

## I CAN CONTROL RESOURCES

### C 31

"Nightmare Difficulty: I don't need any hints. I was born for greatness. I'm the chosen one of this new world! Cut the chatter—let's get down to business!"

"Nightmare Difficulty Completion Reward: A guaranteed Middle-Level Treasure Chest and a 10% chance to trigger the Lucky Prize Wheel."

"Penalty for Failure: Turn into a moron!"

'Screw your "moron"! Gao Neng couldn't care less about rewards at this point. Only one thought ran through his mind: 'Everyone dies eventually. It's just a matter of sooner or later.'

'So, I should go for 'sooner'?'

'Right?'

Gao Neng felt helpless, lost. He wanted to sing a song. More than that, he wanted to compose a poem...

In the end, he did nothing at all.

After all, he was Gao Neng, the academic prodigy. He wasn't your average Joe. He quickly calmed down and, for good measure, pulled a cookie from his bag and wolfed it down.

'Youth is meant to be lived with passion.'

'So what if I have to take down Shen Ning'Er? What's the big deal? Just like the mission said, if I could take her down once, why can't I do it a second time?'

Gao Neng gazed at Shen Ning'Er in the distance and the Steel Giant Dragon coiled around her body. The dragon's head was majestic and mighty, radiating an unmatched arrogance.

He hadn't received a hint.

Therefore, he needed to calmly consider a few minor issues.

'For instance, where am I supposed to take down Shen Ning'Er? Here? And should I rush in and fight alongside these guys, or should I wait until they're finished and take her on alone?'

'If I team up with them, doesn't that make me one of the bad guys? But if I don't take advantage of this situation, what other chance will I get?'

'A paradox!'

'Such a paradox!'

'A hint... I need a hint...'

'Stupid, moronic system!'

Just as he was lost in thought, he saw the shouting middle-aged men and youths charge forward.

'Could there be Energy Warriors among those men?' Gao Neng was surprised. He thought they would have turned and fled the moment they saw Shen Ning'Er summon her Steel Giant Dragon.

But they didn't run.

Not a single one of them ran!

They bravely charged forward together!

And then...

The Steel Giant Dragon swatted two of them down with a single claw and sent another five or six flying with a sweep of its tail. They were all taken down in the blink of an eye.

Over a dozen bodies flew into the air.

Then, they came crashing back down to the ground.

Their bravery moved Gao Neng. But he was already preparing to flee.

'To hell with joining forces with them! I am Gao Neng, an academic prodigy! I am righteous and honorable, calm in the face of danger. How could I possibly associate with such a pack of lowly thugs?'

'Wait a second.'

'It looks like three of them are still standing.'

Yes, there were indeed three still on their feet. As the dozens of bodies crashed to the ground, three of the men landed standing. They hadn't fallen; they stood tall and unyielding.

All three of them were the middle-aged men.

'These old-timers are beasts!'

'A chance! It looks like there's still a chance!' It was as if Gao Neng had seen a glimmer of hope in the darkness. He had no intention of relying on these men for his opportunity; he just wanted to be a third party, a puppet master behind the scenes.

'Controlling the situation from the shadows is the only way to go.'

'A sneak attack.'

'If I had a mission hint, it would definitely tell me to launch a sneak attack while the three men are ganging up on Shen Ning'Er.'

'That has to be it!'

Gao Neng dropped to the ground, lying in wait for the perfect moment to strike.

"Iron Energy manifestation? Hmph... what an unexpected surprise." The three men exchanged glances. Then, a heavysset man among them smiled, nodded, and calmly pulled out a walkie-talkie. "FUCK! She's an Energy Warrior! Call for backup, now! We can't hold out!"

"..." Gao Neng was speechless.

'How can you not hold out? What happened to "These old-timers are beasts"?'

Gao Neng had nothing more to say. These weren't the respectable middle-aged men of old. It wasn't that good men had gone bad; it was that bad men had simply gotten old.

On second thought, however, Gao Neng relaxed.

'How could there be so many Energy Warriors, anyway?'

In the entire Forgotten Land, there were probably no more than a hundred Energy Warriors in total. Li Qingping was one of them.

You could say that pretty much every Energy Warrior held a respectable position—with the exception, of course, of those who used their power for illicit gains.

...

After yelling into his device, the heavysset man took off. The other two men did the same, all three bolting in different directions.

They were even faster than Gao Neng would have been.

But not a single one of them got away.

Because at the very moment the three men decided to flee, the Steel Giant Dragon coiled around Shen Ning'Er disassembled.

'One dragon splitting into the Three Pure Ones...'

'Oh, wait, no—one dragon splitting into three weapons!'

The massive dragon transformed into three weapons: a spear, a sword, and a saber.

"SHLICK!"

"SHLICK!"

"SHLICK!"

The three men fell.

Then, the three weapons flew back toward Shen Ning'Er, merging in mid-air. In the blink of an eye, they had reformed into the Steel Giant Dragon.

Watching all this unfold, Gao Neng could only repeat himself... 'Energy Warriors are truly badass!'

"ROAR!" The dragon's cry echoed.

Shen Ning'Er's gaze swept over the area before finally landing back on Gao Neng. A faint, malicious smile played on her lips.

"Were you... with them?" Shen Ning'Er asked.

"No!" Gao Neng answered without a second's thought.

"Mm, I didn't think so. You'd already be dead if you were," she said. "Still, I am curious. Why are you here?"

"Would you believe me if I said I was here to fix the road? I've even got a shovel in my bag..." Gao Neng tried to back away, but his foot was shackled by an iron ring.

"And what do you think?"

"Well... you could!"

"Heh. Gao Neng, you need to understand something. If you confess now, you might have a slim chance of getting out of this. If you don't, and I take you in, your only option will be to face the full force of Alliance law." Shen Ning'Er gave a light chuckle and continued, "Let's see now... assaulting an Alliance Major... that's at least twenty years in prison, no problem. And before the trial, I could always use your 'resistance' as an excuse to... 'accidentally' break a leg and a couple of arms..."

"Are you a monster?"

"Mm, you could say that. Alright, you have ten seconds. I'm starting the countdown now. If you can't give me a reasonable explanation by the time I'm done, I'll start by breaking one of your legs." Shen Ning'Er's smile was absolutely radiant.

"..." Cold sweat trickled down Gao Neng's face. He was certain Shen Ning'Er wasn't joking. She had no reason to.

He was just a high school senior from the Forgotten Land.

Forget breaking his legs...

...she could kill him without facing any consequences.

"Ten," Shen Ning'Er began with a sneer.

"Nine."

"Eight."

"..."

"Three."

"Two."

"One."

"Alright, time's up!" Shen Ning'Er declared. The Steel Giant Dragon began to move. Its enormous head reared back, baring a set of chilling fangs.

(Please leave a recommendation vote!)

Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 32: Beauty Gao Neng's Powerful Entrance

"Wait, I have one last thing to say..." Gao Neng had no desire to be crippled. Becoming a lame War God wasn't something he was striving for.

"What?"

"Watch your back!"

"Gao Neng, you think I'd fall for such a cheap trick... Huh?!" Shen Ning'Er stopped mid-sentence, her expression changing in an instant as she pivoted sharply on her right foot.

The Steel Giant Dragon swatted a claw behind it.

CLANG!

It sounded like two giant iron hammers smashing into each other.

Shen Ning'Er stood perfectly still, her long black hair whipping through the air. Behind her, a figure shot backward, having arrived quickly and departed even faster.

"Iron Energy manifestation?! How interesting!" A man in a silvery-white suit, appearing to be in his thirties, landed on the ground. He had to take five quick steps back to steady himself, but a composed smile remained on his lips.

"I never thought I'd see an expert of this caliber in the Forgotten Land. Ah... what a pity. It seems you came alone today, didn't you?" A second man stepped out of the darkness. He had a scruffy beard, and while his hair suggested he was in his mid-thirties, the wrinkles on his face made him look at least fifty.

"The intel's wrong. This psycho chick is no pushover. Are we about to become cannon fodder?" The third person to appear was a woman in her late twenties with wavy hair and professional attire, the very picture of a cool, collected older woman.

"I heard a Major from the Alliance Military Department came down, one who can manifest her Energy. I wonder if that's her? It's just... she doesn't quite look like the photo, does she?" the man in the silvery-white suit continued with a smile.

"She's just one person. Let's just deal with her. Why are you wasting your breath?!" the scruffy man grumbled.

"Hold on, let me make a call and report this," the composed woman said, pulling out her phone and dialing. "We've found a psycho chick, possibly the Military Department Major. Can't confirm her identity yet. We'll need to engage to be sure. Mmm... that's about it. Leave it to us. I'll call you back in ten minutes."

The woman hung up and slipped the phone into her pocket.

"We can begin now," the woman said with a faint smile.

"Your lips say 'begin,' but you're not moving. In that case, I'll go first. If she really is the Major from the Military Department, then I've hit the jackpot!" As he spoke, the man in the silvery-white suit made a gentlemanly gesture toward Shen Ning'Er. "Allow me to introduce myself. Ito Sei, thirty-three, unmarried. And what might a beautiful lady such as yourself be called?"

"You can drop the formalities. The name's Gao. Gao Neng," Shen Ning'Er replied with a ladylike nod.

"???" Gao Neng.

'What the hell?!'

"So, the lovely Miss Gao Neng. A pleasure to meet you, truly. I don't suppose you could tell me where you got that lovely patient gown from the mental asylum..." Ito Sei didn't finish his sentence, launching a sudden attack instead.

SWISH!

A beam of white light shot out.

Shen Ning'Er's expression didn't change, but her Steel Giant Dragon moved, swiping a claw at the white light.

"You fell for it, Miss Gao Neng!" Ito Sei laughed. The white light caught by the Steel Giant Dragon suddenly burst, illuminating the entire factory as if it were broad daylight.

Gao Neng was almost blinded by the flash.

'What was that?!'

Just as he was wondering, a series of metallic clashes rang out. By the time his vision cleared, he saw Shen Ning'Er still standing in her original spot.

Ito Sei, on the other hand, was plastered dramatically against the factory wall. The wall itself had cracked, and his body was completely embedded within it, spread-eagled.

He had clearly been swatted away by Shen Ning'Er's Steel Giant Dragon.

However, Ito Sei's body was covered in a layer of silvery-white metal that had formed into a suit of armor, protecting him from the blow.

'An Energy Warrior!'

'That layer of silvery-white metal is...'

'Magnesium!'

Gao Neng was a top student; he identified it in a single glance.

"If you can't beat her, just call for help. We can pitch in. But please don't just set off flashbangs without warning. At the very least, give your teammates a heads-up, right? You walking lightbulb!" the scruffy old man said.

"Ptui! Ptui! Ptui!" Ito Sei spat out a mouthful of crushed stone. He ignored the scruffy man's taunt, the smile wiped clean from his face and replaced by an ugly scowl. "Incredible strength. But you think you can fight my Magnesium Energy with basic Iron Energy? A little naive, don't you think?"

"It pays to be cautious. This girl isn't using pure iron. It's pig iron with carbon added, and it's even evolving into steel. Underestimating your opponent can be fatal," the composed woman warned.

"No matter how hard it is, iron is still iron! Watch me waste her!" Provoked by his partners, Ito Sei's emotions began to spiral out of control. The Magnesium Energy covering his body instantly transformed into a swarm of fine needles.

"Die!"

The silvery-white needles shot forward!

The Steel Giant Dragon once again moved to shield Shen Ning'Er, its maw gaping wide.

"Burn!" Ito Sei shouted again.

Gao Neng instinctively closed his eyes.

But this time, he didn't see a blinding flash. When he opened his eyes, he saw that Shen Ning'Er and the Steel Giant Dragon were completely engulfed in a raging inferno.

'Magnesium combustion!' Gao Neng, being a top student, identified it instantly once again.

"No matter how hard the iron, it still has a melting point. Let's see you fight me after I melt you down!" Ito Sei laughed with abandon. The Steel Giant Dragon shielding Shen Ning'Er was beginning to glow red-hot.

'It's really melting!'

And to this, all Gao Neng could think was...

'Moron!'

If Shen Ning'Er were using ordinary Iron Energy techniques, Ito Sei's move would have actually worked.

But Shen Ning'Er was using Energy Manifestation!

An Energy Manifestation endowed with its own essence, energy, and spirit was no ordinary hunk of iron!

That thing was practically a living dragon on the verge of true sentience!

Gao Neng had personally seen Shen Ning'Er's manifested Iron Dragon devour wood and turn its own body into a furnace of molten steel. So what if it was melting?

ROAR!

Glowing red-hot, the Steel Giant Dragon burst from the flames and charged straight for Ito Sei like a tiger unleashing a powerful, coiled strike.

"How is this possib— No!" It was too late for Ito Sei to cry for help. The Steel Giant Dragon swallowed him whole.

"..." Gao Neng could even see Ito Sei's body entering the Steel Giant Dragon's stomach, where it combusted and was reduced to ash.

The atmosphere suddenly fell silent.

An Energy Warrior, defeated in a matter of moments?

The scruffy old man and the composed woman both took an instinctive step backward.

"So, who's next?" Shen Ning'Er asked, turning to them with a nonchalant air. She glanced from the scruffy old man to the composed woman.

"Energy Manifestation... it's even more terrifying than I imagined. It can still attack even while melting. Looks like we're in for a nasty fight," the scruffy old man said, his face grim.

"Stop posturing and let's attack together! It's that or we all die!" the composed woman spat.

"Hmph... I've lived long enough as it is. A man in his thirties living like an old geezer. Today, I'll risk these old bones and test this 'Miss Gao Neng's' Energy Manifestation!"

"Go!"

Without another word, the two of them charged forward.

Gao Neng was speechless.

'Isn't this dialogue a little... cringey?'

But for some reason, he felt a strong sense of unease coming from the scruffy old man. There was an extremely pungent odor as well.

And then, he saw a terrifying scene.

A yellow gas surged out, thick and suffocating, and in an instant, it had completely enveloped Shen Ning'Er.

At the same time, the composed woman made her move. Ribbon-like strands shot out from her body, wrapping around the Steel Giant Dragon that was protecting Shen Ning'Er.

'A non-metal Energy, Sulfur!'

'A metal Energy, Copper!'

As a top student, Gao Neng once again identified them instantly.

But it was completely useless. No matter how much he understood, he was powerless to help.

This battle Shen Ning'Er was fighting made him realize for the first time just how weak he was. In a fight between Energy Warriors, he didn't even have the right to participate.

"Your iron may be able to resist melting, but what can it do once it's been corroded by my sulfur?!" the scruffy old man bellowed, his eyes wide.

"And lucky for us, my copper is more resistant to corrosion than your iron!" the composed woman added with a confident look.

"Yes, you're both right. There's not much I can do right now." Shen Ning'Er nodded. The Steel Giant Dragon in front of her was rapidly corroding, falling to pieces. "However... are you so sure that iron is all I can use?"

(After weathering the storm, a rainbow finally appears. This book has welcomed its first Helmsman, "A Quiet One." I'm so touched! Applause! CLAP CLAP CLAP... It's been half a month since the book launched, and it has nearly 9,000 bookmarks. Yesterday alone, we broke 800 recommendation votes! The performance is pretty good! I hope everyone continues to support the book! The more you vote, the happier Xin Yi is while writing. Thank you all! Finally, please feel free to leave lots of comments in the Chapter discussion. Xin Yi reads every single one. Any suggestions, and any memes... if you write them out, it makes it easier for me to 'borrow' them, right?)

## Chapter 33: The True Pay-to-Win Girl

"Huh?!"

"What does that mean?!"

The sloppy old man and the dominant-looking woman froze in shock.

Then, they saw a magnificent golden light flare up in Shen Ning'Er's hand, blindingly brilliant. A golden liquid gushed from the light like a fountain.

"G-Gold Energy!!!"

"Quick, run!"

The sloppy old man's face contorted in horror.

As for the dominant-looking woman, she spun around and bolted instantly, all her previous haughtiness gone. She looked as if she had just seen a demon.

"Trying to run? Too late." A faint smile played on Shen Ning'Er's lips as she thrust one hand forward. As if on command, the golden liquid rapidly solidified before her.

"ROAR!"

An enraged beast's roar echoed out, shaking the entire factory.

Then, a massive arm forged of pure gold reached out from the yellow sulfur mist, covered in a dense coat of visible golden fur.

"Shield!" The dominant-looking woman's face was pale. She clapped her hands together in front of her, and four copper bands materialized, fusing into a copper shield as smooth as a mirror.

BOOM!

The pure gold arm crashed into the copper shield.

The mirror-like shield offered a moment of resistance before it was shattered into fragments.

The dominant-looking woman shot backward, but a fragment still struck her foot. With a cry of pain, she tumbled headfirst and landed between Gao Neng's legs.

"..." Gao Neng stared at the woman.

"..." The woman also saw Gao Neng.

Their eyes met. Gao Neng desperately pushed off the ground, scrambling backward. The woman did the same.

'Huh? This woman seems a little afraid of me. Don't tell me she thinks I'm an Energy Warrior like Shen Ning'Er?' The thought flashed through Gao Neng's mind. He was just about to shout, "Don't move! Hands up!" when another tremendous roar assaulted his ears.

"ROAR!"

The beast roared again.

Within the sulfur mist, a giant golden ape a full eight or nine meters tall stood firm. Its thick arms, dense golden fur, and a pair of sharp tusks were a testament to its fury.

Meanwhile, Shen Ning'Er was now covered in a golden feathered mantle composed entirely of individual golden feathers. It enveloped her whole body, and a golden mask concealed her face.

It was an incredibly imposing sight.

Gao Neng watched the scene, somewhat speechless.

'What a massive pile of...'

'Gold!'

'And it's pure gold at that!'

'That's right. Shen Ning'Er has a hidden gold-type talent. Gao Neng remembered that before he copied her talent, his own hidden gold talent was at 0%.'

'Then, after enhancing it, his hidden gold talent became 100%.'

Gao Neng didn't know exactly how powerful Gold Energy was, but he knew that the number of Alliance Coins required to gather enough material for such a massive Furious Golden Ape had to be astronomical.

'Impressive!'

'She's a true pay-to-win goddess!'

However, this wasn't the time to be concerned about that. An intense sense of danger was washing over him.

The woman was drenched in sweat. With Gao Neng in front of her, Shen Ning'Er behind her, and the wound on her foot, she was preparing to make one last, desperate stand.

And the target of this desperate move...

...was obviously not going to be Shen Ning'Er.

'Oh no, this is bad!' A chill ran down Gao Neng's spine. He wanted to run, but he couldn't get away. The iron ring was still clamped on his ankle, making it hard to even stand up.

"Major Shen, your subordinate has subdued these two. They are now yours to deal with!" Just then, Shen Ning'Er's voice suddenly rang out.

"Major Shen?" Gao Neng's intelligence was as high as his name suggested. After a moment's hesitation, he realized Shen Ning'Er was actually trying to save him.

Then he thought back to how Shen Ning'Er had used his name...

What?!

Gao Neng suddenly felt a surreal sense of dislocation.

He had originally thought Shen Ning'Er was just speaking off the cuff. Now he understood the true depth of her scheme; it was a move calculated at every step. By pretending to be him, she could test whether he actually knew the people in the factory. At the same time, it allowed her to save his life at the critical moment by revealing her identity as "Major Shen."

A drop of cold sweat trickled down Gao Neng's forehead.

'I've really met my match this time,' he thought. 'This Shen Ning'Er's intellect is nearly on par with my own!'

"Lieutenant Gao, you handle the old man. Leave this woman to me," Gao Neng coughed, forcing himself to his feet.

The faces of the woman and the sloppy old man changed drastically. When they looked at Gao Neng again, there was a clear look of dread in their eyes.

'This Gao Neng, who can wield Gold Energy, is just an Alliance Lieutenant?!'

'Then this Major Shen...'

'Just how powerful is she?!'

"Old man, save me! If I make it out of this alive, I'll sleep with you tonight!" the woman shouted, quickly absorbing the copper fragment lodged in her foot.

"What the fuck are you talking about! If \*I\* can survive... hell, you can have your way with me!" The sloppy old man's face was just as sickly pale.

...

「In the factory's security control room.」

Huang Ya and Fatty were frozen in stunned silence.

Although they couldn't make out what was being said on the factory floor, the moment they saw the Furious Golden Ape, they knew the fight was over.

"Brother Huang Ya... Wh-what do we do?! That woman is... she's too strong!"

"Quick, make a call!" Huang Ya fumbled for his phone, but his hands were shaking so badly he dropped it. "Your phone! Give me your phone, quick!"

"Y-yes, sir, here's my phone!"

RING... RING...

The call connected.

An angry yet seductive voice came from the other end.

"It's the middle of the damn night. Who has a death wish, interrupting me while I'm creating art?"

"Boss Lady, it's bad! Real bad! There's a psycho woman in the factory! She... she can use G-G-Gold Energy! She materialized a huge golden ape, it's almost ten meters tall!"

"What did you say? Gold Energy materialization?!" The seductive voice instantly turned ice-cold.

"Yes! Ito Sei is already dead! Uncle Yitutu and Sister Meimei are fighting her now, but I think... I think they're about to die too!"

CLICK.

The line went dead.

「In Tang De's old villa, within the Forgotten Land.」

The woman with elven ears leaped off Tang De's body. She quickly draped a sheer robe over herself, her eyes glinting with a faint blue light.

"What is it? Did something unexpected happen?" Tang De slowly sat up, took a sip of red wine, then casually picked up a cigar from the table and struck a match.

"There's a problem at the factory. A man and a woman broke in. They say the woman can materialize Gold Energy. If I'm not mistaken, that Alliance Major you told me about before is probably at the factory right now!" The woman's eyes narrowed, her tone frigid.

"What did you say?!" The cigar in Tang De's hand dropped to the floor.

Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 34: Nightmare Mission Countdown

"Well, that's fine too. In a way... it simplifies the plan." The woman glanced out the window, then turned. "Tang De, you haven't given that thing to Qin Tianxiong yet, have you?"

"Given what? How could I..."

"Tang De, listen to me and listen carefully. I'm asking if you have given the item to Qin Tianxiong yet!" the woman's tone turned frigid.

"What are you getting at?" Tang De's expression darkened.

"I know you want to cooperate with the Alliance. That magnetic stack from Wang Ju was the gift you intended to offer them. But have you considered one thing? What if that Alliance Major dies in the factory?"

"Hmph? What are you planning?!"

"Oh, nothing much. Originally, we planned to wait for you to give the item to Qin Tianxiong. Then, when he led his team into the factory, we would just detonate it with a 'BOOM!' By then, you would have naturally given up any thoughts of cooperating with the Alliance, right?" the woman said with a faint smile.

"You dare to trick me? I'll fucking kill you!"

"Don't be so hasty, Brother Tang. It's not too late to make your move after I've finished. Now, Qin Tianxiong didn't go, but that Major did. This isn't a bad opportunity, you know."

"What kind of opportunity?"

"Wouldn't it be better if someone who's in the way dies? You can still cooperate with Qin Tianxiong. That way, the Alliance will support you, and so will we. Isn't that for the best?" the woman said alluringly.

"Heh, I'm not Wang Ju. I will absolutely never work with you!" Tang De sneered.

"Well then, that can't be helped. I've already planted explosives at the factory. With a single command from me, that Major will be dead for sure. Afterward, we'll just casually spread a rumor that the Major died in the factory because you, Tang De, leaked the information. Do you think the Alliance will still have a place for you then?"

"Despicable... But do you really think this is enough to make me submit?"

"Think it over, Brother Tang. We both benefit by cooperating, and we both suffer if we don't. As long as we keep quiet, no one will know why that Major went to the factory. We can just find a random scapegoat, and you'll still be you, Tang De. Furthermore, we'll help you prepare something to deliver to Qin Tianxiong. When that time comes, the Forgotten Land will truly be your domain," the woman's smile grew even more bewitching.

"..." Tang De fell silent.

"Alright, I'll be on my way. If you've made up your mind, Brother Tang, head over to the factory and take a look. See if that Major is still alive, will you?" Having said her piece, the woman walked slowly to the window.

Tang De's fists clenched, but he didn't move to stop her.

The woman glanced back at Tang De, the smile on her lips growing even more radiant. Without another word, she leaped lightly out of the window.

...

「Dream Toy Factory.」

Gao Neng was temporarily safe.

However, he knew that even though Shen Ning'Er had spoken up to save him, it was only because she didn't want him to die at the hands of others. Once she dealt with the two people before them, it would probably be his turn.

'The Nightmare Mission...'

'It really is a nightmare!'

Gao Neng was truly witnessing Shen Ning'Er's power this time. Coupled with an intellect that matched his own... 'if I choose to fight her head-on here, it's anyone's guess who will break first.'

"Aaargh, I'm making my move!" Gao Neng yelled, recklessly leaping forward.

The imposing woman instinctively retreated.

At the same time, Shen Ning'Er's Furious Golden Ape moved. Its two fists, seemingly forged from solid gold, smashed toward the imposing woman like a pair of great mountains.

"No!!"

The imposing woman tried to kick out in her final moments, but a fist had already smashed down on her head. She raised a bronze shield, but it shattered almost instantly.

BOOM! The factory building shook violently.

The blast of wind sent Gao Neng's short hair flying.

And just then, Gao Neng saw a wrench lying on the ground.

'That's my wrench!'

'The wrench Shen Ning'Er scared out of my hand!'

In an instant, Gao Neng dove for the wrench like a drowning man grasping at a lifeline. He snatched it up and clamped it hard onto the iron shackle on his ankle.

"ARGH!" Gao Neng roared, putting every last ounce of his strength into it. His muscles tensed, hard as steel.

SNAP!

The iron shackle snapped.

Having broken through the first human physical limit, it was possible for him to snap pure iron that wasn't exceptionally hard.

At the same time, the pained scream of the scruffy old man echoed from nearby.

'No time to hesitate.'

Gao Neng's eyes darted around, searching for an escape route. 'I can fail the mission and become a 'guapi,' but I absolutely cannot lose a leg, much less die here.'

"MEOW!" In the distance, a stray cat, as if it had spotted prey, darted into a corner of the factory and vanished.

'It's the cat I sent flying with my wrench at the factory entrance!' Gao Neng's eyes lit up. 'Life is full of surprises.' He broke into a run, heading for the spot where the cat had vanished.

RUMBLE!

RUMBLE!

A series of massive crashes echoed from behind him.

A golden light illuminated the factory floor.

In the brilliant light, Gao Neng could clearly see a large, open hole in that corner where a manhole cover should have been. 'Every cloud has a silver lining! If that cover were still there, I'd have had no chance.'

"Here I go!"

"Gao Neng, where do you think you're going?" After dealing with the two, Shen Ning'Er quickly spotted the fleeing Gao Neng. With a flick of her hand, the Furious Golden Ape charged after him.

Gao Neng didn't dare look back.

He knew that looking back while fleeing was the biggest mistake one could make. Not only was it completely useless, but it would also slow him down and make him more likely to trip.

"Shen Ning'Er, want to know how I beat you? I'll tell you right now!" Gao Neng yelled as he ran.

"Hm?" Shen Ning'Er's eyes narrowed, and the Furious Golden Ape's movements faltered for a second. "It was really you who defeated me? You, of all people?"

...

No answer came.

Because Gao Neng had already jumped into the hole.

"Hmph, men... so typical!" Shen Ning'Er stamped her foot and quickly followed. "Trying to run? Do you really think you can escape from me, the invincible pretty girl?"

...

'Not run?'

'And wait to die? No thanks!'

The moment Gao Neng jumped in,

he felt like he was in the clear.

Below him was a massive sewage drain pipe. It was a labyrinth of branching paths and countless exits, like a spider's web.

'Shen Ning'Er will never be able to catch me now,' Gao Neng thought as he ran. 'Failing the Nightmare Mission will turn me into a 'guapi,' but that's still better than being dead, right?'

'Wait, that's not right!'

'If I really become a 'guapi,' wouldn't that be worse than death?'

'Besides, I can get a Middle-Level Treasure Chest from the Nightmare Mission. Who knows what's inside? It's got to be better than the Bone Marrow Cleansing Pill from a basic chest, right?'

Gao Neng's gaze swept across his surroundings.

He was thinking.

'Is completing this mission worth the immense risk?'

'Shen Ning'Er is just too strong. I can't beat her head-on. Using others as a diversion is also unrealistic because no one else can even pose a threat to her. And without a threat, there's no opening for a sneak attack.'

'Most importantly, Shen Ning'Er is wearing that Golden Feather Robe. Even if I got close, I probably couldn't even scratch her, could I?'

'What should I do?'

"MEOW!" Just then, he heard the stray cat cry out again. For some reason, he could sense the excitement of a predator that had spotted its prey in that sound.

'Wait a minute!'

'This is a sewage drain, right?!'

'That means there are bound to be... those things... down here, right?'

'My childhood trauma...'

'If Shen Ning'Er actually dares to follow me in here, she's the one in for a nightmare, isn't she?'

"Gao Neng, you can't escape," Shen Ning'Er's voice echoed through the pipes. "If you confess everything, I might consider giving you a quick death."

"I'm over here! If you can catch me, I'll do more than just confess—I'll even let you toy with my emotions!" Gao Neng yelled back as he sprinted away.

And right in front of him,

a timer was flashing incessantly.

Time Remaining: 28:25

Twenty-eight minutes left. Nearly half an hour. 'That's plenty of time to show Shen Ning'Er what a real nightmare is.'

"So you haven't gotten far, have you?" Hearing Gao Neng's voice, a cold smile once again graced Shen Ning'Er's lips. She pressed one hand against the sewage pipe.

BOOM!

The entire sewage pipe system seemed to explode.

Black "Iron Energy" surged out from the pipe network, and as it flooded the system, the pipes themselves began to warp and twist.

Gao Neng's excitement was short-lived. A continuous CRACKLING and POPPING sound erupted from behind him.

He was stunned.

'What kind of plot twist is this?!'

Just as he had that thought, he heard a flurry of footsteps from behind, accompanied by a series of sharp YELPS.

He glanced back.

Gao Neng's eyes went wide.

'Dogs?!'

'A dozen iron dogs?!'

In that instant, Gao Neng realized just how naive he'd been. Shen Ning'Er might be afraid of rats, but when faced with her, where would he find the time to go catch one?

More importantly, even if Shen Ning'Er was terrified of rats, it wasn't as if seeing one would render her completely powerless.

It wasn't like he had a rat on hand, anyway.

And even if he did, Shen Ning'Er could probably still take on ten of him at once.

(Seeing you all fighting over your recommendation tickets pains me so much I can't breathe! So, for such a long Chapter, asking for a few recommendation tickets isn't too much to ask, is it?)

## Chapter 35: Just to Stay Alive

'You shitty system! You won't be happy until you get me killed, will you!' Gao Neng bolted, but the dozen or so iron dogs behind him stuck to him like glue.

No matter where he ran, the iron dogs reacted instantly and kept pace.

'They have a sense of smell?!

Gao Neng was speechless. 'Energy manifestation can actually give iron dogs a sense of smell. Energy Warriors are so damn cool. I have to become an Energy Warrior.'

'Trying to escape my grasp? Dream on! How could someone like me, an invincible, beautiful girl, be so easy to bully?' Shen Ning'Er followed closely behind the iron dogs, completely unafraid of losing her quarry.

Gao Neng was miserable.

But he truly had no other options. All he could do was run for his life, using the dense network of openings in the drainage pipes to turn left and right, maintaining the distance between them.

And so it went, one person running, the other chasing...

Time remaining: 25:15...

Time remaining: 15:45...

Time remaining: 8:35...

...

'Less than 6 minutes left?' Gao Neng watched the time tick away, his lips growing dry. His stamina was holding up, but if time ran out, the nightmare mission would be a failure.

'No!'

'I have to risk it! If you're gonna die, die fighting!'

'No!'

'I can't risk it. If I die, I'm really dead!'

The two thoughts collided in Gao Neng's mind. Impulse urged him to turn back and fight Shen Ning'Er like a man, but reason told him that to turn back was to walk into a dead end.

And then, he discovered...

He really had reached a dead end.

Somehow, the path in front of him had simply vanished.

'Gone?'

'The path is gone?!'

'I've run into a dead end? But... how can there be a dead end inside a drainage pipe?!' Gao Neng didn't get it. Logically, the primary purpose of a drainage system was to drain water, so it should be a vast, interconnected network that eventually converged at an outlet.

But before him, there was indeed no path.

It seemed to be blocked by something...

'Blocked?'

'What kind of heartless bastard just dumps their trash here!'

AWOOOO!

The iron dogs' barking grew closer, and soon, they charged. A cold light glinted off their bodies, their eyes locked on Gao Neng.

Cold sweat dripped down Gao Neng's back.

He brandished the wrench in his hand as he backed away, until his body was pressed against the pile of "trash" blocking his path.

"Running? Why aren't you running anymore?" Shen Ning'Er appeared in Gao Neng's line of sight. The golden feathered robe was gone; she was back in her mental hospital patient uniform.

"Nowhere left to run..." Gao Neng said, stating the obvious.

"Oh? Hahaha!" Shen Ning'Er laughed. With a wave of her hand, the dozen or so iron dogs closed in, completely encircling Gao Neng.

"Wait! This isn't fair! It's not fair!" Gao Neng shouted.

"How is it not fair?"

"I'm not an Energy Warrior yet. You're just relying on your energy manifestation, aren't you? If you have any guts, try fighting me without it! Let's go hand-to-hand; I might not even lose to you." An idea suddenly struck Gao Neng, and he resorted to goading her.

"Oh? Trying to goad me? Too bad, that doesn't work on me. I'm simply stronger than you. I can use energy manifestation and you can't. That means I get to bully you." Shen Ning'Er was completely unmoved.

"..." Gao Neng really wanted to call her shameless.

But he held his tongue. 'After all,' he thought, 'if the roles were reversed, I wouldn't fall for such a low-level taunt either. It's too stupid. Only a complete idiot would fall for that.'

'But if that's how it is, I'm really out of moves.'

Less than two minutes remained.

'Even if I charged in like a real man right now, with so little time, I wouldn't have a chance of taking Shen Ning'Er down, would I?'

"Alright, the game of cat and mouse is over. I'll give you ten more seconds. If you can tell me, in full detail, your purpose for coming here and how you got into my room, then perhaps... Huh? Gao Neng, get over here! Quick, get over here!" Shen Ning'Er had been smiling, but halfway through her sentence, her expression suddenly changed, becoming extremely tense.

'Hmm? Go over there?' Gao Neng really wanted to say, 'Trying to trick me? Not a chance!' but he wasn't a complete fool.

He knew that if Shen Ning'Er really wanted to attack him, she wouldn't need him to move an inch. The dozen or so iron dogs surrounding him were more than enough.

'Something's wrong!'

After hesitating for only a second, Gao Neng dove toward Shen Ning'Er.

He moved with incredible decisiveness.

Even so, after taking only five steps, a massive explosion erupted behind him.

BOOM!

The entire underground drainage system trembled.

'Gunpowder?! That pile of "trash" I was leaning against... was gunpowder?!' How could Gao Neng not guess what had happened? But he had only taken five steps. How could he possibly escape an explosion from a mountain of gunpowder?

"Hurry up! Faster!" Shen Ning'Er yelled. From her vantage point, she could clearly see a massive fireball surging toward them from behind Gao Neng.

Her eyes were wide, her face completely devoid of its earlier mockery. Even she had never imagined that such a massive quantity of gunpowder would be stored in the factory's underground drainage system.

If the iron dogs' extremely sensitive noses hadn't detected the scent of gunpowder, prompting her to crush the high-dimensional capsule she had just sealed, she likely would have died as well!

A golden liquid gushed from the high-dimensional capsule.

However, unlike when she dealt with the slovenly old man and the cool, mature woman, it didn't immediately envelop her body to form the golden feathered robe. Instead, it surged continuously toward Gao Neng.

'No way... Are all young girls this vicious? She wants to kill me right before she dies?' Gao Neng was stunned for a moment as he watched the golden liquid swirl toward him.

But he quickly realized something was wrong.

The golden liquid wasn't harming him. Instead, it enveloped his body, forming a suit of Golden Battle Armor that completely protected him from head to toe.

'Shen Ning'Er is saving me?'

Gao Neng was a little surprised and even slightly moved. Then, he felt a powerful, irresistible force slam into his back.

The shockwave from the explosion had arrived!

The force of the impact sent his body flying.

"Golden Sphere!!!" Shen Ning'Er let out a sharp cry. The remaining golden energy that hadn't covered Gao Neng instantly solidified into a giant sphere, enveloping the space around them and shielding them from the omnidirectional shockwave.

THUD!

Gao Neng's body successfully slammed into Shen Ning'Er.

Tackled!

Yes, he had tackled Shen Ning'Er again.

However, the notification sound for mission completion did not ring out.

Less than a minute remained.

"You attacked a Major again! Gao Neng, you are so dead this time! You have two seconds left of the ten I gave you. If you don't state your purpose right now, I'll throw you out and let the gunpowder blow you to bits!" Shen Ning'Er's expression

was icy as she grabbed Gao Neng with both hands and began to shove him out of the golden sphere.

Gao Neng was speechless.

'What is this?'

'A complete 180? You were the one who just saved me. You wouldn't go that far, would you? There's a real explosion happening out there. She wouldn't actually throw me out, would she?'

'No way!'

Gao Neng refused to believe it.

Just as he was thinking this, he felt his body being pushed up and through the golden sphere. His back was actually pushed outside of it, and he could even feel the searing force of the shockwave.

Holy shit!

Shen Ning'Er wasn't kidding!

"Are you going to talk or not?! You have one second left! If you don't, you can try being a good person in your next life! And don't you dare disbelieve me. I only saved you because I want to know the truth. Besides, I never joke with strangers!" Shen Ning'Er's gaze turned cold, and she gave him another hard shove forward.

In that instant, a million thoughts raced through Gao Neng's mind.

'Women are fickle creatures.'

'Their hearts are as deep and unfathomable as the ocean...'

'And as for this woman, Shen Ning'Er... while she might not be completely evil, you'd be dead wrong to think of her as some kind-hearted, charitable soul.'

'Just as Shen Ning'Er said, she only saved me to find out the truth!'

'If that's the case, then don't blame me for being ruthless.'

SQUEAK SQUEAK SQUEAK! Gao Neng suddenly let out a few sharp, piercing squeals. He didn't want to die; he still had a bright future ahead of him. To paraphrase Shen Ning'Er...

'I'm taking you down just to survive!'

"Huh?! You're really..." Shen Ning'Er's expression changed. She was all too familiar with that sound. It was the same one she had heard in her dream—a squeal so sharp it made one's heart race with panic.

"Do it!" At this point, Gao Neng couldn't care about anything else. In the split second that Shen Ning'Er was stunned, he tightened his grip on the wrench and, with every ounce of strength he possessed, swung it hard.

THWACK!

Shen Ning'Er's gaze froze. Disbelief and indignation flashed across her face, but in the end, her eyes slowly fluttered shut.

THUMP!

Shen Ning'Er's hands went limp.

Gao Neng once again successfully pinned her beneath him.

Mmm...

A familiar feeling.

"Ding! Congratulations, Host, you have successfully completed the Nightmare-level mission: Third Time's the Charm!"

(This was a long Chapter, wasn't it! I really went all out to make it a satisfying read for everyone. Please send some recommendation tickets my way! Can we break a record today and get over a thousand?)

## **Chapter 36: The Middle-Level Treasure Chest's Surprise**

"A true man must be tested by blood and fire. Host, your endurance has earned a heavenly blessing. The final three seconds were the moment of true sublimation!"

"Ding! You have received a Middle-Level Treasure Chest."

"Ding! 10% chance to win a spin on the Lucky Wheel."

"Analyzing..."

"Analysis complete: Luck status: abysmal. You didn't win! But don't give up. You were unlucky this time, and you might be even unluckier next time! Do your best, young man!"

"..." For some reason, even though Gao Neng had completed a nightmare-level mission and gotten a Middle-Level Treasure Chest as a reward, he had the urge to curse someone out.

But he was better than that. He didn't say a word.

He just calmly looked at the iron chest in front of him.

"Open."

"Ding! The Middle-Level Treasure Chest obediently opened."

A blue light flashed.

Gao Neng felt something appear in his hand. It was an icy-blue pill, crystalline and translucent. But it wasn't a white Bone Marrow Cleansing Pill.

"\*\*Soul Tempering Pill:\*\* Tempers the host's soul and randomly enhances one of the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, or touch. (The stronger the soul, the stronger the five senses.)"

'Temper my soul? Enhance my five senses!' Gao Neng hadn't delved too deeply into Soul Studies, as it wasn't a major part of the high school curriculum.

But he knew perfectly well what the five senses were.

'Enhance the five senses!'

'This stuff is seriously powerful!'

'Hmm... I'll give it a try.' Gao Neng wasn't worried about passing out. Shen Ning'Er had just fainted, and she probably wouldn't be waking up anytime soon.

Still, just in case, he needed to take some precautions.

He took a hemp rope he'd prepared earlier from his backpack and tied up Shen Ning'Er's hands and feet. Still feeling uneasy, he wrapped the rope around her body a few more times.

After a moment's thought, he still felt it wasn't enough...

Next, he pulled a sleeping bag from his backpack and stuffed Shen Ning'Er inside. Then, he wound the rope tightly all around the sleeping bag.

Having done all that, Gao Neng let out a sigh of relief.

'That should do it.'

'Now I can take the pill in peace.'

Gao Neng picked up the Soul Tempering Pill and popped it into his mouth. He poured some water from his canteen, wondering if he should chew it first, but the pill had already dissolved.

"GULP!"

Gao Neng swallowed it in one gulp.

'Tastes pretty good. A little sweet and sour.'

'Alright, time for another round of painful bliss!'

Gao Neng was a man. He could endure short-term pain to enjoy long-term pleasure. He closed his eyes, waiting for the storm to hit.

He waited for a minute.

Nothing happened.

He waited another two minutes.

He felt his body grow lighter. Then, after an unknown amount of time, he thought he heard the sound of faint footsteps. They were extremely quiet, but he heard them nonetheless.

'Am I hearing things? Everything outside was destroyed. How could there still be footsteps?' Gao Neng ignored it and kept waiting. Then, he felt like he was seeing people.

'Yes!'

'I can really see them!'

But it was also hazy, faint and indistinct, like looking at flowers through a fog.

A few people seemed to be searching for something in the ruins. After a while, they walked over to a nearby corner.

Two people were standing in the corner.

A man and a woman.

The woman had a pair of elf-like pointed ears, and a faint, ethereal blue light flowed in her eyes, looking as if they were connected to another dimension.

And the man...

'It's Tang De?!'

Gao Neng was stunned. 'Why would I be "dreaming" about Tang De? That's impossible. My sexual orientation is perfectly straight. And taking a huge leap, even if it weren't, Tang De is not my type!'

"Brother Tang, what's the verdict? Should we have them search one more time?' the woman asked with a faint smile, a look in her eyes that pleaded for conquest."

Gao Neng was startled again.

'I can actually hear her talking.'

'Amazing!'

'I must be dreaming, right?'

"'No need.' Tang De shook his head."

"'Then Brother Tang must know what to do next, right? The meddlesome Alliance Major is dead. Isn't it time for you to give that Lieutenant Qin Tianxiong a call?' The woman's smile grew even more seductive."

Tang De fell silent for a moment before finally raising his wrist and making a call.

The call connected almost instantly.

Gao Neng couldn't hear the person on the other end, but he could see Tang De's expression turn grim.

"'You'll get what's yours. I know exactly what the Human Alliance wants, but I need to leave myself some room to maneuver, don't I? Whether you want to cooperate or not is your decision...'"

"CLICK!"

The call ended.

Tang De let out a long breath, his grim expression breaking into one of delight.

"See, Brother Tang? I told you cooperating with us was the right move!' Seeing the look on his face, the corners of the woman's lips curled up slightly."

"Qin Tianxiong's condition is ten units a month."

"Ten units? Your Human Alliance sure has a big appetite... Still, the Forgotten Land is your territory, after all. Ten isn't unreasonable. We'll agree to his terms."

"Qin Tianxiong says the Alliance's official appointment will come through tomorrow. Your identity makes it inappropriate for you to be involved, but if you're worried, you can send someone to supervise."

"Brother Tang, no need to be so polite with me. Of course I trust you! Hmm... but I'm thinking one person might not be enough. You're so charming, after all. What little girl could possibly resist your... 'artistic' talents? Why don't I send two over instead?' The woman's eyes narrowed slightly."

"'Suit yourself.' Tang De didn't elaborate, simply turning and walking away."

The woman stood where she was, watching Tang De leave. A car then pulled up, and she got in. It drove off in the opposite direction and stopped a short while later.

Gao Neng's eyes immediately went wide.

Because he recognized the place where the car had stopped.

North Suburban Mental Hospital!

'The woman...'

'Is she... a patient there?'

Just as he was thinking this, he saw the woman enter a small door next to the mental hospital.

"CREAK!"

The small door closed.

The woman disappeared from sight.

But then, a shocking scene unfolded in Gao Neng's vision. His sight seemed to pierce through the ground, revealing a massive underground factory.

Machines were running inside.

Most importantly, the factory's layout was extremely similar to the one he had seen on the metal storage device—in fact, it was identical.

'No way!'

'The real Dream Toy Factory...'

'Is under the mental hospital?!'

'No, that's not it!'

'It's not that the Dream Toy Factory is under the mental hospital. The Dream Toy Factory was just a decoy! The real key location is underneath the North Suburban Mental Hospital.'

A thought suddenly struck Gao Neng.

Everything he was seeing was faint and indistinct, yet his mind was perfectly clear. This meant he wasn't dreaming!

'My soul has...'

'...left my body!'

(Amazing! We actually broke a thousand recommendation votes! You guys are incredible! Xin Yi won't let you down, I'll work hard to keep the updates coming! Please keep the recommendation votes coming, let's keep the excitement going!)

## **I Can Control Resources**

## Chapter 37: I've Become Super Strong

'Does this mean I can watch people change clothes whenever I want now?' That was the first thing that popped into Gao Neng's head.

However, as an upstanding gentleman, he disdained such activities. Therefore, he decided to give it a try and see if he could really watch people change clothes.

If he could...

He would try his best to watch less in the future.

Gao Neng began to "dive," following the woman's footsteps. He dove and dove... He had no idea how many twists and turns he'd passed before finally arriving in a hidden room.

Then, he saw another person in the room, clad in a black cloak that concealed their face. He couldn't make out their figure or appearance.

'Is it a man or a woman? Let me take a look.' Gao Neng subconsciously drifted closer. He had the Eye of Deprivation; as long as he wasn't too far away, he could see through the surface to the essence of things.

Just as he was leaning in...

The person in the black cloak suddenly looked up.

In an instant, Gao Neng saw a pair of eyes as clear as water, as if unstained by a single speck of dust. Those eyes held no emotion, no ripples whatsoever.

"Hmph!" A soft snort.

Gao Neng immediately shuddered.

Then, he felt his out-of-body soul recede like a tide, passing back through the small gate of the North Suburban Mental Hospital before returning to a patch of ruins.

"Who dares launch a sneak attack on Us!" Gao Neng's eyes flew open. He found himself back inside the golden sphere, but his body was completely drenched in sweat.

Phew!

Gao Neng let out a breath.

Shen Ning'Er was apparently still unconscious, showing no signs of movement.

Wait!

My vision seems...

Stronger!

The change was incredibly obvious.

Gao Neng quickly noticed the difference. He could see more clearly than before, he had night vision, and his gaze could even perceive some kind of pulsating substance within the golden sphere.

Not only that, but his hearing, sense of smell, and even his sense of touch when he felt the golden sphere had all been greatly enhanced.

'So the Soul Tempering Pill... doesn't hurt?' Gao Neng quickly figured it out, and a wave of joy washed over him. He couldn't have asked for a better, pain-free outcome.

Most importantly, he seemed to finally understand what it meant to have a powerful soul.

It wasn't about his soul leaving his body, but about his Spiritual Power becoming stronger!

Gao Neng tried again. He focused his mind, imagining he could see outside. His Spiritual Power once again passed through the golden sphere, and he saw the factory that had been reduced to ruins.

Then, he tried to look at his own body.

Soon, he could see the meridians within his body, and even his bones...

'I can really see it. Didn't I just get way too strong?' Gao Neng remembered that the training path for an Energy Warrior was to first refine the body, and only then temper the soul and Spiritual Power.

But now, he possessed tentacle-like Spiritual Power right from the start!

His five senses were heightened, too!

Gao Neng checked his attribute panel.

Vitality: 120/202.

Stamina: 110/150 (Rating: Excellent.)

'My Stamina went from 96 to 150? A 54-point increase just like that? And the rating became Excellent?' Gao Neng was a little surprised. He remembered his previous rating was "Good," and now it had jumped straight to "Excellent."

This was a pleasant surprise indeed.

Although his Vitality hadn't changed, the massive boost to his Spiritual Power made Gao Neng feel as if he were seeing a whole new world.

'Looks like I should do more nightmare missions in the future!'

However, the most pressing matter now was to complete that normal-difficulty mission for 100,000 Alliance Coins. Without money, he couldn't even register for the college entrance exams.

"Since the real underground factory is beneath the mental hospital, the magnetic pile should be there too, right?" Gao Neng muttered to himself, beginning to ponder how to complete the mission.

He was so focused that he didn't notice Shen Ning'Er had already opened her eyes.

'Magnetic pile? Huh? He actually knows about the magnetic pile?!' Shen Ning'Er's eyes blinked. She subconsciously tried to move, only to find her entire body bound tightly.

"I've got the layout of the place clear now, but how do I get over there?" Gao Neng continued to think. Then, he closed his eyes. "Huh? No way... The underground drainage pipes here are actually connected to the ones at the mental hospital? Does that mean I can use the drainage pipes to get into the underground factory?"

Gao Neng continued to talk to himself.

Meanwhile, Shen Ning'Er's eyes had already closed again.

"Excellent. Time to move. Finding the magnetic pile means finding 100,000 Alliance Coins!" Gao Neng made up his mind. He was going to go all out this time.

Then, he realized he had an awkward problem...

He seemed to be trapped.

The golden sphere was completely enclosed, without a single gap. His Spiritual Power could probe outside, but his physical body couldn't get out, right?

So, that raised a question.

How to break out of the sphere!

'Hit it with a wrench?'

'Dig at it with a shovel?'

'Isn't that just bullshit!'

'A golden sphere thick enough to withstand explosives isn't going to be smashed that easily, is it?'

'I'm screwed. This golden sphere isn't that big. If this keeps up, am I going to suffocate?' The more Gao Neng thought about it, the more his heart sank. His gaze subconsciously fell on the unconscious Shen Ning'Er. 'Should I wake Shen Ning'Er up? If she's awake, she can open the sphere, right?'

'No!'

'If Shen Ning'Er can control the golden sphere, wouldn't I just be dead again?'

'What do I do?!'

'Right, the high-dimensional capsule! As long as I have one, I can store this golden energy, and then I should be able to get out.'

'So clever.' Gao Neng mentally patted himself on the back. However, there was still one problem: he didn't have a high-dimensional capsule. But that wouldn't stop him.

Because Shen Ning'Er definitely had one on her.

"Major Shen, my hand is forced. If I don't get rid of this golden sphere, we'll both suffocate. You don't mind if... I search you, do you? Hmm, don't worry, I, Gao Neng, am an absolute gentleman. I promise I won't grope you. Okay, I'm starting now!" After speaking, Gao Neng got to work.

He reached his hand into the sleeping bag, but then he realized he'd tied her a bit too tightly. The ropes completely restrained her inside, and his hand could only reach the area above her chest.

'A little more force!'

'Maybe I can reach it then!'

Gao Neng strained again, but still couldn't get his hand any further...

'What should I do? Should I untie her first?' Gao Neng pulled his hand back and thought calmly. He realized it was risky. Shen Ning'Er had been unconscious for a while and would likely wake up soon. If he untied her now, he might just get himself killed.

But if he didn't untie Shen Ning'Er, he couldn't get the high-dimensional capsule...

Sigh. It's so hard to be a man.

Gao Neng agonized for a moment before deciding to take the risk and untie Shen Ning'Er. Before that, however, he had to test if she was about to wake up. If she did, he decided he would just hit her with the wrench again to be safe.

"Hey... Shen Ning'Er, you can wake up now." Gao Neng gently patted Shen Ning'Er's cheek, but there was no response.

'She's probably not awake yet.'

'To be safe, I'll try splashing some water on her.'

Gao Neng poured some water from his flask and splashed it on Shen Ning'Er's face.

'Still not awake?'

He patted her cheek again, then pinched it with his fingers.

"Huh? It's pretty springy." Gao Neng pinched it a few more times.

In no time, the makeup on Shen Ning'Er's face was completely smeared away, revealing the jade-white skin underneath, along with her hidden, stunningly beautiful features and heroic air.

'Was my wrench hit that hard? Did I hit the back of her head?' Gao Neng felt there was no point in continuing his tests. Shen Ning'Er was probably in a deep state of unconsciousness and wouldn't be waking up anytime soon. Since that was the case, he'd just untie her. It's not like she'd coincidentally wake up the exact moment he finished, right?

(Gao Neng: Give me some recommendation votes!)

Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 38: The More You Dig, The More You Earn

There's a saying: "Getting up the mountain is easy, but coming down is hard."

What Gao Neng was feeling right now was that tying someone up was easy, but untying them was hard. However, since he only planned on untying Shen Ning'Er's upper body and not her lower half, it didn't take too long.

Before long, he had loosened the outermost ropes and the sleeping bag. Then, he undid most of the ropes binding Shen Ning'Er's body. This way, it would be much more convenient to search her.

"Shen Ning'Er, I'll give you one more chance. If you're awake, don't pretend to be out. I'm about to start searching you, you know." As Gao Neng spoke, he tightened his grip on the wrench in his hand.

"..." Shen Ning'Er didn't say a word.

"I'm really gonna do it," Gao Neng tested the waters again.

Still no response.

"Stop playing dead. I can see you're awake—your eyelids are twitching. There's no point in faking it. I'm going to count to three, and then I'll really start groping you all over." Gao Neng touched Shen Ning'Er's neck, then his hand slowly, tentatively, moved downward.

"..." Shen Ning'Er.

"Three!"

"Two!"

"One!"

"Here I go!"

Gao Neng hovered his hand over Shen Ning'Er's chest.

Shen Ning'Er remained perfectly still.

'Looks like I was overthinking it. The blow to the back of her head must have really done the trick.' Gao Neng chuckled, then reached out and rummaged through the pockets of Shen Ning'Er's clothes.

Soon enough, he pulled out more than ten high-dimensional capsules.

He glanced at Shen Ning'Er again.

She still hadn't woken up.

Gao Neng finally relaxed completely. He walked over to the edge of the golden sphere, opened one of the high-dimensional capsules, and began collecting the energy according to the method taught at the academy.

But at that very moment, Shen Ning'Er's eyes opened again. She bit her lip, her gaze fixed on Gao Neng's back, a fire seemingly blazing in her eyes.

"Haha, collect!" Just then, Gao Neng burst out laughing. The golden sphere instantly shrank, transforming into a stream of golden liquid that flowed swiftly into the high-dimensional capsule.

Shen Ning'Er immediately shut her eyes again.

Gao Neng was thrilled.

'This high-dimensional capsule is filled with a huge clump of golden energy! If I sold this... forget one hundred thousand Alliance Coins, this has to be worth tens of millions, right?'

'But why haven't I gotten a prompt that the mission is complete?'

'Could it be that the system doesn't consider this mine yet? If I kill Shen Ning'Er, will it belong to me then?'

Gao Neng glanced at Shen Ning'Er again.

Heh...

It wasn't that he wasn't ruthless enough. It was just that while Shen Ning'Er wasn't exactly a good person, she wasn't that bad either. Most importantly, he had only survived because she had intervened.

"Forget it. I'll let you live. This gold doesn't belong to me. I'll return it to you when I get the chance. I should just find my magnetic pile and earn my own Alliance Coins." Gao Neng said it aloud casually. Even though he was sure Shen Ning'Er couldn't hear him, saying it served as a mental reminder to himself.

Otherwise, holding a high-dimensional capsule filled with so much golden energy, he really wasn't sure if he could avoid being blinded by greed.

He scanned his surroundings.

Gao Neng saw that the area was almost completely destroyed. However, about five hundred meters away, there was the entrance to a drainage pipe that hadn't been fully blocked off.

'Should I just leave Shen Ning'Er here?'

'What if someone comes back to search the area again?'

'Better take her with me.'

Gao Neng remembered someone had already searched the area once. Besides, a massive explosion had just happened here. Once the dust settled, even if those people didn't return, some scavengers definitely would.

He picked up the rope again and wrapped it around Shen Ning'Er a few more times.

Gao Neng didn't bother with the sleeping bag this time. He just picked Shen Ning'Er up in his arms, his large backpack still on his back. After all, he really didn't feel safe turning his back on someone who could wake up at any moment.

'Holding her in my arms, if she makes the slightest move, I can just drop her and hit her with the wrench again.'

'Convenient and quick.'

Once everything was settled, he checked the time.

It was exactly midnight.

He still had two hours until the 2:00 AM deadline given by the system.

Gao Neng began to feel his way forward.

Having broken through his first human limit, his stamina was quite impressive. Shen Ning'Er wasn't very heavy, so carrying her wasn't too strenuous.

Carrying Shen Ning'Er like this, he made his way to the entrance of the drainage pipe.

Gao Neng began to channel his Spiritual Power.

The layout of the drainage pipes unfolded before his eyes like a map. This powerful feeling was simply incredible, but the consumption of his Stamina... was a bit severe.

In just about ten seconds, his Stamina had dropped by more than 60 points, leaving him with less than 50.

Gao Neng was shocked by this rate of consumption.

'I didn't feel this before, did I?'

'It was probably because I was "evolving" at the beginning, so the consumption was low. And the other time I used it was too brief, just a quick glance.'

Gao Neng thought for a moment. 'This won't work. Even with my calisthenics routine, I can't handle this kind of drain. I'd have to do the routine every ten-odd seconds. Who could stand that?'

'Could it be related to the range my Spiritual Power is covering?'

'A smaller area of coverage... means less Spiritual Power consumption?'

Gao Neng tried again. This time, he only extended his Spiritual Power to a range of seven or eight meters ahead. As expected, the Stamina consumption was much lower.

"Hmm, keeping it within a ten-meter range should be acceptable." Gao Neng carefully weighed his options and started feeling his way forward again.

After all, he already had a clear idea of the layout inside the drainage pipe, so there was no need for such a large, continuous drain. A ten-meter range was more or less enough.

...

「Twenty minutes later.」

Gao Neng successfully reached the location of the mental hospital.

Through his Spiritual Power exploration, he determined that the underground factory was just seven or eight meters ahead. The next step was to recover his stamina and then search for the so-called magnetic pile.

Gao Neng first ate a few crackers and drank some water. Then, he did his calisthenics routine for a bit, and his Vitality and Stamina values were soon full again.

"Want a bite? Go ahead if you want one, don't say I'm stingy." Gao Neng held a cracker to Shen Ning'Er's lips, then closed his eyes and began to explore with his Spiritual Power.

BUZZ!

In an instant, he felt the tendrils of his Spiritual Power pass through the wall and enter the underground factory.

There were quite a few people bustling about inside.

But the flow of personnel seemed to follow a specific pattern.

'It's in the southeast direction!' Gao Neng quickly confirmed this. He then extended his Spiritual Power toward the southeast, and in no time, he discovered a specific location.

"A pile of ore!"

"How can it be a pile of ore?!"

Gao Neng was so shocked he almost shouted out loud.

'Don't tell me the magnetic pile *is* the ore pile?!

'Impossible!'

'How could a magnetic pile be an ore pile... That doesn't make any sense. Something must be wrong. Based on my understanding of magnetic piles, some kind of "unknown" existence would be a better explanation.'

'Wait!'

'Is it possible that there's a pile of ore at the location of the magnetic pile? And this ore pile was affected by the magnetic pile, which then formed some kind of special ore?'

'Or maybe...'

'...at the location of every magnetic pile, there's always a special pile of ore?'

Gao Neng couldn't be sure.

He knew too little about magnetic piles; everything was just speculation. The only reason he even had this theory was because of the system's hint.

'A hammer, a wrench, and a shovel?'

'It's telling me to go mining, right?'

"Whether it is or not, I'll just start digging first. If the magnetic pile really is with the ore pile, then I'll just dig up the magnetic pile along with it!" Gao Neng grinned at the thought.

'Digging up a magnetic pile...'

'Just thinking about it is so badass!'

There was still an hour and a half left.

'First, I'll get to the ore pile's location and get ready to dig. It doesn't matter if my judgment is right or wrong. As long as I dig up some ore, it's a profit. The more I dig, the more I earn!'

## Chapter 39: Ruthless Flower Destroyer

With his mind made up, Gao Neng wasted no more time. He picked up Shen Ning'Er and crept toward the ore pile.

He made it there ten minutes later.

He was still inside the drainage pipe, but the distance to the ore pile had been reduced to fifteen meters. Plus, there was a pipe exit right in front of him.

Simply put, once he was out of the pipe, the ore pile was only fifteen meters away.

Fifteen meters...

It wasn't a long distance, but it wasn't short, either.

Coupled with the four guards watching over the ore pile and several workers bustling about, rushing out now would be no different from a death wish.

Wait!

Gao Neng didn't rush into action. He remembered the system's hint pointed to 2:00 AM, so there was bound to be an opportunity then.

For now, all he needed to do was conserve his strength and get everything ready.

He took another look at his Attribute Panel.

"Huh?" Gao Neng suddenly noticed a change on his Attribute Panel.

Evolution: 2/5

'When did that change?'

Gao Neng hadn't noticed it before. 'Was it because I completed a mission? No, that's not right. I clearly completed three missions: "Sacrifice Shen Ning'Er," a random mission called "Confront," and "Once an Accident, Twice a Coincidence, Thrice a Pattern."'

'Why did it only add 1 evolution point?'

'Do random missions not give evolution points?'

Gao Neng didn't dwell on it. He figured he'd find out after completing the mission to earn one hundred thousand Alliance Coins. For now, the priority was to recover his stamina.

Time passed quickly...

1:40 AM.

Shen Ning'Er still showed no signs of waking up.

Gao Neng had everything ready, shovel in hand.

The four guards outside were yawning, their vigilance clearly slipping. The workers had also stopped and presumably gone to rest.

"Ah Kai and I are going to rest. You two stay here and watch, got it?"

"Us two again? Brother Dan... we've been on watch for nearly a week straight. By all rights, we should be rotated out..."

"You have a problem with that?"

"Wouldn't dream of it. You and Brother Kai go get some rest, Brother Dan. We'll be fine watching." The other young man immediately pulled on the one who had spoken up.

"Hmph. Let's go, Ah Kai."

A moment later, it grew quiet outside.

The two young men slumped, glaring after the two departing middle-aged men. Then they found a place to sit down and each lit a cigarette.

Time continued to tick by.

Ten minutes later, the two young men were yawning again.

Gao Neng continued to observe the two young men with his Spiritual Power. He decided to wait for a final ten minutes, then make his move decisively.

Just then, Shen Ning'Er's eyelashes twitched. One eye cracked open slightly, and she glanced at Gao Neng squatting beside her, a hint of astonishment on her face.

'Spiritual Power? This complete scrub... is actually emitting Spiritual Power fluctuations? Am I imagining things?' Shen Ning'Er didn't move. She closed her eyes again.

In truth, she had been tempted to make a move when Gao Neng broke open the golden sphere.

But after some careful thought, she restrained herself.

She wanted to see what Gao Neng was truly up to.

'Is it really about the magnetic pile?'

Shen Ning'Er wiggled her fingers. Her body was bound, but not too tightly. With a full burst of her strength, she could break free in just three seconds.

But now there was one major problem. Gao Neng had already searched her and taken her high-dimension capsule. Without that energy source, a lot could happen in three seconds...

'This scrub is surprisingly cautious. I'll wait a bit longer... We're too close right now. For a three-second escape, I need at least five meters of distance. He must be planning to go out... Yes, I'll wait for him to leave this exit. Then, whether I charge in after him or wait for him to return, it'll be a sure thing.'

Shen Ning'Er quickly made up her mind. Just then, she saw Gao Neng stir, prompting her to squeeze her eyes shut again.

'He should be heading out now, right?'

As she was thinking this, she felt a sharp pain on her head.

**BONK!**

A muffled thud rang out.

Shen Ning'Er's eyes flew open, just in time to see Gao Neng squatting in front of her, holding a wrench. But her vision quickly blurred again, and her consciousness started to fade.

She was indignant. 'How is this possible?'

'How could I have been discovered?!'

'My acting skills...'

'They're so good!'

But whether she could accept it or not, Shen Ning'Er was knocked unconscious once again.

Gao Neng, for his part, was rather surprised.

'Why did she suddenly open her eyes? She gave me a scare.'

'Must be a side effect of getting knocked out, right?'

'Yeah, Shen Ning'Er should still be unconscious. That's right.'

Gao Neng didn't think much of it. He was ready to make his move. So, before he did, what was the harm in giving Shen Ning'Er an extra knock?

'Always double-tap, just to be sure.'

With Shen Ning'Er taken care of, he could finally relax. He prepared to go knock out the other two drowsy young guards.

But just then, a mechanical voice suddenly rang in his ear.

"Ding! Host has successfully unlocked the 'Cruel Despoiler of Flowers' achievement. (Possessing the 'Cruel Despoiler of Flowers' achievement gives the Host a chance to trigger its related bonus missions.)"

"Huh? An achievement... a bonus mission? What's a bonus mission?"

"Bonus Mission: A very 'bonus-y' mission. The rewards are plentiful, the time limit is long, and there is no penalty for failure."

'So that's what a bonus mission is, huh? So how do I trigger one?' Gao Neng was secretly delighted. 'Now \*this\* is how a system is supposed to be!'

"CLAP! CLAP! CLAP!" came the mechanical sound.

"..." Gao Neng cursed internally. 'You moron of a system.'

Gao Neng was furious.

However, he suddenly realized something. It seemed that whenever he did something to Shen Ning'Er, he managed to reap handsome rewards. Sacrificing her got him an enhanced hidden talent, and knocking her out again got him the 'Cruel Despoiler of Flowers' achievement.

'Then if I were to give her an injection...'

'...would I get a 'Night Shift Nurses' achievement?'

Gao Neng didn't dwell on the thought, because the clock had just struck two in the morning. It was time to start digging.

...

The two young men were yawning.

Suddenly, they felt a cold draft on the backs of their necks.

THUMP!

THUMP!

Two muffled thuds.

The two young men didn't even have time to turn around before their heads slumped to the side and they collapsed to the ground.

'I've gotten ridiculously strong!' Gao Neng felt that this Spiritual Power was just too useful. By using it to observe, he had been able to ascertain the two young men's condition in advance, even from inside the drainage pipe.

The attack was decisive and ruthless.

He was starting to get a little cocky.

However, time was short, so he didn't dally. He first propped the two young guards' heads up, then slipped on a set of work clothes the other workers had left behind. After that, he grabbed the shovel and made a beeline for the ore pile.

As soon as he reached the edge of the ore pile...

Gao Neng felt that something was off.

Something was definitely off. The ore pile before him was pitch-black and looked unremarkable, but he could no longer use his Spiritual Power.

It felt as if it were being suppressed by some mysterious force.

Not only that, but he also had the strange sensation of being at the intersection of two different spaces. And yet, before his eyes, there was nothing but the ore pile.

'Is it inside the ore pile?' Gritting his teeth, Gao Neng thrust the shovel into the pile.

CRUNCH!

Shards of black ore went flying.

Beneath them, it was still black.

"..." Gao Neng dug again.

Another CRUNCH!

I'll dig!

And again!

And... again!

Gao Neng's stamina was full, and he went all out. He refused to believe there was nothing in this ore pile. He clearly remembered Tang De saying the Alliance needed 10 of them a month.

'Ten of them! If that's not ore, what else could it be?'

"Gan Liniang! Who's there? Digging with so much gusto in the middle of the night?" Just as Gao Neng was furiously digging, shovel after shovel, a disgruntled voice sounded from nearby.

(Recommendation votes... I need recommendation votes!)

## **Chapter 40: Magnetic Crystal Ore**

Gao Neng's Spiritual Power was being suppressed by some strange force, so he didn't notice the footsteps and movement behind him at all. The moment he heard the voice, his expression changed.

'I've been discovered?!'

'I get found out just for mining a little ore?'

Gao Neng was speechless. 'Isn't working overtime to mine a popular thing in this underground factory?'

Normally, this would be the time to run.

But Gao Neng wasn't normal. He quickly grabbed a handful of ore-rich soil, smeared it on his face, and then, while continuing to dig, calmly turned his head.

"Ah... Huh? Hello, Brother Dan!" Gao Neng recognized him the moment he turned around. It was the middle-aged man, Brother Dan, who had said he was going to rest earlier.

"Hm? Why are you still digging so late?" Brother Dan's brow furrowed. Gao Neng's face was covered in black ore dust, making his features unrecognizable. However, the fact that the man had recognized him at a glance made him lower his guard.

"Ptoeey, ptoeey..." Gao Neng didn't speak this time. The more he said, the more holes would appear in his story. So, he just pointed a finger at the ore dust on his lips and kept spitting.

"Another new idiot? Let me tell you, getting twenty pieces of this stuff a month is considered a high yield. It's not about hard work, it's about luck. Go to bed early... Don't fucking keep me from my rest. Ah... I'm dead tired." Brother Dan yawned again, glanced at the two guards standing with their backs to him not far away, and then left.

Gao Neng smiled, bowed, and waved goodbye to Brother Dan, but inwardly, he had received a definitive answer.

'Twenty pieces? So it really is ore!'

'Keep digging!'

Gao Neng made his movements a little quieter.

'Twenty pieces a month... doesn't that mean there's a good chance of finding one per day? My luck has always been heaven-defying. There's no way I can dig all night and find nothing, right?'

'I just don't know what it is, exactly...'

But Gao Neng wasn't too worried. All the ore here was pitch-black. If he dug up something of a different color, that would have to be his target.

'Shovel!'

'Shovel again!'

As Gao Neng dug, he carefully checked his work. Whenever he hit something hard, he would pause and tap it a few times with his wrench.

He just kept digging, and digging...

Before he knew it, he had been digging for nearly four hours.

During that time, Gao Neng would go over and give the two guards a couple more whacks on the head every half hour.

The time was approaching six o'clock.

Gao Neng still hadn't found anything particularly "eye-catching."

'What should I do? Maybe I should come back and dig again tomorrow? No... I've already knocked their heads swollen. If I don't find anything this time, it definitely won't be this easy tomorrow.' Gao Neng weighed his options. Wrench in hand, he went back to the two guards and gave them two more solid whacks.

'One more hour. If I still can't find anything, I'm out of here.'

Gao Neng resumed digging!

Digging...

And digging...

Just as he was digging, he heard the sound of a shovel next to him.

"Yo, brother, you're up early, huh? I thought I was early, but I didn't expect someone to be even earlier." A worker greeted Gao Neng while yawning.

"..." Gao Neng remained silent.

This was very awkward.

'I had no idea work started so early in this underground factory!'

'Maybe I should just knock this guy out, too?'

Just as he was thinking this, a few more workers slowly walked over from not far away. They started changing into their work clothes; some held iron shovels, others held spades.

"Heh!" Gao Neng gave the worker who had greeted him a small smile, revealing a set of pearly white teeth. Then, he buried his head and continued digging.

For some reason, however, he felt like a wolf that had snuck into a pack of huskies.

Soon, more and more people gathered around him.

It started with just a few people.

Eventually, there were more than ten.

Gao Neng was now considering how to get back. If he just ran, he would definitely be discovered. But if he didn't run, he would be found out all the same when the guards changed shifts.

'Useless System!'

'You said I could make money by mining!'

'I've found the ore pile now, so what the hell is this about not being able to dig up any ore?!'

"CLANG!"

Just then, Gao Neng's shovel suddenly hit something hard. Over the course of the night, he had already dug up more than thirty rocks, so he didn't pay it much mind.

He lifted his shovel and flipped it over.

A rock about the size of two fists was tossed out.

It landed right at the feet of the worker who had spoken to him earlier.

The worker stared at the rock by his feet, stunned for a moment. Then, his eyes went wide, followed by a surge of frantic joy.

"Ore, ore! I dug up some ore!" the worker shouted, reaching down to pick it up.

"Whoa, someone struck ore?!"

"What great luck! That's a huge bonus!"

The other workers also shouted.

"Struck... what ore?" Gao Neng glanced over and saw that it was the very rock he had just flipped out. The rock was still pitch-black.

But beneath its black exterior, a faint purple light seemed to flow, as if a piece of amethyst was hidden inside.

"My ore, my ore! This is the ore I dug up!" The worker was overjoyed and reached down to grab it.

Gao Neng didn't stand on ceremony. He lifted his shovel and swung it directly at the face of the worker who was already bending over to pick up the ore.

"BANG!"

The worker took a shovel to the face and went tumbling to the side.

"What do you mean, \*your\* ore? This is clearly the ore I dug up with my own skill. You dare to steal it?" Without another word, Gao Neng picked up the ore and stuffed it inside his clothes.

"You little brat, you dare hit me?! I'm the one who dug that up!" The worker who had been sent flying by the shovel clutched his face and tried to get up to fight Gao Neng to the death.

The other workers just stood by and watched the show.

Every time ore was found, fights like this were perfectly normal. It wasn't uncommon for two people to beat each other bloody, so they weren't the least bit surprised.

They were even ready to pick up the scraps!

Gao Neng hadn't expected the guy would actually try to steal his ore. There was nothing more to be said. Before the man could even get to his feet, Gao Neng rushed forward and slammed the shovel down on his head again.

"THUD!"

This time, the worker didn't get up. He was knocked out cold.

"Someone struck ore?! Who struck ore?" Just then, a groggy Brother Dan and Brother Kai rushed over. They immediately spotted Gao Neng and the downed worker.

The other workers said nothing, merely pointing at Gao Neng.

"So it was you, you little brat. Your luck's not bad. Hurry up and give me the ore. Go collect your bonus." Brother Dan recognized Gao Neng immediately, despite his face being covered in black ore dust.

"How much is the bonus?" Gao Neng glanced around, wanting to weigh his options.

"What a stupid question. One thousand Alliance Coins, of course!"

"Only a thousand?" Gao Neng felt like something was off. 'Could it be that the System didn't send me here to "mine ore," but to "steal ore"?'

"What? You're still not satisfied, kid?" Brother Dan was a little surprised. Usually, whenever these workers found ore, they would all run over to him, ecstatic, to hand it in.

Just by mining here, with a bit of luck, they could get a reward of one thousand Alliance Coins in a month...

This was an extremely high amount.

"DING! Detected that Host has mined one 'Magnetic Crystal Ore (Color: Purple, Quality: Intermediate).' To facilitate maximum resource utilization for the Host,

the System has generously unlocked the hidden 'Resource Recycle' function. Does the Host wish to recycle it immediately?" Just then, a mechanical voice sounded.

(We're almost at 100,000 characters! The climax is coming! With that, I'm asking for a wave of recommendation votes, let's get some passion going!)