognize me? What if that Ancient Elf Tree has 'eyes'? It's not entirely impossible.'

"..."

As Gao Neng's thoughts churned, he unconsciously came to a stop.

Turning back...

Wouldn't that be a little safer?

Although the old saying goes, "fortune favors the bold," there was another famous saying: "Stay calm and don't get cocky!"

His potential was basically limitless right now. Even if he returned to the City of Hope, the military academy would probably still take him seriously, right? He might even be moved from the "Reserve Plan" to the "Official Plan."

'Should I just head back?' Gao Neng hesitated, but he was also a bit unwilling to give up. If the Elf Royal City was really an empty city, this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Just one look...

That shouldn't be a big deal, right?

Gao Neng was torn. Was it better to be bold and seek his fortune, or to play it safe and not get reckless?

As he pondered, he opened the system's attribute panel.

Name: Gao Neng.

Age: 18.

Basic Information: City of Hope, Eastern Capital Military Academy Freshman.

Vitality Value: 989/1035 (Rating: Excellent).

Stamina Value: 450/496 (Rating: Excellent).

Energy Value: 1965/2019 (Excellent).

Talents: Iron 100%, Copper 100%, Tin 100%, Silver 100%, Gold 100%, Phosphorus 100%, Sulfur 100%, Silicon 100%...

Special Abilities: 1. The Glare (Intermediate). 2. Second Magnetic Core (Advanced). 3. Lifeform Transformation (Beginner). 4. Wordless Celestial Book (Beginner).

Special Skills: 1. Infinite Energy Infusion.

Evolution: 4/10. (Progress)

...

'My Vitality Value rose from 650 to 1035, my Stamina Value went from 345 to 496, and my Energy Value nearly doubled, from 1320 to 2019?! I really am strong now!' Seeing these stats, Gao Neng felt a fire begin to burn within him.

He was crazy strong now!

Wait a minute?

Something doesn't seem right.

Where's my Eye of Deprivation!

How did it become The Glare? And it's even intermediate...

Intermediate?!

Gao Neng hadn't looked at the detailed description for The Glare until now, but at this moment, a sliver of understanding dawned on him.

'Could it be that The Glare is an upgraded version of the Eye of Deprivation?'

With this thought, his hand quickly tapped on it.

Indeed!

"The Glare: An advanced skill of Eye of Deprivation. In addition to the ability to see through disguises, you can also see the target's true data and information with a single look! Cost: 10,000 Alliance Coins/use."

'So that's how it is!' Gao Neng was beginning to understand.

When you had a beginner-level special ability, if you obtained a similar ability, it was highly likely to automatically upgrade to intermediate or advanced.

Did that mean he had directly obtained an intermediate ability from the last mission?

Seems pretty good!

No wonder this skill was so powerful!

He could directly see an opponent's weaknesses and strengths...

'My evolution points have reached 4? Once I get to 10, I can trigger the next system evolution! I wonder what kind of abilities the next system evolution will bring? In any case, this time was fantastic!' Gao Neng was now truly tasting the benefits of the system's evolution.

A 100% creation rate, 100% excavation success rate...

And he even had an advanced form of energy materialization for his third attribute!

It was simply too powerful!

'That's right, I'm this strong, so how can I not get a little reckless? It's just an Elf Royal City. I came here once when I was Tier Two. Now that I'm at the Tier Three Late Stage, what's there to be afraid of?' Gao Neng's fist tightened. Then, he continued to mutter to himself, 'Besides, I have the Flying Earth Dragon, The Glare, and Lifeform Transformation. Right... I also have super-strong self-healing, and I can turn my Spiritual Power into a blade... Me, not be reckless? Who else would be!'

'That's it, I can be reckless!'

'Just a little bit of recklessness won't kill me!'

Gao Neng quickly regained his confidence. But just in case, he decided to test if his Spiritual Power had truly grown stronger.

Spread it out!

'Spread it out, and see how far it can go!'

Under his control, his Spiritual Power extended like a thousand threads, spreading out from underground and toward the surface.

Soon, he saw the scene outside.

It was a forest.

And in one part of the forest, a super handsome guy in an extremely lavish, yet somewhat disheveled, outfit was running wildly.

His destination seemed to be the Dark Night Elf Royal City.

'Huh? Judging by his clothes, he looks like a Prince!' Gao Neng's eyes lit up slightly. If he was a Prince, he must have treasures on him.

Maybe he had some kind of fruit, or a Spring of Life, or something?

If that were the case...

Wouldn't that mean he wouldn't need to risk going into the Elf Royal City?

However, since he was a Prince, he must have guards with him... Forget it. The chances of running into a situation like the one with the Seventh Princess again were probably slim.

Gao Neng felt a bit reluctant, but he still found a spot and crawled out of the ground for a look. He wanted to confirm how strong the Prince's guards were.

And with that one look...

He discovered something else that was off.

Because he had been scouting with his Spiritual Power, he hadn't gotten a very clear view. But now, enhanced by "The Glare," he discovered that this Prince was wearing a fake "skin mask."

And at the same time, a list of information appeared before him.

Real Name: Galileo.

Assumed Name: Jami.

Real Identity: Guard of the Third Guard Army from the Dark Night Elf Clan's second main city.

Assumed Identity: His Highness the Thirteenth Prince of the Wood Elf Race.

Strength: Tier Three Late Stage.

Mastered Skills: Swift Body Technique (Novice), Sky-Breaking Arrow Technique (Accomplished), Acting (70 points).

Strengths: Ranged assassination.

Weaknesses: Poor close-combat ability. (Wears a piece of armor on his upper body that can negate a fatal blow from a Tier Six Powerhouse.)

"Whoa... What comprehensive information. It can even see that he's an imposter?! This bug-like ability, The Glare... is seriously powerful!" Gao Neng was simply stunned by the information displayed.

(I had something to do outside during the day and got back late. I've finally fixed my sleep schedule, so I won't be staying up all night. I'll see if I can post an extra Chapter tomorrow!)