

Chapter 1271

The Art of Managing Leeks

“Oh, the Main Storyline mission is out.”

“Calamity of the Supers? What is that?”

“I guess it refers to the conflict between the three Universal Civilizations and the association. I feel that this name is a little weird though. How could Supers cause a calamity?”

Everyone discussed the mission title.

The Calamity of the Supers should have been the name of Version 5.0, but now that it had its name changed to Black Star’s Era, no one was familiar with this term.

This mission was not issued by Han Xiao himself but rather automatically generated by the interface. This was similar to the Main Storyline of Version 5.0 in Han Xiao’s previous life, except for some subtle changes, such as Han Xiao’s presence.

Everyone went to read the Mission Introduction.

This is a crisis that affects the entire Superpower class. There is a deep-rooted contradiction between individual power and collective civilization. Black Star chose the route of seeking peace through deterrence, taking the initiative to ignite the fuse and detonating this calamity in order to create a new era. As a Super, you should have your own position and philosophy in this storm. Choose your faction, and fight for it.

As a member of the Black Star Army, it is hoped that you will stand at the front of the army in such times of crisis, to complete the great goal of the Black Star Army.

Everyone continued reading and saw that this Main Storyline was more of a faction struggle. As an S-ranked Main Storyline, it stretched for a long period, allowing players to continuously accumulate rewards. However, they were required to choose a faction to participate in this storm to fight for, and everyone’s faction there was preset as the Black Star Army. During this storyline, every time they completed the assigned missions given by their faction, they would obtain extra Contribution Points and Experience, which was very tempting.

“The rewards are plenty, and the mission rewards are even higher than the previous versions. The bar has been raised once again.”

“This is an incident that affects the entire Superpower class, so it feels more impactful compared to the previous version of Flickering World development. While the version also mobilized the entire universe, it focused on exploration, and most of the events were confined to a single Star Field. There was little impact on the other regions. Furthermore, this Calamity of the Supers seems very antagonistic at first

glance, since Supers permeate across the whole universe. This will cause the entire Galactic Society to become turbulent.”

“Actually, I feel that this is pretty good as well. The Main Storyline came out as soon as the version opened, and our goal is clear.”

Everyone talked in small groups, feeling extremely delighted.

While it felt a bit sudden to get involved in such a big event as soon as they came online, the army players quickly accepted this reality, excited.

After marveling at Black Star’s deeds for a while longer, the players finally shifted their attention to the other aspects of version update changes.

“That’s right, fifty years have passed. The army should have upgraded a lot of their internal products. Let’s take a look.”

It did not take long for someone to open up the army’s faction store to check on the equipment and weapons provided.

The equipment sold by the army had always been the focal point for the players. While it was a little pricey, the quality was guaranteed, and its performance was excellent. After-care repair and enhancement services were even thrown in. A large number of players were thus using the army standard suits. Every time the Army Logistics Department launched a new series of equipment, it would be the time for the army players to collectively improve their overall combat capabilities. At the same time, they could also lose the weight in their wallets.

With a glance, the players all froze before shouting out in joy.

The number of products offered by the army had doubled compared to before the version update. There was a lot more equipment, including weapons, raw materials and special props that had never been seen before, and they were all high-quality items even when compared to the current update and iteration.

Many of this technology came from Jayz’s treasure trove, and Han Xiao merely picked up a few suitable ones to throw toward the logistics department, allowing them to greatly expand the scale of the faction’s unique products.

“Yo, the army has done a lot of research in the past few decades. There are so many new products now!”

“I’m still wearing the 7th Generation battlesuit, but they’ve already updated to the 12th Gen, and the performance has been optimized so much!”

“It’s over. My current suit is now outdated. Replacing it will require a large sum of money, and I still have to strengthen, refine, and enchant it... I feel that my wallet is going to die.”

The players’ eyes turned red upon seeing so much good stuff. Their desire to buy was unprecedentedly strong.

It was a pity that the national war and the Pro League at the end of Version 4.0 had emptied the accumulations of most people. They could only channel their desire to buy stuff into the desire to earn money.

At this moment, the players received an internal email from the Army Commander.

In the email, Han Xiao represented the army in welcoming the return of the Immortals, declaring that the current situation was sensitive, and thus, he hoped that everyone could be a little more low key. At the end of the letter, a note was also attached, indicating that their previous location for the national war, Planet Milton, had been purchased by the army and would be given to the Golden Alliance as a gift.

No one was expecting such a bombshell, and they suddenly felt dizzy from the surprise at their luck.

“This... Our Commander directly bought the national war planet to give to us? Am I dreaming?”

“Maybe this is the legendary banknote ability...”

“Why did Old Black do this? He shouldn’t have known about our national war, right?”

“That’s hard to say. At that time, many of the galactic organizations were paying attention to us, even though they did not know about our national war. However, our Golden Alliance beat everyone else, so maybe Old Black thought that we were winning glory for the army.”

“That feels possible!”

Everyone was full of excitement.

As the stage of the national war, Planet Milton had the potential to become the Players’ Main City, so having the army directly buying it and giving it to the Golden Alliance meant handing over the sovereignty of this main city to the Chinese players. Originally, the management rights belonged to the NPC organizations, but unexpectedly, they fell into the players’ hands. This was not a small gift.

This would be the first time a player-managed guild owned a planet!

Many of the players participated in the national war, but none of them expected that there would be such additional reward. They could not help but feel surging joy.

Speaking of which, most of the Chinese players were also old timers who participated from Planet Aquamarine itself. This gift might be Old Black taking care of them.

Thinking of this possibility, people like Frenzied Sword started to feel emotional. This proved that Black Star had always paid attention to them!

Before long, this matter spread to the forums, where it caused envy among countless players.

“Another benefit of the Black Star Army! How can their faction be so good?”

“Nasty, I’m so jealous of them!”

“Black Star is indeed the model of all factions, knowing how to win the hearts of the people. I also wish I could have such a faction leader.”

“Wuwuwu, lemons are also good (cries)”

Seeing this, the various foreign club players felt their sanity snap and their stomachs churn.

The national war had been over for quite a period of time, and these participants had also re-adjusted their mentality. While they had lost, there was no substantial loss to them. But at this moment, these players felt that their hearts had been stabbed once again.

Seeing the Golden Alliance happily receiving a planet as a gift, these foreign clubs only felt upset.

If we had worked harder at the last moment and won the national war, then this planet might have belonged to us...

Oh wait, we're not part of the Black Star Army either way. Even if we won, the faction behind us would not have bought Planet Milton as a gift...

This was even more frustrating to think about!

As soon as the tens of millions of players returned, the long silent forum instantly turned lively.

Because the version had just been updated, everyone was busy trying to level and upgrade their equipment. Their top priorities were to enrich their wallets. After many of the army players understood the current situation, they could not wait to start.

...

At the same time, inside the Army Commander's office, Han Xiao switched off the surveillance in the great hall, glancing at his experience bar, which had begun to rise rapidly once again after being stagnant for so long. He felt great comfort.

Ah, this is the fragrance of leeks...

Nice.

The players' savings were almost all spent in the previous version, and now that the new version has just been released, they also have the need to upgrade themselves, so I can only use new products and discounts to stimulate consumption, maintaining my efficiency of harvesting experience.

Rubbing his chin, Han Xiao's eyes sparkled.

His upgrade costs were astronomical. He had also accumulated some experience during the version update, and according to the normal harvesting efficiency during the opening periods of the version, he would take about eighteen months to three years to accumulate enough to reach the level 360 advancement. This would also depend on the speed at which the players accumulated experience.

If he used his own proficiency in leek management, he might be able to speed up the players' efficiency.

Before his advancement, Han Xiao also planned to have his God's Trait Transformation Void branch reach the maximum level. This would also need time as he needed to craft more Universal Treasures.

This Main Storyline was a battle of factions; thus, the association would appear more attractive to the players. Furthermore, with him as the head of the association, there was no need to be afraid of anyone trying to poach his people. The players would automatically join his faction.

“Now that the players have returned, the fuse for the Calamity of the Supers has been readied. We have to see how the three Universal Civilizations will respond,” Han Xiao muttered.

...

On the Federation of Light’s mother planet, in the President’s Office, Louis stood by the window. He turned back to look at his Head of Intelligence, his brows furrowed as he considered this sticky situation.

“The Immortals have returned? Tsk, another bunch of troublesome fellows.”

“Do you need us to take action?” the Head of Intelligence asked.

Louis slowly returned to his seat, stroking his chin as he thought.

“Immortals... Is their resurrection principle also related to the Sanctum Revival?”

In this past year, the three Universal Civilizations had studied the Sanctum Revival theory, but even with astronomical sums of money poured in, they were still far away from actual results. While the three Universal Civilizations might have been at the forefront of the explored universe in terms of Information Form technology, it was still not perfected.

The three Universal Civilizations leaders would inquire about the progress of the research every few days, so Louis started to think that the players’ resurrection abilities had something to do with the Sanctum Revival. In his opinion, both of them were strange methods to revive, which could be seen as a connection.

After thinking about it further, Louis said in a solemn voice, “The Immortals are impenetrable, and we are still unable to find out the reason for their resurrections... Increase the funding for the Immortals project. We might find a breakthrough there.”

“Understood.”

The Head of Intelligence recorded it down.

Louis paused for a while more before asking, “How’s the situation in the outside world now?”

“The Class segregation is going well. We have succeeded in shaping a group of Supers who believe that the association’s excessive ambitions have affected the order through different treatments and one-sided propaganda. These are basically people who have been affected and have lost their benefits, thus allowing us to split the Supers into two opposing voices. While the contrasting voices are not many at the moment, they are enough. As long as they exist, those that support the association will always try to one-up them, pushing the association toward breaking ties with the three Universal Civilizations.”

“Well done.” Louis narrowed his eyes. “The greater the height, the greater the fall. The association has too many expectations on them. The moment we can make them suffer a small setback, we will be able to obtain twice the result with half the effort, hitting the association’s prestige hard and shaking more people’s hearts.”

The three Universal Civilizations did not wish for a Super organization that would herd the rest as a pack leader to appear. Not only them, but the Super Star Cluster Alliance was also secretly adjusting their strategies, splitting the voices of the Supers through public opinion.

It was just that the time had yet to come, so there was no need to see this method to the end since the disadvantages would outweigh the benefits.

Waving his hand to dismiss the Head of Intelligence, Louis waited for a while before two remote projections appeared in the room. They were the 'Mechanic Empress' Mornisa and 'Defender' Romo, both of whom were Beyond Grade A mechanics directly related to the Federation of Light.

"You've come," Louis said. "You asked to see me. Did you manage to discover the location of the Mechanic Emperor's true body?"

The Mechanics in the Federation of Light had been searching for the location of Manison's body all these years, but they had never succeeded.

Romo shook his head. "He's hidden himself too deeply. We still have no news regarding this."

"Then, why did you want to see me?" Louis frowned.

Mornisa took a step forward at this moment, slowly saying, "I used to study under the Mechanic Emperor, and thus, I am familiar with the style of his Virtual Technology. A while back, I made a breakthrough with my technology, so I would like to enlist the help from the three Universal Civilizations to aid me in raiding Manison's database through Virtual Intrusion!"

Louis was a little stunned. "What's the purpose of you doing this?"

Mornisa's eyes flashed. "I've taken a fancy to the Mechanic Emperor's technological treasures. I wish to obtain his life research!"

She used to be the Mechanic Emperor's student and was more familiar than everyone else with just how deep Manison's reserves were. She had long thought of owning Manison's knowledge, and thus, their relationship had become more and more estranged, partly due to her attempting to steal a portion of his research. This was also why she had to flee to the Federation of Light as a direct descendant in order to obtain protection.

Ever since Manison lost his authority, Mornisa had again coveted his research. In the past, she was not so certain, but due to her sudden breakthrough a while back, her confidence had grown.

Based on her calculations, she believed that with the help from the three Universal Civilizations, her current Virtual Technology would have a more than fifty percent chance of invading Manison's database... The Mechanic Emperor might be strong, but he would not be able to stop so many people from attacking him.

"If it's just for this reason, then I cannot accept your request." Louis shook his head. "Furthermore, the Mechanic Emperor's reputation is not for show. Are you sure you can crack his Virtual Technology?"

"Hehe, I also remember that the Mechanic Emperor has always liked to secretly infiltrate the database of the Federation of Light. For so many years, it is unknown how much secrets he has stolen, but you guys have turned a blind eye for too long. Don't you think that our Federation of Light should fight back?"

No one should be able to pick at us, and we can destroy all the secrets he has collected about the Federation of Light! In addition, we might even obtain secrets from the Super Star Cluster Alliance in the Primeval Star River, which is the true enemy of the three Universal Civilizations.”

Louis’ eyes gleamed. He was a little tempted.

The three Universal Civilizations did not wish to provoke the association, but if it was purely infiltrating the database of the Mechanic Emperor, it should be fine. The three Universal Civilizations might be jittery toward the association, but they had never stopped their small tricks. Plus, the Mechanic Emperor was no longer the president, and he had never been on good terms with Black Star.

At this moment, Mornisa coldly laughed as she added, “As for my ability... hehe, now that more than half of the Machinery Faith has been taken by Black Star, the Mechanic Emperor’s strength has decayed and is no longer at his peak.

“As long as the three Universal Civilizations assist me, I’m sure I can invade his database. After this event, the federation will be able to obtain all the copied technological information.”

Louis weighed the pros and cons for a while before slowly nodding.

“I’m agreeable to your request. I’ll help you contact the dynasty and the church. We can give this matter a try and test the reaction of the association. Don’t disappoint me.”

Hearing this, Mornisa revealed a delighted smile.

“Relax, I’ll make you so happy you won’t even be able to talk.”

Chapter 1272 Progress and Accident

The news of the return of the Immortals spread like wildfire. In this current situation, this matter had received much more attention, with many organizations secretly in awe.

There were tens of millions of Immortal Grade B Supers, and no one could ignore this strength, especially if a few million of them belonged to the Black Star Army. This made many of the large organizations, including the three Universal Civilizations, more vigilant. They were worried that the Black Star Army would take major action after the return of their powerful armed forces.

However, these organizations soon heaved a sigh of relief as they saw the Immortals just going about their daily tasks, without any huge changes in their schedules.

It was just that every time after they disappeared, the strength of these Immortals would grow. This was a law that had been discovered. Many of the top organizations had confirmed this through the intelligence that the Immortals strength was still growing, which led them to feel concerned.

While they were only at the Grade B realm, their strength was already terrifying. Every organization knew that if the Immortals continued to grow, it would inevitably impact the existing universe’s structure and produce unknown effects, which was not good.

Furthermore, the current galactic society was now also aware of the Sanctum Revivals, and thus, they unconsciously linked it to the immortal nature of the players.

On the internet, public anger, which had begun to cool down, once again flared up. The galactic residents discussed recent events, giving rise to much speculation. There were rumors that the reason Black Star had mastered the Sanctum Revival was precisely because he discovered some clues from the Immortals.

The speculation was reasonable, and got the widest acceptance, making countless people feel that they had stumbled across the secret of Black Star.

For a period of time, almost all organizations in the universe started to offer more generous conditions for the Immortals, enthusiastic to win them over so as to research the Sanctum Revivals through them.

However, with the lessons learned through the collapse of the Limitless Financial Group, as well as the version name being called Black Star's Era, most players rejected the olive branches that the small and medium sized organizations offered and instead transferred over to the Black Star Army. The army once again ushered in a period of members skyrocketing.

As the saying went, better late than never. Because of certain factors, many players had already missed out several versions with the Black Star Army. Now that the new version had just opened, it was a good opportunity for them to start afresh, and many of them did not wish to throw away this opportunity.

The movements of the players attracted the attention of the entire universe, and countless organizations paid attention to this covetously yet fearfully.

...

In the territory of the Black Star Army, on the rocky, mountain-like surface, two figures were fighting each other at an extreme speed, leaving a series of afterimages. Each of their collisions resulted in a ring of compressed air exploding.

This was a secret training ground hidden on a barren planet.

Bang bang bang!

The two slammed into each other, much like an earth dragon rampaging amid the ground, kicking up choking sand and dust. Their Pugilist auras shot everywhere, exploding rocks and mountains alike.

Suddenly, the figure wearing heavy training armor seemed to have discovered a flaw in the opponent, raising his elbow before condensing his Pugilist flames at the point of contact. This skewed the opponent's defensive posture, and taking advantage of this short opportunity, a sharp leg whip swept across like a tomahawk, creating a sonic boom from the speed alone as it closed the distance to the opponent's chest in the blink of an eye.

Bang!

A silver figure was thrown out like a cannonball, smashing through three mountains before embedding deeply in the fourth. There was a loud bang as the rocks surrounding it crumbled, leaving behind a deep pit filled with smoke and dust.

“...Good fight.”

The silver figure shook himself, and the hill was blasted to pieces, turning into a rain of rocks.

He suspended himself in midair, his body akin to flowing mercury. The depression made in his chest was quickly recovering. This person was Silver Shadow.

His opponent did not pursue the attack, taking off his helmet to reveal an honest face. It was none other than Karlot.

Silver Shadow flew in front of Karlot and nodded. “Your progress is getting faster. It has been little more than a year, yet the current you can probably beat three of the you from a year ago. Within the Calamity Grade, your abilities are pretty good.”

“Am I that good?” Karlot scratched his head. He was a little embarrassed as he was used to being the worst performing.

“Your Pugilist potential is something I’ve rarely seen in my life. Given time, I’m sure your achievements will be higher than mine,” Silver Shadow said emotionally.

He had suppressed his strength to the Calamity Grade to battle with Karlot, but the latter’s performance completely surprised him, giving him immense pressure.

Initially, when Black Star had asked him to come teach Karlot, Silver Shadow was a little unwilling, but after a year of guidance, all negative thoughts had flown out of the window.

Karlot’s abilities soared upward at an incredible speed. If he was only an ordinary Calamity Grade in the past, right now, he was near the boss level, and this change only happened within a year!

Silver Shadow could feel a sort of Beyond Grade A potential coming from Karlot, so instead of rejecting his teaching, he instead became even more dedicated, almost unreservedly imparting his Pugilist experiences to Karlot. If Karlot became a Beyond Grade A, it would be a good thing for him too.

Black Star had a wide range of connections and had no shortage of friends who were experts in the Pugilist system. However, he actually gave such a good opportunity to Silver Shadow. Thus, Silver Shadow could not help but feel grateful to Han Xiao, thinking that Black Star was supporting him.

However, Silver Shadow devoted himself to teaching Karlot not just entirely out of goodwill of cultivating a younger generation. He was also extremely compatible with Karlot in terms of personality, and they got along very well.

“It’s because you have taught me well.” Karlot smiled in an honest manner.

“It’s not entirely my credit. You have to thank Black Star as well. His vision is truly too precise, and if he had not taught me how to guide you, I probably would not have a clue.” Silver Shadow shook his head.

Because Han Xiao had seen through Karlot's growth mechanism in the interface, he had asked Silver Shadow to conduct targeted training, specifically explaining each Pugilist concept before training at high intensities. The result was that they achieved double the results with half the effort, creating this remarkable achievement of allowing Karlot to improve by leaps and bounds.

According to the original growth trajectory, Karlot was a late bloomer, but the main reason was that he was not clear about his own characteristics, so he could only slowly explore and accumulate, wasting a lot of time. If there was a targeted exercise for him at the very beginning, perhaps Karlot's rise to power would have been much faster.

If they were to compare, Karlot was similar to the famed Hero Guo [1. Guo Jing, also known as Hero Guo, is a fictional character from Jin Yong's novel "Legend of the Condor Heroes"], hiding outstanding talent under his simple and honest appearance. Both of them also did not meet the right teacher at the beginning, wasting too much time. If they had practiced the correct method from the beginning, their combat strength would have long soared and solidified.

Because the interface could list one's advantages and disadvantages, in terms of training, there was no one in the universe more suited for guidance than Han Xiao.

Not only Karlot, but the hundreds of Beyond Grade A seeds who joined the Black Star Army also obtained some guidance, making tremendous progress in their cultivation. All of them had begun to treat Han Xiao as some sort of spiritual mentor.

At this moment, the very person being mentioned appeared beside Karlot and Silver Shadow in a remote projection.

"Your Excellency Black Star."

Silver Shadow and Karlot immediately saluted him.

"How's the training coming along?" Han Xiao smiled.

"He improved once again, and he can even break through my defense now." Silver Shadow let out an appreciative smile.

"Dang, not bad. Keep working, you'll soon step into the Beyond Grade A realm. At that time, I'll find even more teachers for you to keep growing." Han Xiao laughed cheerfully.

He had completely grasped the correct training method Karlot needed. The crucial factor behind [Everlasting Martial Path] was to accumulate Pugilist insight, and a shortcut was to have him interact with many Beyond Grade A pugilists to quickly improve his Pugilist insight. This would allow him to complete the transformation of his talent, allowing him to take the fast track to improving himself.

The moment Karlot reached the Beyond Grade A realm, Han Xiao planned to use his own personal connections to have Beyond Grade A Pugilists guide Karlot and teach him experiences and insights. With Karlot's simple and honest attitude, Han Xiao was sure that his investment would not lose out but rather allow him to earn plenty in return.

After exchanging a few more words, Han Xiao wrapped up the conversation and left.

Karlot exhaled, feeling very heartened inside himself.

In this past year, no matter how busy Black Star was, he would call every ten days or so to inquire about his training progress. He even made a training plan specifically for him and invited Silver Shadow, a Beyond Grade A, to be his teacher. All this had shown the importance Black Star placed in him.

As the saying went, there was no harm without comparison. Thinking back to how the dynasty had treated him, even if Karlot was not a small-minded person, he could not help but feel that both parties were simply not comparable.

The kindness shown to him was firmly engraved in his heart. Even if one removed his idolatry for Black Star, his sense of belonging toward Black Star had already broken through the roof.

Since you treat me like a state scholar, I'll be sure to repay this country with my life!

...

In Black Star Palace's office, Han Xiao shut down the remote projection, smiling brightly.

"Karlot was really worth training. Just a year and his growth is already so high. If we follow this trend, he might even surpass Lothaire and reach the Beyond Grade A realm first."

He could not be more satisfied with Karlot. This guy was indeed the poster boy of the future Pugilist system.

Lothaire was still stuck outside the door of the Beyond Grade A realm. This final step was the most difficult, and it was unknown how long he would take.

On the other hand, Evans had been cultivating diligently for several decades. Because the players were not online, he could not absorb any new abilities. He had only been polishing his core abilities and upgrading his realm. He had finally realized his potential, succeeding in entering the Calamity Grade as well.

Han Xiao was full of expectations for this new 'EsGod'. Since the players had returned, they could finally add some new abilities to Evans.

In addition to these potential stocks, the army had expanded its advanced combatants by many times, hosting a large number of Beyond Grade A seeds, including many talented people worth training.

Oh, that's right, there's still that balding baby Sylvia.

A pity, that with her potential, the most she can reach will probably be the Beyond Grade A realm.

Han Xiao felt that she should actually just remain as the Chief Administrative Official...

Shaking his head, Han Xiao took out the communicator and scanned it.

Right now, the universe is reacting to the players' return, worrying that if they continue to grow, they'll become more lawless, shaking the order of the Galactic Society. It is actually true to think so. The fuse has already been lit.

The ancients used this phrase in the past: a pugilist could use his strength for evil. This trait was perfectly demonstrated by the players; as their strength grew, they became harder to control. This would allow one to understand why the Calamity of the Supers was named thus, which was accurate if looking from the players' perspective.

"The three Universal Civilizations will be moving soon. I keep feeling that something is about to happen."

Han Xiao rubbed his forehead as he frowned.

At this moment, a black flame suddenly appeared in front of his eyes, rapidly expanding into a projection of Oathkeeper's soul.

Han Xiao raised his brows. "Why are you not saying hi? Did you come to me because you've collected another set of keys?"

"Not yet." Oathkeeper's tone was solemn. "Black Star, I have two pieces of bad news for you."

"Oh? Say them."

"There's a traitor that has appeared among the group of avengers, who wishes to sell out the Holy Accord in return for the assistance of an advanced civilization's help to seek revenge."

Han Xiao's expression sank. "How did this happen? Has the news been leaked?"

"Pangon is currently in pursuit of the traitor, and we've managed to intercept the intelligence temporarily."

Han Xiao furrowed his brows. "Then the other bad news?"

"Someone used magic to spy on the Holy Accord. We've traced the source and discovered that it came from the secondary dimensions. Most likely, we've been discovered by some existence hidden in the secondary dimensions, but we're still unclear as to who it is," Oathkeeper said in a heavy tone.

Hearing this, Han Xiao calmly stood up, putting on his cloak.

"Give me the coordinates. I'll go take a look."

Chapter 1273 Traitor

Grains of black sand swirled along with the raging tempest, covering the sky in darkness. This high-speed sandstorm was akin to a grinder that could smash apart steel. It was prevalent on the surface of this barren planet all year round, causing this planet to be unable to give birth to any life.

All of a sudden, blue brilliance flashed in the sandstorm, and a figure appeared out of thin air, falling to the ground.

This person wore a broken mechanical suit and was covered in blood, as if he was seriously injured. He struggled to stand up, raising his hand to eject a thin energy shield to ward off the surrounding high-speed sandstorm.

The next instant, a few rays of light flashed behind him, and Pangon as well as a few other Beyond Grade A quickly surrounded him.

Pangon coldly stared at the person, his tone full of murderous intent.

“Kotlin, you betrayed us!”

This Primordial One named Kotlin gasped for breath as he looked around the people surrounding him. He sadly smiled.

Everyone present was at the Beyond Grade A realm, so the spatial fluctuations and folds left by the teleportation and transitions were all clues for them to track him, leading to his inability to get rid of them. His communicator network was locked by the Mechanics around Pangon, so there was already no way for him to escape.

Pangon’s expression was stone cold, as he raised his fist and shouted, “I’ve said this before. Our principle of action is to not drag Black Star and Holy Accord down in our affairs. For you to try to exchange intelligence on them to the Super Star Cluster Alliance in exchange for assistance has already broken the original agreement. I can only get rid of you!”

He felt heartache yet grateful. Kotlin was a member of the Avengers, so he was saddened that his companion had deviated to another path, but he was also grateful that he managed to discover this before he and the Super Star Cluster Alliance formed deep bonds.

Kotlin exhaled before solemnly speaking. “Pangon, can’t you see it. With our meagre manpower, even if we develop ourselves silently for hundreds of years, we basically cannot complete the revenge plan. It is whimsical to hope so without external help. I can’t do it just by following you; it’s a waste of time!”

Pangon was silent for a moment before resolutely replying, “Even if hope is slim, I will not use this method of betraying Oathkeeper and Black Star. They’ve carried out the mission of the Holy Accord, reviving us and giving us a second life. You’re ungrateful to do so!”

“We’re all founders of the Holy Accord, and without our efforts in the early years, how could they be able to grasp the Sanctum Revival method now? I indeed owe Oathkeeper, but for Black Star... heh, he’s just an opportunist. How dare he put on a front as though he’s our savior? His position now was obtained through us!” Kotlin’s eyes flashed, and his attitude remained stubborn.

Another Beyond Grade A by the side coldly said, “Black Star is merely planning for the future of the entire class. While we’re not participating in it, we should not try to backstab him or get in his way. You’ve crossed the line.”

Kotlin did not seem to approve as he raged immediately. “What does the bullsh*t class struggle have to do with me? I only had one goal from the beginning, and that is to avenge my compatriots! For that, I

could give up everything, including my life. This time, I didn't even think about getting back alive! Since there's only one chance for us to undergo the Sanctum Revival, to me, the Holy Accord and Black Star are now useless!

"If they did not affect me, I could have given them face and helped them keep their secret, but Black Star is obviously trying to find ways to coexist peacefully with the three Universal Civilizations, my enemy! In the future, he might even show his loyalty and destroy us! If he dares block my way, he can only scam!"

Hearing this, Pangon and the rest frowned.

The goals of each of the founding Primordial Ones in the Holy Accord were different. Not everyone did this to escape the war, and people such as Pangon and Kotlin wished to leave a lifeline to protect their civilizations one day after the war as assurance.

Pangon shook his head. He felt that there was no point wasting his breath on Kotlin anymore. The guy had been completely corrupted by his hatred, unable to accept any other advice. He just wished to take revenge at all costs.

He did not wish to waste his time by arguing over Kotlin's personal beliefs. He changed the topic and coldly asked, "What benefits did the Super Star Cluster Alliance promise you?"

"We haven't negotiated." Kotlin did not hide anything either.

The secrets such as the way to open the Sanctums as well as the formula for creating the keys were firmly held by Oathkeeper and Black Star, and they had never been disclosed to the other Revivors. Kotlin could only trade a shallow layer of intelligence, such as the composition of the Holy Accord and the private deals between Black Star and the Holy Accord. However, just that was already very valuable.

Before negotiating conditions that fit both parties, Kotlin would naturally remain a stranger to them. It was not the first time he had dealt with such organizations, so he would not reveal his bargaining chips, otherwise he would lose his negotiation value.

Pangon mutely nodded before the Pugilist flames on his body re-ignited. He coldly said, "Alright, there's nothing more to say. I'll send you off personally."

"I never intended to wait for death. If you wish to kill me, then come and try!"

Kotlin burned his life without reserving any, frenziedly exciting his fatigued cells.

The next instant, several silhouettes blurred and smashed into each other.

Boom!

Fierce shock waves swept across the surface, causing the planet to shatter.

...

In the secondary dimension world, Han Xiao shuttled forward at high speed, jumping through secondary dimensions repeatedly as he headed deep in.

After receiving the news from Oathkeeper, Han Xiao had taken the coordinates and gone straight in to track the peeping Tom.

Over the years, Han Xiao had constructed many new machines, and this mechanical suit he was currently wearing was a model that specifically allowed him to move through the secondary dimensions at high speeds.

As for the traitor on Pango's side, Han Xiao had no control over him for the time being. Pango and the others could not take a Throne along as well, so he could not go there even if he wanted to. He could only leave it to Pango to settle... While this person was a little reckless, his combat strength could not be faulted.

Moreover, none of the revivors knew any key information such as the method to open the Sanctums. Even if intelligence was leaked, the outside world would at most know of the existence of the Holy Accord and his connection with them. Such problems could be controlled, and there might even be advantages among the disadvantages.

The Holy Accord in his past should have met with a similar matter, but the offender was not anyone who was currently a Revivor. In the Calamity of the Supers version during his previous life, Kotlin acted normally, and it seemed that no information about the Holy Accord had been leaked.

"This could be the butterfly effect caused by me. In the past, the Sanctums were not exposed, nor was there an association, so he must've made a different choice."

At this moment, a black flame materialized beside him, which took on the shape of Oathkeeper. As he followed Han Xiao, he spoke.

"Black Star, the problem on Pango's side has been resolved. The traitor has been killed."

"Quite efficient." Han Xiao nodded. "Did you manage to find out the reason?"

"Oh, Kotlin spoke like this..."

Oathkeeper recounted the incident to him.

Hearing this, Han Xiao silently nodded.

"No wonder..."

This was indeed related to him. In his previous life, the Holy Accord had always kept to the shadows, not participating in these political storms. The Revivors had all maintained a neutral stance in the past, but they had all been converted by Han Xiao to join the Beyond Grade A war. Thus, Kotlin's mentality was altered.

However, this was a rare situation. Basically, the Revivors would not risk leaking any intelligence, as they knew that once the plan of Black Star and the Holy Accord was known, they would be hunted down and might even cost Black Star his life, wasting his 'precious second life'.

People like Kotlin who were ungrateful and did not care about their lives were few. This binding of class interest and the safety of one's life was enough to suppress most of them.

In actual fact, Law and Fay had privately suggested in the past that Oathkeeper use the Soul Flame as a way to seal their mouths. While it might not be a strong restraining factor, it could be used to sense when a Revivor was leaking intelligence. However, this suggestion was rejected by Oathkeeper.

Han Xiao also did not agree with this proposal. It would be easy if things could be that simple... The Holy Accord was able to suppress the second batch of Revivors, mainly because they relied on the support of the Primordial Ones in the first batch. Their identities were people who had originally founded the organization, so if this suggestion was carried out, the nature of the Holy Accord would change, and the Revivors would run away.

Han Xiao shook his head to clear his thoughts. "Traitors are hard to avoid; we just have to be more careful."

"Kotlin was not like this... Sigh, hatred can really change a person completely. The next time we activate a Sanctum, let's not count him in."

"That's only natural." Han Xiao nodded.

The two of them were the only people who knew the true mechanism of the Sanctum Revival function. After this incident, they had removed Kotlin's name from the list, and they would no longer consider reviving him in the future.

This b*stard thought that the revival only worked once, so he felt that the Holy Accord and Black Star were of no use to him, deciding to kick them to the curb since they had outlived their usefulness. As such, Han Xiao decided to grant him his wish, so Kotlin's Sanctum Revival was limited to that once. He would never know what he had missed out on!

At this moment, the built-in secondary dimension coordinate tracker on the mechanical suit pinged.

Han Xiao followed its instructions and jumped through a few more secondary dimensions, after which he broke into the chaotic space stream, moving until he abruptly stopped outside a secondary dimension.

The outer wall of the secondary dimension in front of him was inscribed with countless magic array circuits, which protected the place tightly. This was obviously an artificial transformation, and the coordinates that were given to him also indicated this place.

"... It looks like a dimensional Mage Pagoda at first glance."

Han Xiao carefully scrutinized his surroundings.

Because he possessed the coordinates provided by Oathkeeper, he had arrived very quickly. The Holy Accord had long deployed countless countermeasures against prying eyes. Once someone tried to snoop on them, they would be tracked. The magic and technology involved in this was akin to how one's IP address could be tracked.

Han Xiao flew over and placed a hand on the magic protective shield on the outer wall of the secondary dimension, feeling the strong repulsion. This indicated that the strength of the shield was extremely tough.

“A barrier of this level would only be arranged by a Beyond Grade A, and not just a normal Beyond Grade A...”

Han Xiao secretly nodded to himself, his eyes gleaming.

This meant that it was likely secluded experts within the secondary dimension had known of his presence but did not take the initiative to greet him.

Tsk, were they pretending to be tortoises? Thinking it was safe so long as they remained within their turtle shell?

“It seems like I need to utilize some brute force.”

Han Xiao did not plan to use any force, but seeing the other party’s attitude, he could not help but raise his palm, a lump of psionic energy gathering.

At this moment, Han Xiao acutely felt the magic barrier of the secondary dimension fluctuate, opening a gap.

Buzz!

The next moment, a figure flew out of the gap, arriving near him. This person wore a platinum and gold mage robe, with a pointy mage hat, and had a long flowing white beard. His appearance was very similar to a famous violent, dual-wielding battle mage.

A mental message surged into Han Xiao’s mind. “How do you do, guest from afar?”

Looking over, Han Xiao raised his brows as a look of surprise flashed across his face.

This was simply because he recognized the ‘stranger’ that he had met for the first time.

Turns out to be this guy... Isn’t he the Beyond Grade A in seclusion who fought with the World Tree Army in the secondary dimension during the World Tree War in my previous life?

Chapter 1274 Negotiations

‘Mystery Mage’ Joey Terrain, a secluded expert who lived in the secondary dimension world, was a person from the same era as the foul-mouthed ‘Elf King’ Dylan.

There was, however, no such person within the galactic history. He had avoided the universe for a long time without leaving any record. The first time he appeared before the universe in Han Xiao’s previous life was during the World Tree invasion.

The Mage class was similar to the Mechanic class in that they grew stronger the more they accumulated and learned. For most, their age was directly correlated to their strength. Having stayed in the

secondary dimension world for so many years, Joey had slowly accumulated his knowledge like how water droplets slowly accumulate in a bucket to the point that he had reached the pinnacle Beyond Grade A realm. However, due to a lack of talent, potential, and other factors involved, his level was likely lower than the pillars of each Universal Civilization. He would barely qualify to rank as a top-tier combatant in the universe. If one did not count the Revivors, however, he would definitely occupy a spot as one of the strongest Beyond Grade As in the world.

Han Xiao had a deep impression of him. During the World Tree invasion, the secondary dimension world was reduced to a battlefield, and all the secret organizations and hermits turned into objects of conquest, being bombed out of their hiding places. Unable to remain secluded, they banded together to resist collectively.

Joey was one of them. It was said that because the secondary dimension had received severe damage, he was forced to bring his base with him, employing guerrilla warfare tactics against the World Tree Armies. He was eventually killed and absorbed by the World Tree.

Various knowledge flashed through his mind. Han Xiao narrowed his eyes, sizing up Joey before casually speaking.

“Joey Terrain... I was wondering who it was, but it turned out to be you.”

Joey was about to introduce himself, but upon hearing his name being called out, he received a huge shock, surprise showing on his face.

“How did you find out my name?”

He was a little befuddled in his heart. What sort of situation is this? I’ve hidden myself for so many years. No one in the main universe should be aware of my name. How did this guy recognize me?

Han Xiao laughed. “I guessed it. Isn’t it magical?”

Joey choked at his words, suddenly feeling a wave of depression.

He felt that Black Star’s character was a little different from the rumors. Secretly suppressing his depressed feelings, he coughed and said, “Well, whether you guessed it or not, you seem to already know who I am... I’m curious, why has the famous Black Star in the main universe come over to visit my homeland?”

“Oh, so it turns out that you recognize me. I thought you had completely secluded yourself and did not pay any attention to the changes in the main universe.” Han Xiao smacked his lips.

“... I just keep an eye on the news every now and then.” Joey became more suspicious in his heart, having that nagging feeling that Black Star had a deep understanding of him. However, he had never dealt with the other party before, which made him feel weird.

“Is that so?” Han Xiao did not agree nor disagree with him. “However, not long ago, you spied on my friend’s base. It seems like your focus is quite wide, not just about news.”

“So, it turns out that you came here for this matter.”

Joey came to a realization, his inner bells ringing in warning.

He had only just discovered Black Star in the secondary dimension and wondered why he had come over. He initially only wanted to wait in silence and guess his intentions, but the moment he saw Han Xiao raising his hand to break his magic enchantment, Joey could only come out to meet him.

He did not expect that the random object that caught his curiosity would be related to Black Star. Now, the master had come knocking, likely to seek trouble.

Since the other person came all the way here, they must have had some form of evidence. There was no use trying to hide.

Joey’s expression changed.

Seeing this, Han Xiao smiled and said, “As the saying goes, ‘a visitor from afar is a guest’. Are you not going to invite me into your secondary dimension to discuss this?”

Joey nodded when he heard those words. He made a gap in the barrier before gesturing Han Xiao in.

“Of course, please follow me.”

He led the way as Han Xiao flew into the secondary dimension. The world in front of him suddenly transformed, a peaceful world filled with lush nature coming into view. The huge city guarded a white tower that reached up into the clouds.

Passing by from a high altitude, Han Xiao overlooked the scene on the streets as the residents, who were the size of ants, bustled around. The city atmosphere was harmonious and lively.

The duo landed on the top platform of the tower. Joey lightly snapped his fingers, and two sets of high-end tables and chairs as well as a trolley filled with snacks and tea appeared out of thin air.

Han Xiao smiled by the side and muttered to himself, “Magic is really convenient.”

Joey glanced at him, not knowing what to make of his statement, before inviting him to sit. “... Please sit. Try my specialties.”

Both of them sat opposite each other.

Han Xiao took a sip of tea, and a strong fragrance swept across him. The tea was mellow yet rich, with a faint milky fragrance and an endless lingering aftertaste.

“Pretty good.” Han Xiao placed his teacup down before turning to gaze at the city below, smiling as he spoke. “This secondary dimension is not bad at all. It’s been a long time since I’ve seen such a peaceful place.”

“This is the place where I’ve secluded myself. Everything you see here has been built up by me bit by bit...”

When it came to this topic, Joey's tone got a little warmer, as though he liked to hear others praise his achievements.

Han Xiao listened for a bit, smiling. "It's good to live in seclusion here. You won't feel lonely as well. It seems like you've transformed this into a Mage Pagoda as well. Does this place have a name?"

"Yes, it's called..." Joey suddenly paused for a bit before finishing. "The Kingdom of God".

Hearing this, Han Xiao secretly smirked.

This old man thinks that I don't know this place is actually called the Land of Four Gods and did not say its actual name, afraid that I would guess there are three other Beyond Grade As hidden here.

The three of them hid themselves presumably as trump cards, just in case I create trouble. Then they can catch me off guard.

Han Xiao did not immediately expose the other party, instead changing his tone and replying playfully, "However, I saw that many of the residents here are actually the various galactic races in the main universe. You abducted a lot of people from the main universe to accompany you, right?"

Joey remained unmoved, sipping on his tea as he casually replied, "It's not abduction. The universe is such a dangerous place. I only helped a few of them obtain some stability in their lives. Here, they can enjoy the peace that I created for them without fear. What's wrong with that?"

"Sounds pretty good to me. This might be the life that many people dream of, but... heh." Han Xiao only raised his brows but did not finish his sentence.

Dominating the lives of the ordinary was a matter of course for many of the Beyond Grade As. Regardless of whether the masses were willing to accept the arranged life or not, they had no choice either way. This mentality had long been ingrained among the Supers and could not be separated from power and authority.

Han Xiao did not have much to say about it but instead shook his head secretly in disapproval of Joey's practice.

The Land of Four Gods seemed to be an independent paradise, but Han Xiao knew that under the iron hooves of the World Tree, this fragile peace could not even withstand a single blow from them and would forever be on the run. It was not so easy to remain detached from all worldly affairs.

Han Xiao rapped on the table as he leaned forward, getting into the main topic. "Alright, I've already drank your tea, so let's talk business. The target that you used your spying magic not long before was actually my friend. I would like to have an answer for that."

"What do you intend to do?" Joey inwardly tensed up.

Han Xiao waved his hands in dismissal. "There's nothing about it. I just want to know your motive and objective, as well as how you did it."

"You came in such a hurry. Could it be that the object of my spying is that important to you?" Joey frowned, secretly wondering why Black Star would make such a big move.

Han Xiao blinked as he sized up Joey's expression before laughing.

From these words, he probably understood the details behind Joey. The old man likely did not know the full story behind the Holy Accord, but it was unknown how he managed to find the base of the Holy Accord to spy on. He probably did not have a strong motivation.

Because this guy had secluded himself for too long, he had become easy to read.

"Do you think I have a lot of free time?" Han Xiao turned the question back.

Joey seemed taken aback by this question, "No, with your position and authority, I suppose you must be very busy."

"Then since I'm personally here, do you still need to ask about my attitude toward this?" Han Xiao shook his head, his smile vanishing. "Answer me, I don't wish to repeat myself."

Joey's expression twitched. He was shocked by Han Xiao's brief release of his strength and felt a little unhappy.

It was just that as someone who had hidden himself away, his personality was more pliable, so he suppressed the unhappiness in his heart, replying truthfully.

Han Xiao observed his expression, tone, even actions as he listened to his explanation.

According to Joey, this was a coincidence. He said that he did not know the details of this organization, and the reason for spying was because he discovered the Holy Accord capturing many Primal Esper Entities through his 'messenger', making him curious. He thus marked the very 'concept' of the Holy Accord, such that if there ever came a day where their fate string changed or became entangled with his, then he could observe them. This was a spell he had created during his seclusion.

Not too long ago, he had suddenly had a faint hunch, so he had followed his intuition to observe the situation of this mysterious organization. However, the 'messenger' he sent out was blocked, and he saw nothing.

"You said it was a coincidence?" Han Xiao could not prove otherwise.

Although this sounded unreliable, he could not dismiss it as a lie. The secondary dimension was bizarre, with hidden dragons and crouching tigers. The Holy Accord had organized their secret activities for so many years; it was natural that a slight trace of their activities would be discovered. It was not strange for them to be seen by the experts by accident, but not everyone would be able to find out the details of the organization.

The high-level Mages usually had their own set of secret skills. After spending so many years in seclusion, Joey had also developed his own unique set of spells. According to the intelligence from his previous life, his research mainly concerned the environment in which he was located. His spells were extremely suitable for combat in the secondary dimension. On the contrary, it was unsuitable for combat in the main universe, where his strength would fluctuate.

Han Xiao believed around sixty to seventy percent of what he had said. Not only was he observing the actions of the other party, but he was also basing it on his behavior in his past life. This person was not a guy who liked to snoop around, nor did he work for other organizations. He seemed reliable.

It was precisely because of this that while Han Xiao did not know how much Joey had learned about the Holy Accord, he still stated outright that he was connected to the Holy Accord. This was because the moment he recognized Joey, he changed his initial strategy, planning to pull this man aboard.

Furthermore, Joey also recognized him quickly and was even being compliant. Han Xiao could roughly guess that the other side also wished to side with him in order to enjoy the Sanctum Revival.

All sorts of thoughts flashed through his mind, and since Joey had finished speaking, Han Xiao took the chance to sip on his tea before smiling lightly as he spoke.

“Ok, I’m now clear about this matter. It seems like it was just a coincidence.”

“It’s good that you’re willing to believe in me...”

Joey breathed out a sigh of relief. The reason he tried his best to comply was because he wished to resolve the misunderstanding, not wishing to clash with Black Star.

At this time, Han Xiao’s words took a change, and he meaningfully said, “However, this isn’t my true objective of coming today. Let’s talk about something else... You should be interested in the Sanctum Revivals, right?”

Joey was a little surprised. He did not expect Han Xiao to actually change to this topic. After a brief moment of hesitation, he nodded.

“That’s right. I am very interested.”

Han Xiao laughed. “If you wish for it, I can also include you.”

Joey was dumbstruck.

He originally intended to look for a chance to contact Han Xiao in the future and try to obtain an opportunity to have a Sanctum Revival, but he did not expect it to be so effortless, which made him feel a little lost.

This is the first time we’ve met, but you’re already giving me a chance to revive? Has Black Star always been so generous?

Seeing Joey’s expression, Han Xiao immediately knew what he was thinking. He helplessly sighed before saying, “Of course, this chance does not come for free. Right now, the relationship between the association and the three Universal Civilizations is pretty strained, with conflict ready to erupt at any time. I need to enhance the strength of the association, so as long as you join the association and stand on our side, you will have your share in the Sanctum Revival.”

Hearing this, Joey hesitated before whispering, “But I have long decided to live in seclusion. Matters of the main universe are not something I wish to interfere in... Can I join in name after the association has reconciled with the three Universal Civilizations?”

“You don’t wish to invest anything, but you expect returns. Don’t you think this sort of dream is too good to be true?” Han Xiao rolled his eyes as he replied.

For him to even say such nonsensical words, this person really had been in seclusion for too long.

Joey was a little troubled. “Can you change the terms?”

Han Xiao raised his brows in reply. “I don’t think you are in any position to bargain. Besides, what do you have that I actually need?”

Joey was speechless.

Han Xiao suddenly stood up and patted his clothes.

“Your hesitation mainly stems from the fact that you do not trust me, so you think that my chances of failure are high. I believe we need to spar for you to understand. How is it? Shall we exchange a few moves?”

“This seems a little too rushed...” Joey had an expression of surprise, but he did not refuse. “That’s good as well. I’m curious about your endurance. Let’s have a spar outside here.”

Black Star had an outstanding reputation, and since Joey had secluded himself for so many years, he also wished to see where he stood against Han Xiao. Making friends through battles had always been standard procedure for the Beyond Grade As.

However, Han Xiao shook his head.

“You’re mistaken. I wasn’t asking for spar with you one-on-one but with all of you.”

As he spoke, he turned away, speaking in another direction.

“The three of you, I believe you have eavesdropped enough. Please come out.”

As his voice sounded, three figures appeared a few seconds later. As they landed on the tower, they shared helpless glances.

These were the other three Beyond Grade As of the Land of Four Gods. They thought that Black Star did not discover them, but it turned out that he had known about it a long time ago.

Thinking of this, the trio could not help but feel embarrassed. Hearing how Black Star wished to take four of them at once, they got even unhappier.

“Are you sure you wish to go against all four of us?” Joey frowned, feeling that he was being underestimated.

“That’s right, otherwise I believe it will end too soon. There’ll be no excitement.”

Han Xiao chuckled softly.

He had already prepared himself to fight against all four together. Whoever had the strongest fist would have the most rights, so only when these four were convinced could he then facilitate the negotiations.

“You’re too arrogant.”

Joey's tone was cold. He might have had a good temper, but he was also somewhat prideful. Being looked down on, his anger also soared.

Seeing their unsatisfied expressions, Han Xiao also wiped his smile off his face, his eyes transmitting electric arcs. His aura gradually rose, and golden Mechanical Force crackled around his body.

A voice laden with energy blasted out from his mouth.

"It is you guys who've stayed hidden for too long. You've already regressed. I don't mind helping you clearly identify whose era it is now!"

Chapter 1275 I'm the True Mechanic Emperor

There was an endless expanse of white, without any matter present. It just resembled a white, blank space.

Suddenly, a blue vortex appeared out of thin air. Han Xiao and the rest flew out of this portal.

Joey sent out a spiritual message. "This is a prototype of a secondary dimension that I've created. Generally, we all spar with each other here to improve ourselves. You have no problem with this, right, Black Star?"

"Sure."

Han Xiao surveyed his surroundings before nodding in assent.

After reaching a consensus to spar, they decided to change the location due to the fear of destroying their own base. Joey opened a portal, leading everyone to his usual training site.

Advanced mages could utilize magic such as fantasy realization to artificially create secondary dimensions. This white world was merely an imperfect prototype, very simple to manufacture.

"While you might wish to fight against all four of us, we will not take advantage of you. At most, all of us will go one after another until one side admits defeat."

Joey snorted as he dropped this sentence. He then rapidly withdrew, his comrades each flying to a corner.

Han Xiao merely smiled without talking, opening up his interface for a glance.

As expected, a notification popped up, telling him that a special mission had been activated. The format was similar to that of the Beyond Grade A Mission Requirements, which was to last for a certain amount of time in battle. The rewards were divided into different levels, with the highest rating allowing him to randomly draw an ability from any of the four, as well as to gain a talent named [Secondary Dimension Adaptor].

This talent would allow him to obtain bonuses based on the environment when fighting in the secondary dimensions, increasing his combat power slightly. It was just a general-purpose talent, but it was better than nothing.

“Heh, would be nice if I could receive such a surprise every time.”

Han Xiao smirked.

At this moment, Joey, who had opened up a good distance, finally stopped. He made a few hand seals, levitating before a series of magic circles, which turned into light gates. Countless monsters then surged out, with all sorts of varieties present within the various secondary dimensions.

“You want to compete with me in the Army Style?”

Han Xiao nodded.

The opponent had definitely heard of his reputation, so he would not allow him to close in easily. Thus, they wanted to use the Human Wave Tactic to go against his own Human Wave Tactic.

Joey was not a specialized Summoner, but having lived in the secondary dimension for such a long time, it was unknown how many strange secondary dimension creatures he had already seen, let alone the contracts he had signed. He could summon quite a lot of them, and most of them were very powerful.

Han Xiao guessed the other’s thoughts at a glance. He wished to use his solid foundation to fight against him, since he assumed that Han Xiao was lacking in accumulation, having only entered the Beyond Grade A realm relatively recently.

“Fine, I’ll play with you.”

Han Xiao did not mind. He pulled up his secondary dimension barracks, and the endless mechanical army poured out. Compared to the scattered formations of Joey’s monsters, the mechanical army queued up neatly, forming different formations. There was a unique sense of beauty within.

At the same time, he summoned his Divine Mechanical Throne, floating high up in the central area guarded by the machinery, like the commander of an army.

The mechanical army and the summoned monsters grew in volume, the battle line stretching out endlessly to form a confrontation.

While the array of summoned monsters frequently roared and screamed, the mechanical army was on the extreme end, totally silent.

Seeing that both sides had already deployed their troops, Han Xiao waved his hand as he commanded, “Do it.”

As soon as he spoke, the mechanical army moved as one.

The heavy machinery vanguards at the forefront immediately raised their shields, advancing neatly forward. As for the long ranged mechanical units at the back, they discharged all their firepower at once. The dense number of psionic energy beams seemed to combine into a curtain of light, directly targeting

the summoned monsters. Han Xiao watched as the ranged regiment directly decimated the enemy's lineup, spraying huge pieces of monster carcasses everywhere. In addition, the elite vanguard troops were engaging in three-dimensional combat, acting as independent guerrillas as they sought for opportunities to attack the weakness in the enemy's formation.

At the same time, large swathes of golden lightning chains were emitted from the Divine Mechanical Throne, instantly connecting the various mechanical units, forming a spider web-like shape. The large number of mechanical soldiers dyed with the golden lightning received the buffs of the Mechanical Force, their performance increasing sharply by the naked eyes, as though they had entered a state of excitement.

Joey was unwilling to show weakness. With a wave of his hand, beams of magical lights spilled onto the summoned creatures, which also brought about a state akin to a blessing. The summoned creatures behaved like a flash flood, rushing toward the mechanical army!

While there existed a variety of summons, their formations were not scattered with the blessing from Joey's spells. The different types of summoned creatures formed a formation with complementary abilities and tactical coordination, instead of rushing out as a swarm.

The two waves approached each other quickly, before slamming viciously at each other, akin to a comet smashing against Earth!

Boom!

Chaos broke out in an instant, and the scene blazed up. The teeth of both troops were intertwined with each other, as machinery collided with flesh and blood. They fought tragically, killing each other repeatedly!

However, the moment they collided, the mechanical army gained the upper hand, constantly squeezing the monsters back under their advancement.

"What a powerful mechanical army!"

Joey gulped in shock before hurriedly casting a temporary buff spell to stabilize his frontline troops. He also cast a recovery spell to heal their injuries.

It was a pity that all his efforts came to naught.

The Han Xiao right now was terribly strong, with his additions of God's Trait Transformations, Machinery Faith, Proof of Leadership, and Mechanical Divinity. This gave him overwhelming Mechanical Force strength, which even the Mechanic Emperor could hardly match.

Moreover, his decades of research into Jayz's technological treasures had allowed his Mechanical army to be updated and strengthened many times over. Not only were there many new models of combat machinery, all the machines had their performance raised by several tiers.

Han Xiao's current combat power was probably at the very forefront of the universe. There was no need for him to burst his potential, and he could crush almost anyone in an upright manner.

As for Joey's summoned creatures, they were in no way a match for Han Xiao's mechanical army!

The battlefield quickly turned into a one-sided advantage, where the machinery attacked and retreated as they wished. Their formation remained tight knit as they travelled back and forth, constantly shattering the formations of the summoned monsters, slowly whittling them.

At the rear, Han Xiao remained firmly seated on his Divine Mechanical Throne, adjusting the type of Mechanical Force buffs. He had too much machinery now, and his Mechanical Force was not enough to cover all his troops, so he had to constantly adjust the focus of his buffs manually, using it as a means to control the overall situation and the battlefield.

At the same time, Han Xiao also opened a specific battle formation buff, which was a commanding skill commonly used by the Army Style. There were various combat methods, formations, and tactics existing in the form of different talents and skills, and this was a special command-type skill that provided an overall boost for the army. It would boost all attributes by at most ten percent, which was akin to adding wings to a tiger.

Very quickly, the summoned monster army experienced serious casualties, and Joey felt his heart ache. He raised his hand, drawing mana from the Mage Pagoda floating in the air, before slapping his palm against a portion of the machinery.

Buzz!

A huge golden magic circle akin like a lotus flower spread out, and the area in the mechanical army's location suddenly collapsed. The chaotic space streams raged, but it was only restricted to this circular area.

The mechanical soldiers in the area seemed to have been erased by an eraser, disappearing into thin air in an instant. The soldiers that subsequently entered this area also disappeared into thin air.

Gazing over, Han Xiao's eyes narrowed.

"Instant exile spells are actually being used to serve as traps. This is interesting..."

The disappeared machines were not destroyed but rather exiled by Joey's spells into the chaotic space stream of the secondary dimension world. All of them were split up, so there was no knowing where they would end up. This effect was similar to the Dimensional Exile Bullet that the Holy Accord had, but its effect was better.

This was one of the reasons Joey was so suited to fighting in the secondary dimensions. He had a lot of self-made spells that could only take effect in this place and could not be used in the main universe.

Joey stretched out a few more palms, exiling a few more areas of machinery. At this moment, his senses suddenly rang in warning, and he did not hesitate to activate a short-range teleportation spell, leaving his spot.

Swoosh!

The next moment, a highly concentrated ray blasted over, penetrating the layers of magical barriers he had set up to hit his afterimage.

Flashing to the side, Joey turned to look at the origin of the beam. He discovered that Han Xiao had unknowingly donned a mechanical suit that was dyed black in color. He raised his fingers to point over at him, the fingertips of the mechanical suit still flashing with light.

“You really dodged it fast. I still thought of trying out the actual combat capabilities of this anti-Mage gamma splitting ray.”

Han Xiao’s tone was a little regretful.

The style of a normal mechanic was to prepare countermeasures against any sort of enemy. In the past few years, Han Xiao had developed a lot of new weapons against the five major classes, changing out his entire equipment set.

This anti-Mage gamma splitting ray was based on a highly concentrated gamma ray cluster imitating a gamma ray burst, supplemented by magic suppression energy through the reverse transformation of Psionic energy. It was hypothesized that when hitting those of the Mage classes, it would then impose a ‘magic activity inhibition’ state for several hours, greatly weakening the opponent’s spells and magics.

Han Xiao shook his head before standing up from his throne and disappearing.

Joey’s heart sounded with warning bells, and he immediately sent out a backhand filled with magical power behind him, barely blocking the fist of Han Xiao which jumped out from his Void Hyperdrive.

Boom!

As the hand and fist connected, a shockwave of blue and purple suddenly burst out!

Joey was about to borrow the force to increase the distance between them but discovered to his dismay that his palm was glued to Han Xiao’s fist. He saw that Han Xiao’s mechanical suit suddenly lit up with fluorescent blue phantom energy patterns, which pulsed like it was breathing.

Joey’s expression changed drastically at this moment, as he found out that the mana in his body was to flow into his opponent outside of his will, through their connected hands.

The Psionic energy agglomeration decay module was invented by Han Xiao. By stimulating the process of production and transformation of psionic energy, he was able to create an energy that could engulf all other energies. As long as the judgement requirements were met, it could assimilate and absorb the opponent’s energy, turning it into fuel for his energy furnace.

To put it simply, this was akin to the Star Absorbing Great Art!

Joey immediately made a decision, activating an enchantment and producing spatial turbulence, swallowing himself in it and getting rid of his controlled state as he disappeared without a trace.

“Oh, he really has many ways to escape.”

Han Xiao’s brows furrowed, and he turned his head to survey his surroundings. He saw a blast of chaotic space stream surge out from the extreme end of the battlefield, spitting Joey out. The chaotic space stream that seemed uncontrollable had actually been transformed into his own vehicle.

“Close shave... I lost around five percent of my total mana in just that brief contact.” Joey was secretly surprised when he looked into his own status.

This time, the blue lines on Han Xiao’s mechanical suit dimmed as he shook his head with a smile.

“It’s better for all of you to come at me at once. You alone won’t give me any pressure.”

Hearing this, Joey’s expression sank. The other three by the side did not have good expressions either.

In just that short exchange, Joey had personally experienced Han Xiao’s strength. He felt that he had no shortcomings, like an impassable mountain. He could not think of any way to defeat Black Star with just his own abilities.

Since Joey was the strongest out of the four of them, the other three of his comrades were secretly shocked to see his embarrassing performance. Even without going against Black Star, they knew that they would get the same result, or worse.

There was no point sending themselves up for the slaughter one by one!

Cognizant of this, the other three started to be tempted by Han Xiao’s suggestion.

Originally, they did not do so because they had to maintain their dignity as Beyond Grade As, but now that they would just be beaten up if they went one by one, it would be better to besiege Black Star and avoid making a fool of themselves.

As for their round robin arrangement at the start... that was what Joey said; it had nothing to do with the thoughts of the other three.

One of them coughed a little before solemnly saying, “Since you so strongly demand it, we cannot refuse your invitation. Let’s spar together then!”

Glancing at him, Han Xiao secretly gave a thumbs up.

What a shameless sentence, this has my style all over it. Thumbs up to you!

The three of them no longer watched by the side, joining the battle one after another to showcase their magic.

Seeing this, Joey blushed as he recalled his thoughts before fighting.

However, he knew in his heart that just relying on himself would be a lost cause, so he chose not to reject his comrades’ help. He would rather pretend and not say anything, cooperating with them in battle.

The five fought fiercely, clashing and tumbling around, causing the wall of the secondary dimension to tremble constantly. This dimension was not made to withstand the aftermath of their battle and soon became full of holes.

...

This battle lasted for several hours, and they had already cycled through three battlefields, with the fourth secondary dimension they were fighting in on the verge of breaking apart.

There was a huge floating island here, and at this moment, the entire island was stained red with blood, with broken corpses lying everywhere.

On the uneven ground, Joey was leaning on his staff, panting heavily and covered with cuts and bruises.

With horror in his eyes, he tremblingly raised his hand to signal to Han Xiao, hurriedly saying, "I, no, we have lost. Don't come over anymore!"

Not far off, Han Xiao stopped moving, his voice laced with regret. "Just like this? I still have quite a few devices I haven't tested out..."

It had taken him a long time to find such good opponents to spar, so he did not wish to make this battle a quick one. He took out all the equipment he had made in the past few decades to test out, torturing Joey and the others to the point he almost left them with psychological trauma.

This time, because he mainly focused on testing out his equipment, Han Xiao was not too serious in fighting and did not activate any of his aces. Even so, Joey and his gang could not cause him any trouble. The situation was always under his control, a one-sided victory.

He had a slightly clearer understanding of his own strength... If anyone were to fight head-on with him, without a dozen Beyond Grade As with an Energy Rank at 70,000 or above clashing with him, there would basically be no danger to him!

Han Xiao sighed in relief.

"This is not even counted as my warmup. I've given you guys a chance, but you did not use it well."

Hearing this, the four of them were speechless.

If these words were spoken before the fight, they would have been unhappy, but now, they recognized the strength gap between the two sides. Knowing that Black Star could deal with all of them himself, the arrogance in their hearts dissipated.

The Beyond Grade As were realistic. If they could not beat someone, there was nothing they could do but endure it.

However, while Joey and the rest were being tortured by Han Xiao, they also saw the accumulation that Han Xiao showed. They finally understood why Black Star dared to fight against the three Universal Civilizations.

Black Star's mechanical army was simply incredible, his accumulations too terrifying. His mechanical army was practically endless!

The title of 'Mechanic Emperor' obviously belongs to you instead!

Chapter 1276 Achieving Nirvana

"Right now, you guys should be assured of my strength, right?"

Han Xiao snapped his fingers, and the mechanical suit folded and contracted, merging into his body.

Joey took a breath, suppressing his frustration of being beaten up, before seriously speaking.

“... You’re indeed the strongest Beyond Grade A I’ve ever seen, but what you need to do is far from what can be achieved with an individual’s power. It may be okay for you to protect yourself, but others don’t have your ability. It’s too difficult to unite the entire Beyond Grade A class and become a force on par with the three Universal Civilizations!”

“At the core, you’re just unwilling to even bear the slightest risk.” Han Xiao pursed his lips.

Joey spoke in a low voice. “I witnessed the entire Tragedy of the Pinnacles. The three Universal Civilizations are not doing anything now not because they’re really afraid of you. Don’t be fooled by the current stalemate. The current strength of the Beyond Grade A Association is not enough to compete against the three Universal Civilizations on the same level, and they’re just looking for low-cost solutions to their problems. If they do not care about the consequences, the three Universal Civilizations truly have the power to destroy the current explored universe, turning it into a barren land.”

Han Xiao lightly shook his head. “Spare me your alarmist talk. Unless the three Universal Civilizations go crazy, this sort of situation will never occur. Thus, your assumption is meaningless. Who would ask to be euthanized after getting a slight cold or flu? The most suitable option for us right now is to fight for peace.”

“The three Universal Civilizations allow Beyond Grade As to exist, but they do not want us to unite...”
Joey hesitated before tentatively saying, “Since you’ve mastered this precious Sanctum Revival technique, why do you have to use it to carry out such a dangerous business? With your strength, you can be completely independent, treating the Sanctum Revival as a form of business. You can cooperate with the three Universal Civilizations and the various Beyond Grade As. In any case, the Sanctum Revival is only limited to one time, so everyone can be satisfied!”

Han Xiao stared at him for a while before speaking calmly. “Everyone has their own goals and ambitions.”

He did not think it surprising that Joey would have this mentality. Most of the hermits preferred to be alone, but they still wished to enjoy the benefits of the Sanctum Revival, without the risk of any danger.

“Is there really no way around this?” Joey appeared a little disappointed. After hiding for so many years, he did not wish to expose himself to the eyes of the advanced civilizations.

Han Xiao waved his hands without answering. His intention was obvious.

Joey paused for a while but did not give up, trying to persuade Han Xiao further.

“Black Star, if the three Universal Civilizations really manage to obtain the Sanctum Revival technology, then that will be the day they take action. The three Universal Civilizations will definitely try to monopolize this technology and will attempt to neutralize this advantage of the association. The three

Universal Civilizations just have to get rid of you and then revive you before anyone else does in order to not be challenged any more... I feel that you should stop walking down this path.”

Han Xiao frowned and spoke in a slightly offended tone.

“Do I need you to remind me of such things? You might think that it would be safer to join the three Universal Civilizations after they have mastered the technology, but think about it. The three Universal Civilizations’ target of revival will not be as loose as ours. They will not think much of Beyond Grade As after gaining this huge weapon, so Beyond Grade As will only become a tool for them to unify, and if they are unwilling to become tools, then they will not be able to enjoy the benefit that is the Sanctum Revival.

“Why else do you think the association is resisting? Only when we exist can the Beyond Grade As still achieve the maximum freedom. If you don’t choose to bet and contribute your strength now, how long will you wait? To have to constantly look forward and backward, afraid of this and that, don’t be naïve. There’s no surefire method to win. If you have a need for the Sanctum Revival, then you have to give something up. If you’re not interested, then stop wasting my time and continue your own escape from reality. Obediently stay out of the way until the end of your life.”

Joey’s expression was twisted, his emotions tangled, as he dully replied, “I did not mean that. Could you give us some time to consider instead...”

Hearing this, Han Xiao no longer made any noise but took out a few secure communicators, throwing them toward the four. “This can allow you to connect to me directly. If you make up your mind, inform me. Right now, the situation is still stable, so you have a lot of time to consider. I hope to get a satisfactory answer. If you only choose to continuously shy away from the changes of the times, in the end, you can only passively accept the final results. If you don’t fight and pay for yourself, who else can you count on?”

Finished, Han Xiao waved his hand, recovering his army into the secondary dimensional army box before disappearing in place with a single teleport. He had no intention of returning to the Land of Four Gods as a guest.

Seeing this, Joey and his party could not help but stare at each other. After a long while, one of them said, “Is Black Star fed up with us?”

“Seems that way... Joey, you seem to have annoyed him.”

“He wouldn’t be offended, right?”

The four of them were concerned about their gains and losses.

Their feelings were very complicated. On one hand, they wished to avoid all risks, tagging behind Black Star to ask until they were confident that it was completely safe, but they were also worried that this sort of questioning would make him unhappy.

This was especially so since they had just seen the opponent’s combat power. They subconsciously shrank back at the mere thought.

Joey gripped the communicator and helplessly said, "Black Star is right. My request might be too much... Let's discuss it ourselves first. We shall not disturb him."

...

His vision blurred, and Han Xiao was teleported back to his office in Black Star Palace. He took off his mechanical suit, sighing.

"My trip was worthwhile... I just don't know if they will agree."

Stroking his chin, Han Xiao felt curious.

He had a lot of experience in interacting with Beyond Grade As. With such people who had no ambition or motivation, rather than settling things amicably, it was better to show off his strength and influence.

These people had stayed away from the world for too long a period and had no ambition. They were soft tempered, and trying to persuade them with nice ways would take double the work to achieve half the effort. On the contrary, a person with strong authority would instill a psychological tendency to make up their minds and settle on a decision in them.

He knew Joey well, that this person was the type that would only regret when things were too late. He was an indecisive person, so it would be basically impossible to convince the other party to join the association on the spot. Even if the discussion went well, the other party would hesitate and ask many questions. Instead, it would be better for him to develop a tough attitude, rule over their tendencies and let them worry about their own personal gains and losses themselves.

After all, the association was full of talents, and there was no urgent need for the four of them to join. He was not begging them; it was rather the other way around.

Han Xiao himself did not fancy the strength of the four but their identities.

"If they are willing to join, then this will indirectly send a signal to all the recluses in the secondary dimensions. Perhaps they will lead us to find more secluded hermits, increasing the momentum of the association."

In his opinion, succeeding in this was a good thing, but it would not be much of a pity if he failed.

Han Xiao didn't take this matter to heart, turning his head and opening his interface to turn in his mission.

You have received 65 billion experience.

You have received the talent 'Secondary Dimension Adaptor'!

Secondary Dimension Adaptor: When battling in the secondary dimension world, you will gain bonuses of 3 – 6% in Attack, Resistance, Ability Strengthening, and all Attributes. This effect also applies to mechanical soldiers, summons, and subsidiaries.

“The effect is not bad. Three percent is better than nothing.”

Han Xiao nodded, just focusing on the lower limit of the stat boost.

A prompt also appeared, asking him to select a subject to extract an ability from.

Recalling his combat information, of the four of them, there were two Mages, a Psychic, and a Pugilist. Their Molding Talents likely fitted with their own Classes, so it was impossible to obtain. He simply chose Joey as his target to obtain an Intellect talent.

You have received the reward: Randomly draw an ability from Joey Terrain (Talent/Ability).

Remark: Joey Terrain is a Mage, not suitable for your Class, so the extracted skills will be appropriately adjusted.

Randomizing... complete!

Please select one from the five options below as the reward.

1. Melee Mastery – Talent: +1 Melee skills Level, +25% Melee attack power, +25% Melee attack frequency, +20% Melee parry rate. (As a qualified combat mage, it is reasonable to be good at melee)
2. Aura Wave—General Version – Ability: The commonly seen Super skill, by compressing one’s energy in the body then releasing it as a shock wave. The lethality is low, but it will give various negative statuses depending on one’s Energy Attribute. If one’s Class is a Pugilist, it will automatically be replaced by the Pugilist’s Shockwave Blast skill. Cooldown: 24s. Consumes 120 Energy.
3. Multiple Staff Strikes – Ability: When using a stick-based weapon (such as a Staff), you are able to unleash a continuous attack in an instant, gaining an extra 6 – 12% attack power bonus. The number of attacks depends on your DEX attribute, with a maximum of 12 times. Cooldown: 44s. Consumes 80 Energy and 270 Stamina.
4. Crisis Intuition – Talent: When you’re about to be attacked, you will receive a strong alert.
5. The Ancient Ones – Talent: A long life brings about precious spiritual wealth. +20% INT, +10% MYS, +2 all skill Levels.

“This...”

Han Xiao’s mouth twitched. He did not know what to choose.

[The Ancient Ones], why is it always you?

This talent keeps popping out. Just how much does it love me?

Do you really want me to become an ‘ancient one’?

Han Xiao glanced at the other options but only felt that they were too offensive. He almost wanted to curse out at the fact that a mage could possess the talent [Melee Mastery], totally not respecting the fact that they were a paper Class!

The five options were a jumbled mess, and there was no need to hesitate in his choice.

You have chosen the talent [The Ancient Ones]!

A wave of coolness spread through his mind, and Han Xiao felt revitalized. He could feel that his thought processes had become a lot quicker, as though he had been through a comfortable massage.

Compared to the four hermits, this talent was his biggest gain in this trip. Finally, he managed to obtain a positive fate with [The Ancient Ones] talent, which he had missed out on many times.

This time, he no longer needed the Old Man Manison's Character Summon Card to reach the power of his explosive state.

Moreover, the Character Summon Card would still be useful. This would be similar to having double Perfect Mechanical Sense, having multiple The Ancient Ones stacked...

"Yo, I've gained quite a bit."

Han Xiao had an expression of happiness as he switched off his interface and sent a message to Oathkeeper, telling him the problem was solved.

Kotlin and Joey both gave him a slight surprise, but there was no danger in the end. Everything was handled smoothly without anything being revealed.

However, this also caused him to have a sense of urgency.

"The longer I wait, the easier it is for such accidents to happen. I need to speed up the efficiency of harvesting experience..."

Han Xiao took a look at the movements of the army players before opening the book titled 'Cultivation of Leeks'...

"Right now, the scale of players is too big. There are no big movements in the army, and the daily missions are also limited. It will not be easy for players to gain experience... It seems that the best method would be to scatter some 'fertilizer' to create more jobs for the players, accelerating their acquisition of experience. At the same time, I probably have to improve the internal welfare system of the army to better harvest their labor output..."

Chapter 1277 Continuous Benefits, Leek Harvesting Skill

In a certain part of the Flickering World, a spaceship with the Black Star Army emblem was slowly moving.

In the cabin, a group of players were busy with their own affairs. Some were playing cards, some browsing the forums, others browsing the army shop. The IDs above their heads showcased that they were all from the Rivervale Guild. Frenzied Sword and Maple Moon were among them. This spaceship held the core members of the guild as they were going toward a mission location.

At this moment, in a corner of the spaceship, Frenzied Sword was lecturing the team members.

“After coming online, we have not been training diligently. We’ve yet to get back to our peak state. While we’re currently travelling, we should not waste time and engage in entertainment before we arrive at our destination. Let’s all go through a dungeon copy and practice our tactical coordination.”

As he spoke, Frenzied Sword pulled out a few Nightmare-level Dungeon Crystals from his inventory.

Seeing this, everyone could not help but sigh.

“Captain, how long has it been since the previous Pro League? We have yet to get a good rest, and you already want us to start practicing like that now? It’s still early before the next league!” Maple Moon complained.

Frenzied Sword patiently explained, “With King Admiral from Dynasty and Sleepy Winter from Long Sky retiring, their teams will have new players and thus need to break in the coordination. Their strength will likely weaken, so our competitiveness will be even more obvious. This is a great chance for us to win the championship once again. We’ll need to work harder.”

“... I feel like you’re becoming like Hao Tian, only knowing how to grill us daily.” Maple Moon pursed her lips.

By the side, Bun-Hit-Dog snickered. “After all, he is the captain. Rivervale has lived up to its expectations to achieve good results, and credit is inseparable from his own serious responsibility. I still remember that in the first Pro League, Rivervale was a disgrace, but luckily, the superiors of Rivervale put Frenzied Sword as the cornerstone, allowing him to reform the team. Facts have proved that your club invested in the right people, with Rivervale now having the reputation of a top-five club in China.”

Frenzied Sword felt comfortable hearing himself get praised. He raised his thumb up. “Nice words. I’ll agree to an exclusive interview.”

“Alright, I have some goods now. This trip was not waste.” Bun-Hit-Dog laughed.

This group was still joking around when the President of Rivervale club, ‘Moon of Thousand Rivers’, walked in, approaching Frenzied Sword.

“Frenzied Sword, another NPC organization contacted me. They wish to poach us from the army.”

“Again? Who is it this time?” Frenzied Sword was curious.

“It’s people from the Federation of Light.” Moon of Thousand Rivers was a little helpless.

Recently, they had received many such private solicitations. There were all kinds of organizations involved and they all were offering generous conditions, with the hope that their club would pull out their roots and leave the army. It was not just Rivervale; all the affiliated guilds to the Black Star Army were experiencing such things.

“The Federation of Light wants to rope us in? Since when did our ranking become so huge...” Federation of Light murmured. “Don’t worry about it, we’re not planning to switch factions anyways.”

He was a hardcore supporter of the army, so even if the three Universal Civilizations wished to poach him, he was not interested in jumping ships. As far as he knew, most of the guilds in the army shared the same attitude, not liking such poaching tactics.

“Recently, all the major galactic organizations have been trying to poach players from the army. This intensity is greater than in previous versions. During this period, I’ve analyzed the current situation, and it is estimated that the war between the galactic civilizations and the association is inevitable. Thus, we ‘Immortals’ are the most suitable to be used for attacking, becoming the sweet pastry that all sides want to fight for. Otherwise, why would organizations on the level of the three Universal Civilizations specially send people to win us over?” Maple Moon thoughtfully said. While she had become a professional player, she still retained the same interest in analyzing the storyline.

At this moment, everyone’s communicators rang with the notification tone reserved for the army’s internal message.

“What’s this new announcement from the army?”

Taking out their communicators, Frenzied Sword and the rest opened the intranet. An internal document titled ‘Recent System Reform of the Army’ came into their sights.

Everyone quickly browsed through it, and their expressions changed to joy.

According to the announcement, the army had expanded the type of available positions for the Immortals, opening up more middle-tier positions and long-term official positions such as in logistics, instructors, captains, intelligence officers, and more.

To put it simply, they just opened up more channels for the players to be promoted. Originally, the players were only assigned mercenary and combatant roles, but now they could become part of the middle-tier officers in various departments, gaining power and leading a group of subordinates or commanding a group as their player identities. This appealed toward the players that loved to role play.

At the same time, such a position also represented formally entering the organization, which allowed them to receive a fixed salary from the army. This was also in line with the preferences of the Chinese players.

The requirements for promotion were to have a sufficiently high level of Faction Authority, which depended on one’s accumulation Contribution Points, as well as a purchase of a digital qualification certification named ‘Army Officer Registration Application Form’. The purchase required only a few Enas and experience points, and they would then await the review of the various personnel in each department.

In addition, the army also released at the request of their members a new insurance service, named 'Army's Specialized Protection Scheme'. This gave them faction store discounts, free medical treatments, equipment repairs, enhancements, and free logistical services. Depending on their protection level, they could obtain various welfare guarantees such as loan qualifications, lower interest rates, lower renting costs, and so on.

Those members with a higher authority would be able to purchase more advance protections, but this was not a one-time cost. They required the player to renew it at regular intervals. However, the benefit of discounts was enough to stimulate the players to purchase this Specialized Protection. Not to mention the special services, one just had to look at it to know that they would make a killing!

This was especially so for the price of Dungeon Crystals, which had been reduced the most. They were currently the main source of experience for the players. It was akin to an inexhaustible vein of 'experience ore mineral', and the players were akin to the miners.

Adding on to this, the army also stated that they would increase the range of missions that Immortals could accept, as well as setting up special missions with rich rewards. The players would need to spend experience points and a certain amount of money as a 'mission deposit'. The money would be returned upon completion but not the experience.

However, players would not care about this paltry amount of experience when they were being given missions. With the huge size of the army, the daily amount of disposable experience earned would be astronomical. With his experience quota being allocated to players through quests, Han Xiao then harvested that experience from the players, maintaining this positive cycle.

Han Xiao also put in the announcement that the Evolution Cube was now eligible to be used, requiring players to spend money and experience to purchase usages.

Because the players would only be able to reach level 160 in this version, the extra Race Evolution chance offered by the Evolution Cube would be useful, and the demand would not be too low.

Han Xiao was not just aiming at earning experience; he also planned to utilize the side effects of the Evolution Cube to curb the players' speed of levelling so that the Calamity Grade players would appear at a later date.

During the side effect duration, many of them would feel that upgrading themselves would be a loss, so they would spend their experience elsewhere, so this could kill two birds with one stone, delaying plus conveniently letting him harvest them more.

After reading the announcement, Frenzied Sword and the others were stunned by this series of favorable policy changes.

"The army is probably sending out a response to the poaching of other organizations."

"Indeed, the factions must fight before we will get enough to eat."

"That's great. Blackie values us like always."

Frenzied Sword and company were overjoyed.

Most of the players had a close relationship with the army, akin to husband and wife. They did not wish to leave and did not expect any reaction from the army, but the latter actually responded with a series of benefits in response to the poaching, which made them feel wanted and happy.

The last part of the announcement was about a military exercise that would be held among the Immortals. The reward for this mission would be extremely rich, but quotas were limited, and the mission could only be undertaken by experience points.

This would be the only large-scale collective operation of the army in the near future. While this was only an exercise, the reward for this mission was extremely rich. Naturally, Frenzied Sword and the others did not hesitate to pay their experience to register.

In just five minutes, the hundreds of thousands of openings were cleanly robbed, which showed just how popular the army was.

The welfare announcement of the Black Star Army caused stomach ulcers in the players of other organizations. Their eyes were green with envy, and there were many complaints on the forums.

Han Xiao could guess the players' reaction to these benefits even without paying attention. He had long mastered the G spot for the players, and this kind of harvesting means could be done with his eyes closed.

According to his estimates, this wave of harvesting should allow him to make up the amount needed to reach level 360 a few months in advance.

...

"Your Excellency President, our plan to win over the Immortals has had little effect. Few of the immortals from the Black Star Army are willing to change factions."

"... What a bunch of troublesome guys."

Hearing the report in the President's Office, Louis frowned.

In order to study the Sanctum Revival phenomenon, the major galactic organizations were vigorously trying to attract Immortals to their cause. However, the movement of the Immortals showed that there was a higher tendency for them to gather around the Black Star Army than around them, which could not be explained.

They thought that using the name of the three Universal Civilizations as well as the large benefits would attract a lot of Immortals, but it turned out that there were not many people who bought into this.

He naturally did not know of the existence of the version name 'Black Star's Era', so he would not know how much this name had helped Han Xiao.

Louis frowned and pondered for a bit before replying in a deep voice.

"This could be the influence of the Scattered Stars Return event... It has been a year, but the effect of it has actually not dissipated. Just in this year, the number of Supers that have gone under the wings of the Beyond Grade As are too many..."

He could not help sighing, feeling that it was a pity.

If not for the Super Star Cluster Alliance, the interception and killing of hundreds of Beyond Grade A seeds would have been successful. If the Scattered Stars Return event did not occur, their method of killing the chickens to warn the monkeys would have been effective. The negativity as a result of the assassinations would have made Supers more likely to compromise with the three Universal Civilizations... but this could only remain a fantasy.

The Chief Elder paused on his crutches before slowly saying, "This situation needs to be dealt with further. After a year of preparation, it is almost time for sanctions to be issued. The Beyond Grade A organizations will no longer be so comfortable. If we're always trying to be scrupulous and openly creating contradictions, they will only continue developing."

Louis nodded as well. "I really have to curb their momentum of development... I'll talk to the church and the dynasty. I want to see how the Beyond Grade A Association can continue to grow when they are blocked by the entire galactic society!"

Chapter 1278 Sanctions

The Black Star Army held a six-day military exercise exclusively for the Immortals within the territory, with the participation of millions of army players confronting each other.

The original intention was to hold a large-scale collection action for players as a reason to issue large-scale experience rewards, but given the sensitive situation, the military exercises of the army were interpreted differently by the outside world.

On the quantum network, many of the galactic residents believed that the army's military exercise was an indirect demonstration to the three Universal Civilizations. Many of them believed that the Black Star Army was warming up, preparing for major action in the near future.

However, even if rumors raged, the Beyond Grade A Association remained silent, allowing the universe to continue their guessing.

After around half a month, just as the public opinion started to die down, an unexpected event happened suddenly, with almost no warning. The three Universal Civilizations jointly released a top level decree for the entire universe, of which the content was to activate sanctions against the Beyond Grade A Association!

The Beyond Grade A Association and the three Universal Civilizations had been fighting in secret for more than a year. While many of the galactic residents were simply watching the show, in public, neither side had ever openly challenged the other.

But right now, the three Universal Civilizations actually tore apart this facade, which was beyond the expectations of most people, yet at the same time reasonable.

Countless organizations' heads saw the contents of the decree, and their pupils needed. They were startled by the harsh sanction, and everyone thought the same thing in their mind.

How vicious!

The three Universal Civilizations finally utilized their political and economic influence that had permeated throughout the universe, beginning a blockade against them.

...

In the Army Commander's private workshop, Han Xiao was concentrating on studying a Gold Grade blueprint, working hard toward achieving the pinnacle of his God's Trait Transformation—Void.

Suddenly, Phillip popped up, his little face full of anxiety. He hurriedly shouted, "Master, hum... something big has happened! The three Universal Civilizations have issued joint sanctions against us!"

Hearing this, Han Xiao's eyes flashed, and he put down the document. With two fingers, he squeezed on Phillip's head and brought him to eye level.

"The day has still arrived... Speak, what sorts of terms did the three Universal Civilizations issue?"

"Look at this, it's so scary, hum!"

Phillip waved his little hand, and a virtual screen unfurled like a scroll. It revealed a densely packed document bearing the joint seals and signatures of the three Universal Civilizations at the bottom, proving that this was a valid decree that had been certified by the three Universal Civilizations. There was also a special note stating that the decree was effective at the date of signing.

Han Xiao read from start to end, and the beginning was a statement from the three Universal Civilizations, explaining their reasons for issuing this decree.

"In order to minimize the danger of an individual's strength to the galactic civilization, the Ultimate Knowledges of each Super system have always been jointly controlled by the three Universal Civilizations, and other organizations cannot spread it at will. This is the requirement of the sixth section of the 'Galactic Superpower Management Act: Knowledge Dissemination Agreement'. The Beyond Grade A Association (hereinafter referred to as the 'Association') has not obtained our permission but has been privately disseminating the Ultimate Knowledge of various Classes for many years. We have repeatedly asked the Association to rectify this, but they have ignored our requests many times. A year ago, our side issued a final notice to the Association, yet it was ignored. Thus, we have decided to impose sanctions in view of their negative behavior."

"Humph, they indeed resorted to such an excuse. I thought the three Universal Civilizations might have something new up their sleeves."

Han Xiao did not find this a surprise at all. He lightly snorted before reading onward.

In the document, the three Universal Civilizations righteously accused the association of violating the rules, extensively citing the regulations they flouted. Then they emphasized that the nature of the association was non-governmental, and thus, it was not affected by the Peace Treaty or other galactic civilization protection agreement.

This was followed by the three Universal Civilizations declaring that the Beyond Grade A Association would now be included in the list of 'Unreliable Civil Organizations' as well as the list of 'Malicious Armed Organizations'.

These two lists were specially set up for some organizations with a doubtful business nature. While they were not as serious as wanted warrants, as long as one was included in the list, all their rights in the Galactic Society would be greatly affected, similar to having low credit ratings or being a deadbeat.

As for the Beyond Grade A Association, their sanctions encompassed a wide range of areas including politics, economy, and the scale of their armed forces.

In terms of politics and governance, most Beyond Grade As usually took care of their own parent civilization, and this decree required that the Beyond Grade A organizations were to stay out of the politics of their own civilization. Otherwise, the rights of the related civilizations would be downgraded. They stated a list of key planets under review, including Planet Aquamarine.

Those Beyond Grade A organizations that were part of a civilization were all subject to some restrictions. It was claimed that the Beyond Grade A had some sort of 'unreliable cooperative relationship' with them. Psyker's Star Pupil Civilization was an example.

In the area of economics, the terms were much more complicated and cumbersome, occupying half of the content and encompassing all areas.

The first was a notice to the various regional civilizations, requesting them to cooperate with their orders and stop any form of cooperation with the Beyond Grade A organizations. They also would not provide public services such as stargate transportation to the Beyond Grade A organizations and would not open any trading channels to the Beyond Grade A organizations. Any existing resources of the Beyond Grade A organizations left in the civilization would at the same time undergo multiple checks, otherwise they would be personally questioned.

In the private sector, any consortium or enterprise that maintained business dealings with the Beyond Grade A Associations would have their Credibility Points downgraded in the Galactic Civilization Bank. Consortiums that had not corrected themselves would then be included in the list of untrustworthy enterprises. Only when their relationship was terminated would they be subjected to a review, restoring their credit, and they might even obtain certain subsidies. The three Universal Civilizations would protect the companies from threat of force by the Beyond Grade A Association, and they would also provide any judicial assistance in the violation of commercial contracts. There would be no need to pay compensation to the Beyond Grade A organizations.

The Credibility Points for all Beyond Grade A Organizations would be lowered, every fund transfer reviewed and supervised.

Other than these main points, there were also many miscellaneous provisions. The three Universal Civilizations had also attacked their allies this time, but since many of them did not follow them blindly, this was also something they had predicted.

At the end of the document, the three Universal Civilizations stated that the above terms were only for members of the Beyond Grade A Association and did not involve the neutral Beyond Grade As. As long as they withdrew from the association and were re-examined, normal treatment would be restored. As for the ordinary Supers, if they were willing to switch to the three Universal Civilizations or local civilizations, they would not only restore their credit but also enjoy more benefits and subsidies.

Throughout the decree, Han Xiao only had one thought.

How domineering!

Han Xiao shook his head.

Tsk, the three Universal Civilizations are really ruthless.

These clauses simply used their power to entrap the galactic society and block the association, so as to curb their development. It had little impact on the Beyond Grade As but was lethal to their organizations.

If one were to sum up the practices of the three Universal Civilizations, it would be understood as... 'Football certifications, evidence, sponsors, and organizers of the match all belong to me. What are you going to use to fight against me?'

I made this hypothesis many years ago, and alas, it still came true.

Han Xiao had long been mentally prepared for this. It was not surprising for them to come out with this measure, and since the three Universal Civilizations dared formulate such a clause, they were naturally confident in implementing it.

Even the Super Star Cluster Alliance did not face such ruthless measures. After all, they were also part of the Peace Treaty, and hence, they were afforded some form of civilization guarantee. The three Universal Civilizations would only be seeking trouble if they dared to violate those regulations. However, the Beyond Grade A Association was a non-governmental organization, not authoritative and thus not protected by any civilization guarantee agreements.

Since the development of Galactic Society, the three Universal Civilizations had long held hegemony in the financial, political, technological, and military sectors. Their influence radiated in all fields and was deeply tied to all civilizations at all levels. Seeking advantages and avoiding disadvantages was an inevitable tendency for most civilizations, so Han Xiao could foresee that there would be many civilizations acting in response to this decree.

As for the civil organizations and the general public, those who dared to oppose the rulers of the universe were a minority. After all, the majority only wanted a decent job. If they tried anything funny and became marginalized in society, that would be too depressing.

“The three Universal Civilizations hesitated for a year but finally decided to bring this conflict to the surface. I don’t know if the players themselves have influenced it... but starting from this decree, the three Universal Civilizations have finally torn off all pretenses with us.”

The three Universal Civilizations dropping these sanctions were within his expectation, but even if he had predicted it, there was no good way to resolve them. However, in recent years, he had been committed to improving the independence of his consortium and had secretly made a lot of preparations in order to deal with this risk.

Beep beep!

Right at this moment, his communicator rang.

Han Xiao opened it and saw that it was Bennett calling.

Just as the communication was formed, Bennett immediately asked, “Black Star, have you seen the sanctions imposed by the three Universal Civilizations?”

“Yes.” Han Xiao nodded.

He then sized Bennett up.

After replenishing his vitality, Bennett’s life span had been extended by a lot. Even decades later, he was still alive, his bones still strong.

Every year, Han Xiao thought that this fellow was going to die, but Bennett would always jump out and shout, “I’m not dead yet!”

Following this trend, it seems like Nero would become a hundred-year-old prince.

“What do you intend to do?” Bennett was full of worry.

“Take it as it comes.” Han Xiao waved his hands and raised his brows. “Rather than me, it’s Planet Aquamarine that also falls within the scope. What are you going to do?”

Bennett gritted his teeth, solemnly saying, “After a while, our Planet Aquamarine will pull out from the Shattered Star Ring Civilization Conference, signaling that we are unwilling to accept such an arrangement!”

“You wish to accompany me to walk this treacherous path?” Han Xiao laughed.

Bennett had an expression of seriousness. “While Planet Aquamarine is still very weak, we also have our own dignity. We will not deny the great men in the history of our civilization because of such unreasonable demands!”

Han Xiao felt a little touched and warmly replied, “Hearing this, I feel your sincerity. Planet Aquamarine’s short-term development might be severely set back, but with my protection, you will not be in any danger. What you lose now will be earned back in the future.”

“It’s enough with your guarantee. I know I can believe you.” Bennett nodded, disengaging the communication.

Han Xiao exhaled, thought for a while, and turned to contact Kasuyi.

Very quickly, Kasuyi's projection appeared on the screen with a solemn expression.

"Black Star, I've read the news. Do you have a plan?"

Stroking his chin, Han Xiao slowly said, "The three Universal Civilizations are doing this, so we have no need to be polite. Hold an emergency meeting. I have two things to announce."

"Which two things?"

"Firstly, from now on, the association will not accept any form of help from the three Universal Civilizations. Secondly, we will also stop subsidizing the associations' direct Beyond Grade A members, freezing their membership at the same time. This will temporarily deprive them of the right to participate in our regular meetings. We will tell the universe that unless the three Universal Civilizations revoke the sanctions, this situation will continue."

Kasuyi frowned. "This will not hurt or itch the three Universal Civilizations at all. At most, it will display our unwillingness to retreat."

"That's enough. If it was so easy to resolve the sanctions, the three Universal Civilizations would have been ruling for so many years for nothing." Han Xiao was nonchalant. "The cooperation with the civilization officials has always been an important point for many of the Beyond Grade As, and now that this channel has been cut off, what's left will be obtaining resources from the Galactic Black Market. The three Universal Civilizations will definitely focus on this field, and friction will be inevitable."

Han Xiao paused.

"Also, we might need to contact the Super Star Cluster Alliance now..."

There was no such thing as permanent enemies, only permanent benefits. He did not wish to help the Super Star Cluster rebel, but a simple deal was worth considering.

His goal was only to control the intensity of the Calamity of the Supers, stabilizing the situation, but he also knew that it was impossible for things to constantly be peaceful. The three Universal Civilizations would not give up, and the checks and balances would always go on. Even if he sought stability, he had to first show off his teeth and claws.

Chapter 1279 Meetings and Backups

In a few days, the sanctions of the three Universal Civilizations directly caused the public opinion of the entire galactic society to explode, be it ordinary people, Supers, civilizations, or non-governmental organizations!

The Beyond Grade A Association had partners in practically all fields, so these sanctions were too far-reaching, involving almost all aspects of Galactic Society. It was no exaggeration to say that this would affect the entire workings of the universe!

Because the three Universal Civilizations had already ruled for many years as defenders of order, it was inevitable that they would gradually become rotten and conservative. Many people's fear of the three Universal Civilizations stemmed more from their dominance and great power, but they had gradually forgotten their ferocity. This decree had now re-awakened the dusty memories of the many civilizations in history, and they remembered the bloody history of the three Universal Civilizations.

In the eyes of many civilizations, the three Universal Civilizations seemed to be wiping away the rust on their bodies, slowly regaining the cruelty they displayed eons ago. Many were secretly worried, not knowing how much of their edge the three Universal Civilizations would recover.

Public opinion was the rifest on the quantum network, and many of the Supers were in an uproar. They expressed extreme resentment toward this decree and felt that the excuse for sanctions used by the three Universal Civilizations was simple cr*p.

In their view, the association had not done anything heinous. The motive of the three Universal Civilizations was simply their need for control. This caused many of the Supers to feel extremely disgusted, thinking that it was a violation of freedom for the Supers.

For a period of time, the association's voice among the Supers rose once again, and countless Supers went to support the association, thinking that this was unfair.

However, it would be unrealistic to say that the methods of the three Universal Civilizations were ineffective. The slogans of support shouted by the Supers were merely that, since no one wished to put themselves in danger. Thus, those Supers who initially wished to join the association slowly retreated...

One could still use the internet to make themselves look and feel good, but their bodies were still the most honest.

It was just that this method had no effect on the players. Instead, it aroused widespread dissatisfaction. This was not limited to the players who were in the Beyond Grade A faction, but even players from the neutral faction and the three Universal Civilizations' faction were annoyed.

To the players, while sanctions could be forced on others, the same should not apply to them. The three Universal Civilizations tried to force them to conform to their ideals, which sparked a rebellious mentality for some of the players.

So what if it's the three Universal Civilizations? Why don't they take a look at what the name of this version is? Do you think we're all afraid of you?

The players were originally a part of the Super community, and thus, they were innately closer to the association. These sanctions also indirectly strengthened the determination of some players to join the association, speeding up the rate at which players from various organizations switched over to the association...

Anyway, since we're not afraid of death, just try it!

At this time, while public opinion was raging, the Beyond Grade A Association held an emergency meeting under the call of Han Xiao.

...

In the association's meeting hall, no one was late, and many Beyond Grade A projections sat there with solemn expressions.

Some did not attend, and some of the seats at the round table that should have been filled were vacant.

At this moment, however, everyone's gaze was trained on Han Xiao at the main position.

Han Xiao surveyed the audience, both of his hands steeped in front of his nose as he spoke.

"The reason for me convening this meeting is clear, I believe. The three Universal Civilizations have imposed sanctions on us, so we must also reciprocate and counterattack."

As he spoke, he gestured at the empty seats in the room.

"Everyone can see that the direct members of the three Universal Civilizations did not come to this meeting. I have temporarily terminated their membership rights, and we are no longer obliged to provide any form of help, including but not limited to Beyond Grade A military, technical support, and more. If you have any objections, please stand up now."

Just as he finished speaking, the room echoed with a resounding, "Approve!"

The key behind these two commands was to obtain the consent of the Beyond Grade A allies. After all, while the allies were not direct members, not everyone was on bad terms with the three Universal Civilizations.

However, this time, the three Universal Civilizations did not differentiate, throwing everyone, even their allies, under the bus. This made the majority of the allies unhappy.

Only a few of the allies hesitated due to different concerns, but before the situation turned for the better, they could not leave the association since they were already riding atop the tiger. If they did not accompany the association in advancing and retreating, they would not be able to mix in with the rest of the Beyond Grade A circle in the future. In addition, the attitude the three Universal Civilizations had toward the Beyond Grade As was not worthy of their high hopes.

In the eyes of everyone present, the second life afforded by the Sanctum Revival was naturally more important than anything external.

The majority of strength held by a Beyond Grade A organization was judged by the strength of their leaders. So long as they were still helping the place, even if their organizations were hit by various problems, they would always make a comeback. They were people who relied on their abilities to feed themselves and thus did not panic.

Almost everyone knew that the goal of them uniting was in the interest of benefitting their entire caste. The three Universal Civilizations had already exposed all their cards, so if they did not unite to resist

now, there would not be any more chances in the future. Temporary gains and losses were not important at the present. Only those with extreme short-sightedness would view such things with importance, thinking about how they could save themselves.

The association was playing the role that was originally envisaged, becoming the link for the unity of the Beyond Grade As. Even if someone had different thoughts and opinions, they could only stand with the association at this point in time.

“Since everyone agrees, these two orders will remain active until the three Universal Civilizations revoke the sanctions.” Han Xiao narrowed his eyes.

To be honest, he had long wanted to exclude the direct descendants of the three Universal Civilizations but never had a good chance. Now they had just sent an excuse to his doorstep.

Milizaus stroked his beard before solemnly saying, “No matter what, the sanctions will pose a problem for us. Black Star, what are your plans?”

Han Xiao tapped the table. “Channels, territory, manpower, funds... These are all entry points for the three Universal Civilizations to restrain us. Withstanding the pressure will be our next focus. It is imperative for us to shrink our business and streamline the scale of our operations. Among them, the most affected would be the channels, as the sanctions practically deprive us of resources. Thus, the Galactic Black Market will be an important area for us... Secret Master, we’ll have to rely on you.”

Secret Master nodded.

As the administrators behind the Galactic Black Market were all Beyond Grade As, in the future, the black market would serve as the logistical core of the association. A new round of expansion and integration would inevitably occur in the black market, which would be beneficial to Secret Master and the other administrators.

Han Xiao paused momentarily before he continued. “Furthermore, not everyone in the universe will impose sanctions on us. These forces will also be the targets of our cooperation.”

“Like the Super Star Clusters?” someone probed.

Han Xiao flashed the person a glance, smiling. “If the bargaining chips are right, the Super Star Cluster will also be an option.”

Hearing this, some of the Super Star Cluster Beyond Grade As that were disguised as neutral parties brightened.

At this time, Kasuyi interjected. “The Super Star Clusters... It’s ok if they make trouble, but are you willing to cooperate with them?”

“That will depend on whether both sides can come out with a bargaining chip that they are satisfied with. Moreover, from another viewpoint, the Super Star Cluster also needs us to confront the three Universal Civilizations. While both of us are not to the point that we are mutually tied down, we each have something that the other can give,” Han Xiao said.

At this moment, Manison lightly snorted. "Initially, I cooperated with the Super Star Cluster Alliance, but the reaction from the three Universal Civilizations was not small at all. If we arrive at a deal with them, the three Universal Civilizations will definitely be riled up, and it will not be a simple matter to clear up."

Han Xiao turned to him, raising his brows. "You scared?"

"Humph, what do I have to be scared of?" Manison snorted in disdain. "I'm just reminding you of the consequences."

Han Xiao waved his hands. "It doesn't matter. Since the three Universal Civilizations have decided to publicly impose sanctions, they must have also predicted that we will contact the Super Star Cluster Alliance. But they did not care, proving that they're psychologically prepared, maybe even having the mentality to capture all of us in one go... Even so, we still have to contact the Super Star Cluster Alliance to let the three Universal Civilizations know that we're not easy to handle."

"I thought you would always remain loyal to the three Universal Civilizations." Manison spoke coldly, apparently still having the Intelligent Plague incident at the back of his mind.

"I only aim to maintain order. I've never had any sort of loyalty toward the three Universal Civilizations. If I can maintain order in the universe, it doesn't matter who I support." Han Xiao rebutted.

Manison blandly replied, "That sounds nice to hear, but aren't you just taking my old path? It seems like I'm still right after all."

Han Xiao did not think much of it, smiling. "You endangered the entire Galactic Society with your actions. I only made the rulers fear our power. The two are different in nature. I'm much better than you."

"Humph, excuses, excuses." Manison avoided his gaze, no longer daring to speak.

Since things had already developed to this point, the fake Virtual Mutiny Virus he had developed over the years was practically of no use, so Manison felt that this was a pity.

However, in his opinion, it was still good as secret insurance. If the association could not withstand the pressure of the three Universal Civilizations, he would not mind using this assassin to help the association, turning it into the situation he originally envisioned.

Han Xiao did not bother with Manison either, carefully explaining the next steps of the plan. Right now, the association needed everyone to be united, not involved in their own private disputes. His current authority and words were already enough to make everyone obey.

At the very end, Han Xiao paused before instructing, "If we want to resolve this situation, we must either let the three Universal Civilizations revoke the sanctions on their own, or we open up a new form of development. We can progress in both routes simultaneously... but acting is one thing. We also have to maintain a balance, not implicating too many innocents. The purpose of our counterattack is to make the three Universal Civilizations feel pressure in facing us directly. The three Universal Civilizations are pressuring us so as to force us to make a wrong move, allowing them to prove that we pose a huge threat to the Galactic Civilizations."

Everyone nodded in return. They also understood this logic, as such mind games in war were common. However, if they broke the baseline, then they would become the unreasonable ones.

This meeting lasted almost a whole day, and many of the members divided the labor among themselves. While the association was originally a loose alliance, it now felt more like an organization.

After the meeting ended, the projections disappeared one by one, leaving only Han Xiao and Kasuyi in the room.

Kasuyi's expression relaxed as he smiled. "When are you planning to show your hand against the three Universal Civilizations? They seem thoroughly convinced that there's only a limited number of revival opportunities in the Sanctums, or else they would be more radical."

He was more confident than anyone else about this battle, as he held the secret of the unlimited times for Sanctum Revival. He had no fear of the sanctions from the three Universal Civilizations.

At the same time, Kasuyi felt that Han Xiao made the right choice by concealing this secret. Otherwise, the three Universal Civilizations would probably not adopt such a radical method. In his opinion, this was luring the three Universal Civilizations to make the wrong decisions.

"No worry, we'll just wait for the opportunity." Han Xiao waved his hand.

"Anyway, you know what to do, so I'll leave it to you." Kasuyi nodded before cancelling his projection.

Han Xiao shook his head, his eyes flashing.

"I estimate that the Super Star Cluster Alliance Beyond Grade As dressed as neutrals will have already conveyed my words to the Super Star Cluster Alliance..."

...

The leaders of the Super Star Cluster Alliance gathered together, listening to the report.

"Are you sure? Black Star said he wants to reach out?"

Many of the leaders were overjoyed.

"The association is now in a tight situation and urgently requires new channels. It also has to fight back against the three Universal Civilizations. Cooperating with us is naturally a good choice," the leader of the Star Arc Civilization said, his eyes beaming.

While Black Star had some conflicts with them and they disliked each other, if they could obtain help from the Beyond Grade A Association through Black Star, that little grudge could not be considered much.

The stronger the Super Star Cluster Alliance became, the more uncomfortable the three Universal Civilizations would feel. The Super Star Cluster Alliance were most willing to have a new variable appear in this universe.

As for the offenses stated by the three Universal Civilizations when violating the sanctions, the Super Star Cluster Alliance did not give two hoots. Both of them were in conflict, so even without this extra reason, the three Universal Civilizations would still suppress them at every opportunity.

However, the association only cooperated with them at this point, after falling out with their 'old bestie' the three Universal Civilizations, treating them like a backup plan...

Thinking of this, many of the Star Cluster leaders felt a little awkward.

But they did not wallow in their anxieties for long.

Forget it. As long as we get the good stuff, so what if we're spare tires?

We're happy to be so!

Chapter 1280 Withdrawal and Conditions

The meeting place for the Shattered Star Ring Civilization Conference consisted of an area where the dome looked like a portion of the starry sky, constantly shifting, while the great hall was filled with various civilizations in the Star Field. The meeting seemed to have been going on for quite a while.

"... Regarding the sanctions from the three Universal Civilizations, there is too much content. In response to this joint decree, I suggest that the Shattered Star Ring Civilization Council supervise the implementation of the decree in the Star Field, ensuring the complete termination of all civilizations to the Beyond Grade A Association..."

A representative of a Star Cluster civilization sitting on a chair read out the proposal before throwing the question out and saying in a deep voice, "This is the current situation. Does anyone have an opinion?"

The moment he finished speaking, the scene turned silent, and the expressions of the many representatives present were complicated.

The power of the Black Star Army in the Shattered Star Ring was too large. This Star Field could practically be considered as their backyard. More than eighty percent of the civilizations there had different areas of cooperation with them, and they had always cooperated happily in a win-win situation. The sanctions were a trouble for them.

However, they were even more afraid of the three Universal Civilizations. In terms of interests, they were more intertwined with the three Universal Civilizations.

It was not just that, but the strongest seven civilizations of the Shattered Star Ring had already chosen their positions, expressing support for the three Universal Civilizations. No one knew what sort of agreement they had with the three Universal Civilizations, but even reluctant, all of them had no choice but to follow suit.

"... Agreed."

"Seconded."

Everyone was silent for a while before opening their mouths one after another. Many of them vaguely glanced toward the Planet Aquamarine civilization, their eyes complicated, with pitying, sighing, or gloating gazes.

The condition to access the Civilization Conference was to be a Star System level Civilization, but Planet Aquamarine was of a different breed. It ranked as a surface civilization, but its status was brought to it by Black Star. Just a Beyond Grade A was enough to propel them to the sky.

For a long time, many of the civilizations had envied and hated Planet Aquamarine. They could not cultivate a Beyond Grade A, but they actually had three of them. This was some bullsh*t luck!

With the promotion of Hila and Aurora, the status of Planet Aquamarine had risen rapidly in recent years. Even if the civilization was weak, they could afford to be rampant in the Civilization Council since all the civilizations in the Shattered Star Ring depended on the Black Star Army. They had taken good care of Planet Aquamarine, but without the protection of Black Star, Planet Aquamarine would be nothing in their eyes.

Since Black Star had fallen out of favor, many of the people in the room wished to see the Planet Aquamarine turn into a joke.

Very quickly, every civilization present either agreed or abstained from voting, leaving only the Star Pupil Civilization and Planet Aquamarine having not expressed their opinions.

At this moment, one of the Star Cluster level council members spoke up. "Representatives of Planet Aquamarine and Star Pupil Civilization, only you two are left."

The expression of the Star Pupil Civilization Represent was conflicted, his lips twisting around. After a few long seconds, he finally answered in a low voice.

"... We abstain."

Everyone could not help but glance at him, and a touch of surprise flashed across their faces. However, they understood the reason behind.

Only Planet Aquamarine was left, and everyone's gaze fell onto Bennett.

"Planet Aquamarine Civilization, what about you guys?" The Star Cluster representative pressed on.

Bennett took a deep breath before solemnly speaking as he stood up.

"We strongly oppose these unfair sanctions and will never accept the unprovoked accusations and slander... From now on, Planet Aquamarine Civilization will withdraw from the Shattered Star Ring Civilization Conference!"

His tone was sonorous and powerful, without hesitation.

Everyone suddenly went into an uproar, looking at the expressionless Bennett in surprise.

They had thought that Planet Aquamarine would adopt a more roundabout attitude but did not expect them to be so stubborn, immediately speaking about leaving the council.

The Representative of the Purple Crystal Civilization could not help but ask, "Are you certain?"

"Black Star is one of the greatest figures in the history of Planet Aquamarine. We will not allow any person or organization to maliciously slander him. Even the three Universal Civilizations should not arbitrarily discredit the great figures of other civilizations!" Bennett's tone was hard as steel.

Having said this, he directly lifted the remote projection, disappearing from the meeting. He expressed his attitude through actions.

Seeing this, many of the representatives exchanged glances, their expressions complicated.

They did not expect that Planet Aquamarine would be so resolute as to remain standing by Black Star's side, willing to bear the hatred of the three Universal Civilizations...

In fact, in their eyes, Planet Aquamarine had a much better way to deal with this matter. They believed that Black Star would understand, but to take such a tough attitude and openly challenge the three Universal Civilizations, they would likely become a model for the latter to use as a lesson to learn for others.

Many of the representatives shook their heads and sighed, involuntarily glancing at the Star Pupil Civilization representative.

In their eyes, what the Star Pupil Civilization did was undoubtedly the right thing...

But in their hearts, all of them were unsatisfied toward the three Universal Civilizations, and seeing how someone actually dared to stick their head out filled them with admiration.

Almost every civilization wished to oppose the hegemonic decree from the three Universal Civilizations in a clear-cut manner, but unfortunately... no one had such confidence.

The representative of the Star Pupil Civilization secretly clenched his fists in a place where no one could see, as an expression of shame flashed across his face.

...

In his office, Bennett opened his eyes as his vision returned to the room.

He only saw a group of executive officials waiting there, staring at him for orders.

Bennett lightly sighed before solemnly ordering.

"We have already withdrawn from the Shattered Star Ring Council. Announce our decision to the whole civilization."

"...Understood."

No one said anything more, receiving the orders and leaving the room in a file.

It did not take long for this incident to spread across the entire Planet Aquamarine through their official media and social channels.

Bennett stayed within his office the whole time. After reading the news, he took out his communicator and logged onto the quantum network to check the public's attitude on this matter.

Soon, messages came into his view.

"Well done! I've long gotten tired of seeing the three Universal Civilizations!"

"To dare discredit our greatest, what a bunch of garbage!"

"I sincerely support the decision of our federal government. The three Universal Civilizations are clearly bullying us. Did you think we were submissive people?"

Seeing the messages filled with indignation and righteous fury from the citizens, Bennett's old face crinkled into a smile.

Let's hope that this was the right choice...

...

On the Star Pupil Civilization's mother planet, Psyker stood in front of the window, overlooking the bustling city. Flying vehicles passed as they emitted trails of flames in the neighborhood, and the glow was reflected across his seven pupils simultaneously, like countless flashing meteors.

At this moment, a few of the upper echelons walked into his office.

"Has everything been settled?" Psyker blandly asked, without turning his head back.

"Yes... we've made them express their attitude in the council," someone replied with a low voice. They seemed rather disappointed.

Psyker turned around and slowly said, "Get ready for my retirement ceremony as soon as possible."

Upon hearing this, the expressions of several of the upper echelons became heavier. They revealed a sense of helpless sorrow.

Seeing this, Psyker smiled. "You will soon take over my authority. Don't be so glum."

One of them could not help but grit his teeth and ask, "Do you have to do this? Can't we be like Planet Aquamarine and express our objections?"

Hearing this, Psyker fell silent. "... I'm not Black Star. He alone can make the three Universal Civilizations fear his presence. I don't have that ability."

Psyker was uncomfortable in his heart. He shook his head gently before looking out of the window again as he whispered, "If we wish for the civilization to avoid the attacks of the three Universal Civilizations, then I can only step down... In the end, we are all involuntary people trapped within the torrent of the times."

The three Universal Civilizations' sanctions specified that the Beyond Grade A could not interfere in civilization politics in any form, even if they had always been the leader of the civilization. Psyker

attached importance to the Sanctum Revival, but he could not sit back and watch his civilization be sanctioned. Thus, he decided to surrender his power and step down.

As the saying went, when there were policies at the top, there would be countermeasures from the bottom. As long as the political connection between himself and his civilization was broken, the Star Pupil Civilization would not meet the standard to be sanctioned and would not be downgraded. After becoming a free man, he could also throw himself into the struggle of the Beyond Grade As without any baggage.

At the same time, Psyker was not completely letting go. Going rogue was just a temporary measure to avoid the limelight. If the association reached a balance with the three Universal Civilizations, he would still have the chance to regain power.

Furthermore, having led his civilization for so long, he wished to let go and take a break.

“I understand.”

The rest of the upper echelons helplessly nodded.

At this moment, someone thought of something and said, “By the way, the Shattered Star Ring Council passed a bill, asking us to cooperate with the sanctions. What should we do?”

Psyker’s eyes flashed, his tone playful, as he replied, “You guys decide. I’ll just remind you not to take it so seriously. The civilizations of Shattered Star Ring are cooperating with each other, but no one will do their best... because all of them are smart, knowing that both the three Universal Civilizations and the Beyond Grade A Association cannot be offended. If we leave ourselves a way out, we will have better days ahead. Don’t worry about that. The civilizations themselves know what to do.”

...

In the Super Star Cluster Alliance remote conference room, the rest of the Star Cluster leaders gathered in a hall, everyone showing solemn expressions, displaying a majestic attitude.

Everyone was serious as though awaiting a distinguished guest. It was precisely Han Xiao.

A few days ago, after learning about the attitude of the association, the Super Star Cluster Alliance had issued a private invitation to Black Star to have a meeting with them and received a positive answer.

The leaders had made a show out of this meeting. On one hand, they wished to show their sincerity and cooperation to Black Star... Basically, they were willing to pretend and butter up to him.

Time ticked by, and Han Xiao’s projection suddenly appeared.

Surveying around, Han Xiao greeted, “Hey, everyone’s here?”

“Your Excellency Black Star.”

Everyone nodded.

This should be the first time all the leaders of the Super Star Cluster Alliance were speaking with Black Star. No matter what emotions they had, everyone suppressed them to be cordial.

In fact, most of the grievances between the Super Star Cluster Civilization and Han Xiao were only limited to the friction during the Flickering War, which was no deep hatred.

Only the Three Kings of Modo secretly clenched their fists, trembling in anger.

Their grudges with Han Xiao were the greatest, since they were directly kicked out of the Flickering War. There was also one of their leaders whom they suspected to have died in an assassination from the Black Star Army. The other party's hands were covered in Modo blood.

If it were not for the overall situation, the Three Kings of Modo would have pounced on Han Xiao.

Han Xiao swept his gaze across the room, disregarding them as he slowly spoke. "I'm quite busy, and I believe everyone knows why, so let's make this long story short. I also roughly understand the purpose of you inviting me to meet. From your standpoint, you also hope that there'll be an organization that can resist against the three Universal Civilizations. Now that we have flipped the table with the three Universal Civilizations, the association needs new allies. As long as their price is right, cooperation between our two parties will not be a problem."

"Very good, this is also what we want." The leader of Star Arc Civilization coughed and expressed their agreement as the representative. "So, what do you want?"

"Channels, territories, resources, funds, intelligence networks..." Han Xiao listed the most urgent needs of the association, as well as hiding the rare materials needed for the Sanctum key openings within.

After discussion, the Star Arc Civilization's leader nodded. "These things can be provided, and the share meets your requirements. Long-term supply will also not be a problem. In order to show our sincerity, we will give them to you as soon as possible."

"Then your conditions?" Han Xiao calmly replied.

"First, we hope that the association will continue to confront the three Universal Civilizations and carry out more counterattacks." The leader stretched out a finger.

"Sure."

"Second, we hope to get assistance from the association's top people, such as combat strength, techniques, and the like."

"Okay."

"Third, we hope the association can provide its own channels and special products. Working closely with the Super Star Cluster Alliance will help both of us achieve a win-win situation."

"Okay."

"Lastly... we hope that you will use the Sanctum Revival to resurrect all of our dead Beyond Grade As, especially those who were sacrificed during the Tragedy of the Pinnacles!"

As his voice sounded, everyone became more eager, staring firmly at Han Xiao.

The last condition was their core requirement. If they could resurrect their direct ancestors, then in terms of advanced combatants, the Super Star Cluster Alliance would be able to stand up against the three Universal Civilizations.

Moreover, the Tragedy of the Pinnacles was an eternal thorn in their hides. If this could be remedied, then it would all be worth it!

Han Xiao did not find it surprising. He stared at everyone with a playful smile, but a cold gleam seemed to flash across his eyes like that of a reaper's scythe.

“The three Universal Civilizations gave the same conditions, and I rejected them. However, that was then, and this is now. I can consider this request... but the current price you are offering is far from enough.”