

Elite Mages' Academy Novel

Chapter 301 - Dawn City

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Dawn City was a capital city, and it was also the first colonial city on Planet Norma. Xiao Lin had always thought that Dawn Academy where the name Dawn City came from, but it turned out that Dawn City was actually established before the academy.

This was quite different from Judge Academy. The Americans had already sought help from the British in establishing a colonist academy before they even declared independence on Earth, while New Washington was only built after their independence.

Dawn City had a very long history, practically having witnessed all two hundred plus years of their history on Planet Norma. Even if their expansion was halted thanks to the war against the orcs, it remained one of the largest and greatest cities on the planet.

The city had over a million inhabitants. The number might not be much on Earth, but in the New World, even counting the native cities, there were very few cities that would even reach a million in population.

Just like the rest of the academies, Dawn City's population was mostly taken up by the natives. As colonists that came from lightyears away, their numbers would never amount to what the natives had. Other than the naturalized citizens that fell under the rule of Dawn City, there were also a large number of merchants from out of the city. Dawn City was a coastal city with a very large port. The various races of the New World usually did a lot of their business there.

An Fumin had a very deep understanding of the city. He was quite the interesting conversationalist, and quickly turned the topic to himself. He claimed to have fought hard in the city for over fifty years before being as accomplished as he was. His tone was filled with pride.

"Would you not automatically be assigned a job after graduating?" Xiao Lin asked curiously. An Fumin had said that he had a lot of different careers after graduating: an adventurer, a recorder, a hotelier, and—at his lowest point—even labored at the docks. With his self-deprecating words, those kinds of jobs were extremely shameful for a colonist. Xiao Lin felt the academy would not leave someone who had been nurtured for so many years to do those sorts of jobs.

"Ah, you're still too young." An Fumin said with no malice, he said with a hint of regret. "The history of us colonists needs to be looked at in two parts. The first hundred years saw a lot of war, and every colonist was very valuable. They needed manpower everywhere. Furthermore, war meant that the natives could not easily be trusted, so everyone was assigned something right after graduating."

Pausing for a moment, he continued, "Ever since the Law of Immortality, various treaties were signed, basically meaning war would be very rare, so everyone started to focus on expansion and their economy... The academy would naturally still assign us jobs after graduation, but do you

really feel like a job that made less than two thousand New Dollars a month would be meaningful? Ah, I came to the New World to enjoy my life, but how could I buy houses, maids, and women without money? That's why I needed money...a lot of it!" An Fumin declared, not hiding the fact that he was a money-chaser. The truth was, Xiao Lin did understand that most of the people who chose to stay at the academy probably had the same goal. Anyone who was obsessed with morals had probably already been kicked back to Earth during the entrance examination.

The colonists were basically nobles in the colonist territories, and it was no different in Dawn City. However, even nobles were split into those with power and those without. In over two hundred years, there was already an established status quo. With so many of them, someone needed to be on the losing end in the end.

That was why people started to reject the assigned jobs by Dawn Academy, choosing to carve their own path. Some of them were just filled with a sense of adventure, and chose to leave the academy to explore for themselves.

An Fumin was considered one of the more successful people from that group. Thanks to his large tax contributions every year, a lot of the upper level of the academy had good relationships with him, allowing him to have the freedom to travel in and out of the academy and establish connections.

Xiao Lin was not as experienced as An Fumin, so he showed some admiration after listening to everything, but An Fumin waved it off. "There's nothing to envy. Your future is much brighter than mine! You're only a first year, but you're already a captain. You'll end up as the head of a regiment in the future, and might even be able to own a territory yourself!"

Dawn Academy only had six regiments in total, so officers were quite limited. It was different during the war, since most of them would enlist after graduation thanks to having nowhere else to go, but after the war, an awkward situation appeared where officers started to outnumber the regular soldiers, which led to the number of officers being culled.

There were still nobles, so they could not be regular soldiers like natives. Xiao Lin thought about it, and he would definitely not be willing to be treated the same way as the natives. He would rather quit the army at that point.

With that thought, Xiao Lin started to understand the significance of the dean's personal letter of appointment.

The two of them got much closer after the conversation, and the carriage quickly arrived at the stop. The Timesand then began to fade away from the carriage.

Stepping out of the carriage, rays of bright sunlight struck his face as a wave of fresh air hit him. He could hear the sound of waves, signaling that the interspatial gate was near the sea. Looking over, he could see the limitless blue sea. There were countless cargo ships moving around, the docks bustling with activity.

Xiao Lin took a few deep breaths. The New World did not have a trace of pollution, and the clear air was extremely soothing to his lungs. Even though Dawn Academy was in a space that mimicked the New World, but since it was a pocket dimension, the space was way too small, and there was a sense of suffocation after staying there for a long time.

The platform they stood on was quite vast. There did not seem to be anyone around other than fully-armored troops. The interspatial gates were heavily guarded by every academy. Xiao Lin even noticed a silver-colored resurrection tower a few hundred meters away, but it was not very large.

An Fumin smiled and said, “Dawn City has two resurrection towers. This was the one built initially, but another larger one was built elsewhere since it covered too small an area. However, they did not destroy this one, leaving it as a backup.”

After he got off the carriage, he underwent a security check as usual, verifying if he had the appropriate permissions and that he did not bring any restricted goods. However, An Fumin seemed to be a regular there, and was not submitted to the same checks. The guy even pulled out a hundred dollar bill and stuffed it into the officer’s hand. The latter gave him a smile before waving him away.

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A horse carriage was already waiting for them outside the station. The driver bowed to An Fumin, opening the door for him as he moved further inside, motioning for Xiao Lin to follow him. That led to the driver glancing over at Xiao Lin.

The inside of the carriage was furnished with soft animal fur. Scented candles were lit up; the fragrance felt like it could even wash away fatigue and the cold. Planet Norma was currently in spring, so it was quite chilly outside.

The carriage slowly started to move; more accurately, it was a unicorn carriage. The carriage was being pulled by two snow white horses with sharp, black horns on their head. Xiao Lin had learned in history class that the unicorns were an animal that mainly came from the elvish country. Since the elves never sold any living creatures, unicorns on the market were often stolen, so the prices were not cheap.

This guy really knew how to enjoy himself! Looking at the extravagant carriage, Xiao Lin could not help but be impressed.

The roads were clean, and various stores were on both sides. This city did not lose to New Washington in any way. Xiao Lin quickly noticed the main difference between the two cities. The races on the streets were extremely varied; he had seen dwarves, elves, native humans, devils and even the occasional orc.

“Why are orcs here?” Xiao Lin asked.

“There are no eternal enemies, only eternal benefits. The orcs are quite backward when it comes to trade, so they require our help on that front.” An Fumin had a greedy look on him, proving that he had done quite a bit of that sort of business as well.

The Century Casino was located at the busiest part of Dawn City. The three-storied, oval-shaped building was quite large. They could originally enter from a side entrance, but An Fumin wanted Xiao Lin to see the casino properly, so they entered through the front.

The first floor was an extremely large hall, filled to the brim with people. Most of the games there were the common ones found on Earth, and from their attires, most of the clients were natives. It seemed like Dawn Academy's own people did not play on the first floor.

An Fumin's appearance caused a sudden stop in the noise. Xiao Lin noticed that even the natives looked at him with some sort of respect. An Fumin had a blank expression, turning toward Xiao Lin after a moment before whispering, "If you want to play, head to the second floor. The first floor is a little unsuited for you. We're nobles, after all."

The second floor looked quite similar to the first, but it seemed to be a lot better. The second floor served only the privileged, which were the colonists. Of course, there were the occasional natives among them, but it was still dominated by their own kind.

An Fumin discarded his earlier indifference, and his smile was once again plastered on his face. Practically everyone who passed would greet him earnestly. Xiao Lin could tell that An Fumin did not even recognize most of them. Only a small minority would have An Fumin stopping and exchanging a few words, even introducing Xiao Lin.

However, most of them did not seem interested in him at all. At the most, they would congratulate him after hearing he was the victor of the freshman gambling pool.

After some maneuvering, they finally reached the third floor, which was the top. Compared to the second floor, this floor looked much more luxurious. The floors were draped with thick fur rugs and the walls were decorated with valuable jewels. The attendants were all women dressed in thin silk dresses.

"If you want any special service, just tell me. Heh, I have women of many different races here." An Fumin made a suggestive smile.

Xiao Lin rolled his eyes. "Let's just move on to official business."

An Fumin shrugged, heading straight to the private office on the top floor. He took out a crystal card from a drawer, saying, "This is a bank card, it has one-point-two million New Dollars after deducting tax. If there are no problems, please sign here."

With a pause, An Fumin smacked his head, smiling. "Oh, I almost forgot. This card can be checked with internal energy or mental strength. It can be used anywhere with a bank, since such an amount with cash would probably be way too inconvenient."

Xiao Lin took the beautiful card and tried pouring a bit of his mental strength inside. The crystal lit up with the numbers 1,200,000.

"How fascinating." Xiao Lin exclaimed before signing on the document An Fumin offered, verifying that he had received his money.

“With that, this order of business concludes. Congratulations for becoming the youngest millionaire.” An Fumin did not know Xiao Lin would split the money with Song Junlang, and Xiao Lin obviously did not disclose it.

“What are your plans after this. Are you returning to the academy?” An Fumin asked.

“I’ll probably report to the army first.” Xiao Lin remembered that Yu Mei had told him to report to her immediately after reaching the Black Iron-rank.

“Ah, I know quite a bit of people in the army. Do tell me if you encounter any difficulties.”

Xiao Lin nodded in thanks, but he could not help but be suspicious. He was acting way too enthusiastic for someone who was only a freshman.

Xiao Lin had actually understood from the start that the bank card could have just been handed to him at the academy, and it did not even need An Fumin to do it personally. Why did the man want to show so much respect to him?

Probably identifying Xiao Lin’s suspicion, An Fumin slapped his stomach, revealing a deep smile as he said, “When you came in just now, you should have seen how everyone acted. Why do you think they were so friendly with me?”

“Because you’re rich.”

“Ah, that is definitely one of the reasons, but I’m definitely not the richest in the city. Those Epic- and even Legend-ranked folk in the city have riches that even I envy.”

An Fumin sat down, saying, “It’s because I know how to invest. Those people are all influential folk nowadays, but they were nothing when they first graduated. At that time, I gave them a hand, and now I’m just reaping the rewards.

An Fumin did not even try to hide it. He was basically telling Xiao Lin that he had faith in Xiao Lin, and was investing in him, providing various forms of support. Xiao Lin did not need to do anything now, but An Fumin definitely expected his help in the future.

It was no wonder An Fumin was so rich and well-connected now; his acumen was remarkable.

Xiao Lin widened his eyes in realization, but shook his head. “I appreciate your generosity. Even though I don’t know what sort of help you can give me, I still hope to rely on myself.”

Chapter 303 - The Sixth Regiment (1)

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Xiao Lin’s answer did not change An Fumin’s expression at all. The casino owner maintained his smile, nodding in understanding, as if it was a common occurrence. The man had even offered Xiao Lin his carriage to head to the army, but was rejected.

Xiao Lin could more or less guess that An Fumin definitely did not approach him alone. He was probably planning on approaching all of the monitors from this year. Just like he said himself, the investment now did not have any guarantees on what it would yield in the future. An Fumin did not bother to hide it, but Xiao Lin did not want to just be a rich merchant in the New World.

Dawn City's armies were situated to the south of the city. The buildings there carried an old Chinese style. There were not many people who were leaving or entering. Xiao Lin's letter of appointment went through various checks, but when he said he was looking for Commander Yu Mei, he received looks of surprise.

"The sixth regiment; it's the building in the corner." A young woman answered Xiao Lin; her rank was a lieutenant. Her curiosity was evident when she heard Xiao Lin mentioning the sixth regiment. She could not help but ask, "You-you belong to the sixth regiment?"

"Is there a problem?"

"I guess you don't know that the sixth regiment was just established?"

Xiao Lin thought for a bit, and recalled that Yu Mei had mentioned just that, so he nodded.

The curiosity was even more evident now, but it seemed to also carry a look of pity, "You just graduated?"

"Not yet. I'm only in my first year."

"What?"

The woman looked like she was having a stroke. Xiao Lin let out a dry cough and quickly excused himself. The surroundings were all basically army territory. Each regiment had their own area. Asking around as he walked, he quickly found himself in front of the sixth regiment, and he finally understood why he received so many odd looks on the way.

It was a square yard, and flowers and greenery grew in every corner. The old trees remained green even in the spring. The environment was not bad. As noble colonists, they would naturally not short-change themselves in that department.

However, Xiao Lin's gaze fell only the decrepit building in the middle and his face twitched. The building only had its foundations, and there were many bricks surrounding it, indicating it was still under construction. The construction seemed to have halted, leaving an awkward-looking remnant.

Xiao Lin felt like he had come to the wrong place, but someone called out to him just as he was about to leave.

"Oh, Xiao Lin? It really is you!" Yu Mei walked over from the neighbouring courtyard. She could not help but exclaim when she saw Xiao Lin, "I could not believe it when someone said you were looking for me earlier. Have you really reached the Black Iron-rank?"

"I reached it two days ago. Ah, Major Yu, this-this courtyard..."

“Haha, you’re really something. The dean said you had a lot of potential, but I really did not believe it at first. What use is a newbie that can’t even come to the New World?”

“Yes, you’re right, but... That... This is the sixth regiment’s base of operations...”

“Did you just come to Dawn City? Have you eaten? It’s fine, you definitely haven’t. Come, come, I’ll treat you today!”

“...”

Yu Mei was obviously very enthusiastic, but she did not give Xiao Lin a chance to speak. There were constantly passersby who would turn their heads and look, and someone who was familiar with Yu Mei even smiled and greeted, “Oh, Commander Yu, did you finally recruit someone?”

“Haha, of course! My regiment was created by the dean himself. How could I not have anyone!”

Xiao Lin wanted to say something, but the woman was extremely strong. Her vice grip on his wrist was impossible to get away from. He had just arrived for a few minutes, but he was already being forcefully dragged away by Yu Mei.

After half an hour, a room within a certain restaurant was filled with familiar dishes, such as roasted duck and the like, but the smell was somewhat odd. He had already gotten used to the buffet in the academy, so the dishes there were quite unappealing.

Yu Mei had already gotten used to it, gulping the food down as she said, “The chefs in the New World are all natives. Even if we try our best to teach them, the cultural differences mean that you can never really have authentic Chinese food, but you’ll get used to it quickly.”

It was just like how Chinese food overseas never tasted like what they had in China. Xiao Lin sighed before saying, “Putting that aside, is the meal going to just be the two of us?”

Dishes filled the table, but Xiao Lin and Yu Mei were the only ones there. Yu Mei paused and said, “Relax, I have a great appetite, so it won’t go to waste. It doesn’t cost much anyway.”

Xiao Lin’s eyes twitched, saying with some exasperation, “What I mean is, are you really not going to introduce everyone else to me?”

Xiao Lin had come over this time for two reasons. The first was the promise he made with Yu Mei; the second was to first introduce himself to the other members of the sixth regiment. They would end up in war together eventually, so knowing each other beforehand was not a bad idea, but Yu Mei did not seem to be bothered with that.

“Everyone else? There’s no point getting friendly with the other regiments; they’re not really that important.” Yu Mei’s appetite was really quite impressive. She was stuffing herself with a large piece of meat as she spoke.

“I’m referring to our regiment. I’m a captain of the sixth regiment, so shouldn’t I be introducing myself to my comrades?” Xiao Lin could not help get straight to the point.

Yu Mei gulped down the meat, wiping away the oil on her mouth as she laughed. “That’s completely unnecessary. At the moment, the only official members of the sixth regiment are you and I.”

Yu Mei’s face was quite uncaring as she continued to eat, “I wanted to tell you after a few days, but since you asked, I’ll just say it now. As colonists, we have special privileges, and would never be regular soldiers like the natives are. Surely you understand that.”

Xiao Lin nodded.

Yu Mei’s smile was somewhat strange. “The first to fifth regiments understand that as well, so our people are usually officers while they recruit natives as soldiers. However, the sixth regiment is different. The soldiers we recruit are directly from the privileged class. Do you understand what I mean?”

Chapter 304 - The Sixth Regiment (2)

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Xiao Lin knew what Yu Mei meant by that, but at the same time, he was quite surprised that the Sixth Regiment was actually a military unit formed using colonists as soldiers.

“Will anyone even sign up?”

Xiao Lin immediately regretted asking that question. The issue was clear for him to see. Yu Mei shrugged and laughed at herself. “That is why I told you that we’re the only two people in this regiment for now. ”

Students were usually assigned to their work by the college after graduation, but such assignments were not compulsory. None of the students were idiots, and anyone who saw themselves being assigned a regiment like that would immediately refuse without hesitation. Using An Fumin as an example, the students might feel that starting it was better to start their own business and make big bucks compared to being a soldier.

It did not surprise that everyone had such a weird expression during the inquiry at the military headquarters earlier. As it turned out, Xiao Lin was the second member of the Sixth Regiment. In other words, he was a fool.

“Why does the dean want to form such a regiment? Is it because of loyalty? ” Xiao Lin was not trying to question the dean’s decision and was simply curious as to the reasons for doing so.

“The issue of the loyalty among naturalized citizens has always existed, and this is a matter of course. It doesn’t matter how we treat the locals or how much we brainwash and educate them, because our nature as outsiders can never be changed. It’s understandable that some people might oppose us, but since so many years have passed, problems like this aren’t as serious as they were at the beginning. Loyalty is useless in the face of strength and personal interests.”

Ever since the resurrection law's creation, the colonial academies' dominion has gradually stabilized in various areas. While there were those who remained dissatisfied over it, absolute suppression and appropriate levels of leniency ensured that no one would dare to rebel in the open. Naturalized civilian soldiers gradually became the mainstream trend in many of the places that were under control. Even the dragon-eagle knights—Judge Academy's strongest regiment—had a relatively high proportion of Earthlings despite them occupying only one-third of the entire regiment.

“As the world becomes more peaceful, fewer people would want to join the army. The ideology is surprisingly consistent everywhere even though we're in a different world.” Xiao Lin was slightly rueful.

“Almost everyone in the military was opposed to the initial proposal, but the dean forced the resolution through. Although it's imprudent for everyone to voice out, there are too many people who are just waiting to see us make a fool of ourselves.”

Yu Mei spoke in a rather depressed manner, but there a slight sneer accompanied her words. In the end, she added, “Those short-sighted buffoons! They don't understand the significance of the dean's decision! Sooner or later, they'll regret it!”

Xiao Lin heart skipped a beat and he lowered his voice slightly, “Is the dean preparing for a future war?”

Yu Mei continued to eat and was noncommittal to his question.

Xiao Lin, however, took that as silent affirmation, and he thought of the bold yet terrifying idea that he had come up with earlier—the key and the lock.

The high priest who fled from the end of the war had mastered the knack of the resurrection law. In addition, the elves had probably also obtained a complete sample of the resurrection tower during the war with the orcs a hundred years ago. They might even have captured the man who had the knowledge of building the resurrection tower. That man was none other than the grandfather of the young captain sitting in front of Xiao Lin.

If those two facets were taken into consideration as a whole, it could only mean one thing—war. Ever since the third monthly exam, Xiao Lin took into consideration the possibility of war and even discussed it with the student union president.

At the end of the day, it was all just pure speculation. The entire colonist world would not descend into panic merely because of a random guess, especially when Xiao Lin could not come up with any further evidence to back it up.

if such a war really did break out in the future one day, the colonists—as invaders of time and space—would not only face one or two races, but the entire Planet Norma.

“Moving on, you must shoulder this mission and responsibility now that the dean has entrusted you to me!”

“What mission?”

“Recruitment! Have you ever seen a troop with only two commanders? It’s unfortunate that the graduates have their own factors to consider, which makes it difficult to get them on board with us.”

Xiao Lin realized what she was trying to say and was a little surprised by it. “You’re suggesting that we recruit directly from the academy’s students! Is this really feasible? In terms of procedure, I mean. If I remember correctly, we’re not allowed to leave the college before graduation.”

“Stuff like rules and regulations are created so they could be flouted. Why the hell else are you able to sit here? In the strictest sense, everyone who enters the academy is actually regarded as reserve. In times of crisis, the academy has the right to conscript everyone into the army. Many people have already forgotten this rule after the war with the orcs ended. ”

In reality, anyone who graduated from the academy would have at least a full four years of experience through the monthly exam. Their foundational strength itself was certainly adequate, but Xiao Lin thought of people like An Fumin, who possessed a fat figure after enjoying himself for years. If An Fumin actually went to the battlefield, he would be giving his life away for nothing even if he had plenty of lifespan remaining.

After all, everyone spent far too much time living in peace. Aside from those freshmen who had never experienced the hardships of initial colonization, perhaps those who had gone through the tragedy of past wars have even begun to gradually forget all that suffering.

“What do you think? I heard that you’re also a freshman class monitor too. Are there any suitable freshmen candidates you can recommend? It may be a little difficult to handle things with the student union, but it’s not entirely unrealistic for students to enlist in the army as long as the dean has a say on it.”

After having her fill of the food and drink, Yu Mei finally began to get right down to business while picking her teeth. However, Xiao Lin glanced at the cold leftovers of the dining table and his face twitched uncontrollably. The woman’s appetite was absolutely terrifying and Xiao Lin hardly even moved his chopsticks throughout the meal.

“Why must we choose from freshmen?”

“Sophomores and third-years are fine too, as long as you’re confident that they have the ability. The reason freshmen are selected is because they’re more malleable. I’d also like to emphasize that my preliminar vision for our sixth regiment is quality over quantity. It should ideally be limited to talented students only.”

Xiao Lin was a bit speechless. Talented students did not come by the dozen, and there were only a few of them in the entire year.

“Well, of course I know that’s impossible. Anyway, it’d be better to have no one than to recruit some substandard students, so don’t accept anyone with average strength. There’s no need to be too anxious about it, but you must remember that I can give you this authority. If you notice anyone suitable, you have the authority to enlist them directly into the army. ”

“There are usually tens of thousands of people in a regiment. Are you sure that there are enough students in the entire school? ” Xiao Lin doubted whether the woman was even reliable.

“Oh, well, according to my tentative plan, the sixth regiment won’t have more than a thousand people, but I hope that members of this army are no lower than Gold-rank at the lowest! Even if they’ve yet to reach that level, they must at least have that kind of potential.”

Yu Mei’s idea of building the Sixth Regiment left Xiao Lin with a lot of doubts and he was not even sure whether that idea came from Yu Mei or from the dean. In any case, since he was one of the lone commanders of that regiment, he had to show some effort in fulfilling his duty.

Chapter 305 - Silver Province

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So far, the sixth regiment had no members except for two lone commanders in Major Yu Mei and Captain Xiao Lin. By convention, each regiment was supposed to have their own dedicated base, but the sixth regiment was the only one to have none. The reason for that was simple—lack of funding.

Yu Mei looked very distressed and irritable when it came to that, even to the point of yelling at some senior military personnel. They had deliberately withheld a large amount of funding on the grounds that there were too few members of the sixth regiment. Without the money, not even a base could be built, which was why Xiao Lin only saw a half-built building that stopped construction when he went over.

“The military’s funding allocation has always been under the control of those stubborn old bags, and the dean can’t intervene either. Although they were forced to make concessions to form the sixth regiment, they still have to deliberately make things difficult for us! Hmph! In their hands, Dawn Academy will be defeated sooner or later!” Yu Mei mumbled a few sentences and said nothing more. Xiao Lin did not know much about the higher-ups of Dawn Academy, and Yu Mei did not seem too eager to let him in on too much either.

After Yu Mei finished, her squinted eyes sized up Xiao Lin’s entire body and her gaze seemed to be rather improper.

Xiao Lin gripped his clothes subconsciously and suddenly had a realization. No wonder that woman seemed so enthusiastic that day. With her intelligence network, it was obviously not a problem for her to find out that he had just made a lot of money.

“No can do! The money is mine! Don’t even think about getting your hands on it!”

“Hehe, like what you said earlier, you’re also a member of the sixth regiment. Your benefits will only increase when the regiment expands in the future. Even though you’re only a captain now, you’re still regarded as one of the regiment’s founders. ”

“I don’t think this is the dean’s intention!”

“The dean is an old man who has his hands full every day. He wouldn’t have the time to deal with such trivial matters. He entrusted me with complete authority, but I can’t conjure money out of thin air!” Yu Mei looked a little annoyed.

In fact, Xiao Lin sympathized with Yu Mei. Being a regiment commander sounded pretty good, but it was quite depressing for a regiment to have no members and no money.

However, as sympathetic as Xiao Lin was, he was not prepared to use his private funds willy-nilly. Even though he had yet to figure out how to spend his money, he believed that there will be plenty of avenues for him to use it in the future. All other things aside, lifewater alone would cost him a huge sum already.

“If you can’t magically produce money, then you might as well just rob it,” Xiao Lin suggested bitterly.

Yu Mei’s eyes lit up suddenly. She practically slapped the table and stood up while exclaiming, “Good idea!”

Xiao Lin’s lips twitched and he said helplessly, “Are you going to rob a bank?”

“Nonsense, of course not!” Yu Mei rolled her eyes at him, then sat down again. She snickered and said, “But we can always rob someone else’s. For the record, Planet Norma is very different from Earth. Wars are frequent here and it’s chaotic in many places. Say, how much do you actually know about the situation around our colony?”

Xiao Lin knew all of that from his initial geography lesson as all of it was mandatory knowledge for freshmen to learn.

The colonies under the direct jurisdiction of Dawn Academy had Dawn City as their center. There was a total of ten variously sized cities, and the total area was equivalent to about the size of a province on Earth.

Dawn City was located at the southernmost end, adjacent to an endless sea. In several other directions, the northwest was indirectly bordering the orcs’ territory. It was labelled as ‘indirectly bordering’ was because the merfolk were sandwiched in between. However, neither the orcs nor Dawn Academy took that weak race any seriously.

Ever since the war with the orcs, Dawn Academy realized the strategic importance of those buffer zones. They no longer oppressed the merfolk and even supported them as appropriate.

Bordering Dawn Academy’s colony to the northeast was an area about the size of two provinces. Neither the academy’s earthlings nor the locals could stake their claim over there. Dawn Academy once attempted to integrate that area in order to expand the colony, but it eventually failed due to the intervention of multiple parties.

There was a mix of both crooks and honest folk in that area, and many colonial academies had their supporting forces there too. To put it bluntly, balance and equilibrium was emphasized there. Everyone’s interests were evenly divided and it was always easy to deal with things. However, no one should expect to conduct any integration, not even Dawn Academy. If they were so bold as to commence any military interference, it would be met with strict opposition from the other academies, Judge Academy included.

The status and overall strength of Dawn Academy declined considerably after the war with the orcs, and there were also quite a lot of internal opposition, which left them little capital with which they could contend with. Over time, the area was left completely unchecked.

The reason why that area was so valued was because it was the only area where starmetal has been excavated in the entire Planet Norma.

The only thing Xiao Lin knew about starmetal was that it was a rare and valuable material which had extremely important applications in many fields. Everyone could accept joint mining of the resource, but monopolization by any one force was completely unacceptable to all.

That was where Yu Mei was going to make a fortune. Although Xiao Lin thinks this woman was a bit of a looney, the plan might not actually be impossible after giving it some thought. The powers-that-be was plentiful there, intertwining and overlapping, with power and might being the sole way of life there. It was quite common for crooks to turn against each other too.

As soon as Xiao Lin wished Yu Mei success, the woman frowned and said in a serious tone, “I can’t personally put myself out there though. I’m afraid I’ll have to rely on you.”

“Huh?”

“After all, I’m considered a government official and many people know who I am. There’ll be all sorts of unnecessary trouble if someone recognizes me there.”

“But I’m just a Black Iron-rank freshman!”

“No, no. It’s because you’re a Black Iron-rank freshman that you’re most suitable for this task.”

Had it not been for Yu Mei’s serious expression, Xiao Lin would have almost flipped the table and left. Yu Mei quickly explained, “That area is called the Silver Province. Do you know why that is?”

Yu Mei answered her own question. “Because there are unwritten regulations in that area. Gold-ranks are forbidden to enter! Silver-ranks can practically have their way around there, but Black Iron and Bronze are the commonest ranks there. Yours level and your identity will make you less noticeable.”

“Gold-ranks aren’t allowed to enter?”

“You could say that this is a compromise from Dawn Academy,” Yu said helplessly. “After all, Silver Province is next to our colony, and no one wants to have a time bomb next to him while they sleep, would they? Under the premise that that no integration shall be done in that area, the result of the final compromise was that no one above Silver-rank were allowed to be there. Eventually, the place was renamed Silver Province as a warning of sorts.”

Chapter 306 - Lilith's Message

Chapter 306: Lilith’s Message

Yu Mei's courage was commendable, but when she mentioned committing robbery in Silver Province, she could not possibly be suggesting that they actually stand in the way of caravans and rob them. Even though it was hard to track people down in such a chaotic place, it was not that difficult for the various forces to find him if they put a target on him and ruthlessly investigated the matter.

"We need to rob those bandit gangs. Because of Silver Province's unique location, the bandit gangs are very fond of going about their activities there, so much so that they even set up a base there."

"Won't the academies' forces annihilate them?"

"They did in the beginning, but even grass grows back in the prairie once the wind blows the fire away," Yu Mei said helplessly. "Since the returns are too high and the transactions of starmetal often involve large sums of money, they haven't been brave enough to grab the starmetal as of yet. They have no qualms when it comes to ordinary caravans, and even though the various forces have repeatedly suppressed them, they eventually reached a certain tacit understanding. 'Don't snatch any of my caravans in my domain'."

Xiao Lin frowned. Yu Mei was clearly implying that the colonial academies—despite saying that they were allies—were actually still competing to some extent. They only protected the caravans belonging to their own academy, and the fate of caravans from other academies had nothing to do with them. Perhaps every academy had the same idea.

"But even if you plan to rob another bandit, it's still going to be very difficult. You can't seriously be thinking that a Black Iron-rank person like me can kill all the bandits at once?"

"I don't intend to let you go by yourself. You can choose your own team members among those that can be deployed for assignments. In fact, I have a lot of information on that group of bandits from my previous work. It'll save you a lot of time."

Yu Mei offered a tempting bargaining chip by proposing that part of the looted property could be set aside for Xiao Lin's personal use, as well as hinting that his wealth might reach the tens of millions. However, Xiao Lin was prudent enough to request more time to think carefully.

Xiao Lin's original intention was to refuse. Fundamentally speaking, he felt that he was not strong enough to move confidently there even though Yu Mei made it clear that the bandit gangs were very weak. They were only around Black Iron- or Bronze-rank at most, because those who were truly at Silver-rank would have been requisitioned by various forces and would not lower themselves to the level of bandits.

As a result, he was prepared to give Yu Mei the go-by for the time being and slowly delay things after that. The fact that an individual was left to obtain military expenses sufficed to show Xiao Lin that the so-called sixth regiment was very unreliable. If it were not for the dean's appointment letter, he would have wanted to leave right away.

However, that line of thinking changed after three days. After bidding farewell to Yu Mei, Xiao Lin was originally going to stay in Dawn City for two more days and wander around casually. He was not short of money anyway, and everything in the New World was a novelty to him. Although the Sixth Regiment had practically nothing, Xiao Lin experienced the benefits of the privileged class for

the first time. In particular, his commander status gave him the privilege to stay in the central zone's best hotel for free.

Dawn City was different from New Washington's function-based regional segregation in that it adopted a ring-shaped structure. The ring closest to the center was the first to be built, and therefore had more complete functional facilities as well as a much better environment. It was an allusion to modernization back on Earth.

It was said that the first ring allowed only the privileged class to enter and exit, and Xiao Lin's initial plan was to enjoy a couple of days of life in luxury.

However, on the early morning of the third day, the still asleep Xiao Lin was awakened by Yu Mei. Before he could even express his dissatisfaction, his sleepy eyes noticed that Yu Mei was similarly angry after being disturbed in her sleep. Apparently, she had been woken up as well.

"Dawn Academy just transferred an urgent communication request. I originally wanted to wait for you to return before telling you, but the student union seems to take you very seriously. For that reason, the communication request was transferred to me at the last minute."

"Urgent communication request? Who is it?"

"The president."

Xiao Lin's sleepy eyes opened wide in an instant as he had a rather good impression of the baby-faced president. Yu Mei came to the communication room, and the spatial communication technology had to be utilized in order to contact Dawn Academy. It went without saying that the high cost would naturally have to be borne by Xiao Lin, but he was fortunate not to lack money anymore.

He was initially rather puzzled as to what drove the president to contact him using the costly spatial communication instead of waiting for him to head back. Once the call was connected however, the president simply said calmly, "Lilith is looking for you."

Xiao Lin was stunned for more than ten seconds and did not snap out of it until the president transferred the call to America and Lilith appeared on the virtual screen. He said half-teasingly, "Lilith? I'm surprised you actually initiated this communication request. You're not chasing me to settle my debt, are you?"

Back then, he consulted Lilith on upgrading his talent and ended up owing her a lot of money because he requested her to help foot half the bill. Of course, money was no longer an issue for him.

"We found his trail here." Lilith was not in the mood for jokes and had a serious look on her face.

"He?"

"Asabanor."

Xiao Lin was not that surprised. Asabanor was the high priest's soul from the Ancient Thunder Kingdom. It had escaped with them in The Final Land and left no traces after that. Xiao Lin

believed that Judge Academy would have commenced an all-out search, though he did not expect that there would be news so soon.

“Where did he go?” Xiao Lin was very curious.

“Silver Province.”

Xiao Lin’s jaw dropped and he wanted to say, ‘It can’t be that coincidental’.

“Oh, you probably don’t know about Silver Province, it’s a short distance from Dawn Academy’s colony...”

“No, no, no, I do know about it,” Xiao Lin interrupted Lilith quickly and frowned. “I just find it a little strange. Why would the high priest go to Silver Province?”

“That’s also a question I’m trying to figure out.”

“Okay, then why are you looking for me?” Xiao Lin could more or less guess why Lilith requested to talk to him, but it was quite difficult for him to accept the fact.

“I’m hoping that you’re able to participate in this investigation as well,” Lilith said straightforwardly.

Xiao Lin could understand her reasons. After all, he and Lilith were the only ones who had come into contact with the half-dead half-alive Asabanor. Furthermore, his and Lilith’s SS-level talents might prove useful when dealing with him.

Xiao Lin was still very reluctant because Judge Academy had tricked him before and it nearly cost him his personal freedom. He did not mind helping Lilith, but if she represented Judge Academy’s stand on the matter, then it might be better to discuss it further.

Having avoided a lot of troublesome issues in recent days with his ‘let me think about it’ rhetoric, he wanted to use the same delay tactic again when he heard the president’s mellifluous voice.

“I’ll agree to it on behalf of Xiao Lin, but I’m sure you of all people would understand the unique circumstances of Silver Province, Lilith. This can only be a private cooperation, and the official forces will not intervene. Lilith, our hope is that you’re the only person from Judge Academy who will enter Silver Province! If anyone else comes along, I’m afraid Dawn Academy would have to suspect Judge Academy’s true intentions!”

Chapter 307 - Tempting Chen Dao

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Translator: EndlessFantasy Translation **Editor:** EndlessFantasy Translation

The student union president spoke with such righteousness that Xiao Lin frowned when he heard it. Before he could even say anything however, Lilith waved her hand and replied with a big grin, “No problem. It’s too burdensome for other people to come along anyway. ”

Lilith agreed with such glee that Xiao Lin was left stunned again, but their communication ended just as he was about to say something. As expected, the cost was high, but Lilith was the one who paid for it.

However, the communication between Xiao Lin and the student union president was still ongoing, and it seemed that the other party did not intend to hang up. Xiao Lin was silent for a moment but he soon took the initiative to ask, “Why did you ask Lilith to come here alone?”

The president’s face reverted back to the usual smile when facing Xiao Lin, “Silver Province is special in that it’s difficult for any forces to intervene. The balance will be broken if there’s too many people, and you might not understand—”

“I do understand!” Xiao Lin answered, but in the end, he could only sigh with a wry smile.

In fact, what Xiao Lin really wanted to ask was whether Dawn Academy would do the same thing.

Previously in New Washington, Judge Academy did not hesitate to embroil themselves in disputes and detain him simply on the suspicion that he was a SS-level talent. Lilith was also rumored to be a SS-level talent, so would Dawn Academy do nothing if she entered their colony?

Although Lilith did not seem to be too much of a schemer, she was not an idiot either. She had definitely predicted the possible dangers that might occur, yet she dared to take the initiative to request his help. Was it because Asabanor’s was too important for Judge Academy, or did Lilith simply not care about her own safety?

After the storm in New Washington, Judge Academy never announced Asabanor’s appearance to the outside world for fear of backlash from the locals. However, a joint arrest warrant had been applied for amongst the insiders of each college.

In fact, Judge Academy aside, the other academies had a great interest in the matter as well, although their concern was with The Final Place instead of Asabanor.

Xiao Lin was afraid of trouble, but since it had already been decided, he would strive to complete it meticulously. With great strength comes great responsibility, and that was something he understood very well. Although his strength was still at Black Iron-rank, his status within the academy was actually quite special. Everyone treated him politely, be it the year leaders or the student union president, but he was not that narcissistic as to believe that it was due to his own charm or personality.

The reason was simple. The dean valued him and cared for him under subtle guises. Xiao Lin was very grateful to the old man despite only meeting him once. Therefore, Xiao Lin would not refuse a chance to do something for Dawn Academy.

There were a lot of advance preparations to be made. According to the student union president, the result of the negotiations with Judge Academy was that Lilith would go directly to Silver Province

instead of passing through Dawn City. To put it bluntly, the American side was not too at ease if she had to go to Dawn City first.

However, going that route would take many days, so in the meantime, Xiao Lin returned to the academy and began studying the Lightsword. It was one of the skill books he brought back from New Washington. Since he had reached Black Iron-rank and mastered sword aura, it was much easier for him to study it again.

Lightsword was an actual combat skill based on ordinary sword aura. Sufficient lethal force could be produced by compressing, condensing and controlling the sword aura. A skill like that was actually really easy to master, but it also overlapped considerably with other sword aura skills. The most important aspect was that the Lightsword's subsequent upgrades required a certain foundation of spell training despite being a purely physical killing skill. Although Dawn Academy did not offer such a course, books on the subject could still be found in the library.

Using the simulated battle system, Xiao Lin only took four days to master the skill. The effect of his LV2 Academic Genius was slowly starting to manifest. For skills where his basic attributes had met the learning requirements, his learning efficiency would be rather high.

During his time in Dawn City, Class Twelve's Chen Dao had also successfully achieved Black Iron-rank. He was just over one week later than Xiao Lin, but it did not engender too much surprise due to Xiao Lin's remarkable earlier achievement. Cheng Ming and several other monitors were almost only a few points short of Black Iron-rank in terms of attributes, so the most they would need to reach that rank was probably another few weeks.

As a result, even the senior students were discussing how awesome the freshmen were. As far as the speed of getting to Black Iron-rank was concerned, the present batch of freshmen were undoubtedly the best Dawn Academy had ever seen.

"As expected, comparing yourself with someone else will only make you feel inferior. I was kinda happy at first, but then I heard you were going on a business trip to Planet Norma again? Why don't I have this kind of treatment?"

After returning from his Lightsword practice, Xiao Lin would sit in the dormitory's lounge area and drink a cup of strong tea while reading the latest issue of Dawn Academy Evening News. He would occasionally run into Chen Dao and wondered why the latter suddenly enjoyed reading the newspaper recently. He finally understood why after noticing that the front-page cover of the newspaper depicted a few lifelike elven beauties.

"Business trips are a pain and you might die. It isn't worth it even though you have a long lifespan. You're well aware that you'll lose twenty years of life span whenever you die in the New World." Xiao Lin's trips to the New World had been public knowledge on the forum for quite some time already, as he had delegated Gu Xiaoyue and Zhou Feng to deal with Class Seven's daily affairs.

Chen Dao did not begrudge the trips to the New World, but rather, because he wanted to see the beautiful women of various races.

Xiao Lin responded half-heartedly to him but had a sudden thought in his heart. He asked, "Do you really want to go to the New World?"

“Hell yeah I do!” Chen Dao nodded like a chicken pecking at rice. His eyes lit up immediately after realizing that Xiao Lin’s tone seemed to suggest that there was a way.

Xiao Lin had a serious look and solemnly patted Chen Dao’s shoulder. He asked sternly, “I see you as someone with excellent aptitude and potential. There’s an opportunity for us to defend our colonial territory there, so are you willing to shoulder the responsibility and take on this arduous yet glorious mission?”

“Huh?” Chen Dao was in a daze.

Xiao Lin let out a dry cough and said more directly, “Do you want to join the army?”

“Join the army? We can go to the New World?” Chen Dao’s focus was completely different from Xiao Lin’s.

“You can. The military has special authority and isn’t subject to school regulations. Moreover, the colonial army often needs to go out to perform tasks. The chances of encountering beautiful women of all ethnic groups are very high,” Xiao Lin felt like he was one of those weird old men waving a lollipop in front of some young girl, although on that occasion, it was not a young girl.

“Okay! Then I’ll join the army!” Chen Dao answered gleefully and even blamed Xiao Lin for not telling him earlier.

The process went so smoothly that even Xiao Lin was a little dumbfounded by it. Chen Dao was not a sly person, or rather, he had not yet reached that age of adulthood. Meeting beauties from various races was something he thought about day in day out, so the temptation was simply too hard for him to resist.

In any case, Xiao Lin thought to himself that the sixth regiment finally changed from having two members to having three.

Chapter 308 - Off to Silver Province

Chapter 308: Off to Silver Province

Chen Dao was smoothly tricked into joining the sixth regiment before Xiao Lin left for the New World. The process could be likened to using a lollipop to deceive a little girl. Xiao Lin had not even explained the detailed composition of the regiment to Chen Dao, but the guy did not seem too bothered about it. All he cared about was going to the New World and meeting beauties of all races.

Yu Mei was not joking when she said she gave Xiao Lin direct permission to conscript members for the regiment. Once Xiao Lin sent the relevant information to Yu Mei, he received a reply in just over half a day. However, it would take some time to settle the officer ID.

“Officer ID? Are you saying that the sixth regiment will only consist of officers in the future?”

“Would you want our rank in the military to be lower than that of the natives?”

Xiao Lin suddenly had a realization. It probably signified that the regiment was some kind of a special army, one that was composed entirely of real elites.

Chen Dao's officer ID was sent along with information about the Silver Province Yu Mei mentioned earlier. Although she later learned that Xiao Lin went there because of a diplomatic mission, she still repeatedly asked Xiao Lin not to miss the opportunity to make money.

Before her appointment as the Major of the sixth regiment, Yu Mei used to work in the Intelligence Agency before, so the information sent over to Xiao Lin came in thick stacks. All of them contained background information on Silver Province's various forces. To put it bluntly, it was to ensure that Xiao Lin paid attention to those he could apply pressure to and those he should not provoke.

During that period of time, the student union president brought Xiao Lin to meet many people, from the military, the Intelligence Agency, and the Foreign Affairs Department. According to the president's teasing words, Xiao Lin was considered to have somewhat of a reputation, as even the president would not ordinarily have the opportunity to interact with those people.

The college management and the colony itself belonged to two completely different administrative organizations, but because they often handled things with each other, the president was still relatively familiar with those people.

Due to the diplomatically cooperative nature of the mission, many of those people had full of doubts and were even puzzled about Xiao Lin. Although Dawn Academy had no interest in Asabanor, the secrets hidden behind that high priest were so secretive that practically all the colleges viewed it with great curiosity.

Had it not been for Lilith's unequivocal request for Xiao Lin, those departments would never consider sending a rookie who had just been in the academy a few months into Silver Province. That kind of attitude was precisely why they were not that friendly when explaining specific matters, and the atmosphere only improved when the president was mediating beside Xiao Lin.

The mission was completely different from Xiao Lin's previous assignment in New Washington. What he did in the past was nothing more than lending a little help, but the upcoming mission involved many interests, especially since the investigation was conducted secretly by Judge Academy and Dawn Academy. Other academies had so far not been privy to any news. Of course, Judge Academy was initially reluctant to bring along Dawn Academy, but their hands were tied because Xiao Lin was someone who had actually met Asabanor.

"Behind each department is a complicated mess of benefit-driven relationships. The dean has too many things to pay attention to and there are some things even he can't manage."

The president also patiently explained to Xiao Lin in private, "But you can rest assured. I brought this up with the dean and he'll make the arrangements."

After preparations had been made, Xiao Lin set out with a specially formed investigation team. That particular aspect left Xiao Lin feeling a little uncomfortable, because although the so-called investigation team was said to assist in the investigation, it was quite certain that they were there for reasons of supervision and because they were concerned about him.

There were four members in that special investigation team, namely Zhao Mancheng of the Foreign Affairs Department, Qin Zuo of the Intelligence Agency, Ruan Feiyun from the military force, and lastly Xiao Lin. Due to the secrecy of the operation, too large a group would easily attract the attention of other colleges. They disguised themselves as a merchant group entering Silver Province, hired a certain number of local natives, brought with them a few large carts of goods, then set off for Silver Province.

The caravan's starting point was from the colony closest to Silver Province. They walked along the road for about five or six days and entered Silver Province's territory after crossing a rather low hill.

The group did not talk much along the way and only had a few simple exchanges. Xiao Lin was not familiar with them and the others were not well-acquainted with among themselves either.

"When it comes to Asabanor, we have actually been cooperating with Judge Academy all this while, chasing leads and tracking clues based on the undead aura. Although it's like finding a needle in a haystack, our luck has been pretty good..." The Intelligence Agency's Qin Zuo was the first who spoke. He was a man who sported a gloomy face all the time.

The group was sitting in a large unicorn-drawn carriage. Although the elves loathed the use of unicorns as tools, they were powerless to prevent such creatures from becoming the most convenient means of transportation.

When Qin Zuo talked about death energy, Xiao Lin—who had been leaning against the window to watch the scenery outside—retracted his gaze a little, and asked in some surprise, "Major Qin, have you learned necromancy?"

Qin Zuo's rank was that of a major, but it went without saying that he was dressed only in plainclothes at the moment. He glanced at Xiao Lin blankly, "We need to address each other by name out here... You're right, I did learn necromancy. Due to the uniqueness of our job in the agency, intelligence is of utmost importance... No intelligence can be more concrete in this world than that of a dead person."

Qin Zuo's tone was cryptic, and although the other two people did not like him very much, Xiao Lin's interest was piqued. He asked and listened carefully, as he had just learned about necromancy and was still very curious about that aspect.

Unfortunately, Qin Zuo did not say much anymore, only that he did not learn necromancy when he was at Dawn Academy.

"In fact, it doesn't matter how the Judge Academy deals with that dead soul. Our military only wants to determine whether he had any contact with the orcs or the elves." Ruan Feiyun, from the military, was also a major and had Silver-level strength. He did not seem interested in the little excursion because he felt that the possibility of that happening was not very high. The only reason he followed along was because he was ordered to do so.

"Hah! Looks like I'll be having the least work to do. I'm only responsible for dealing with Judge Academy. Say, this mission is probably going to be a breeze, otherwise else it won't be just the few of us here," Zhao Mancheng from the Foreign Affairs Department finally found a chance to

interrupt. One could see that he was more easygoing than the others, and it must have been uncomfortable for him to keep quiet during the journey.

The investigation team's original intention was simply to get the information they needed, and at the same time, supervise and ensure that Judge Academy did nothing out of the ordinary. As for Asabanor, Judge Academy had the freedom to handle him as they saw fit.

"The news I received is that Xiao Lin had been in contact with Asabanor before, hence his participation in this operation. Now that you mention it, what kind of person is Asabanor?"

As the conversation gradually opened up, they finally moved to Xiao Lin. Although they had received information about Xiao Lin before they came, it contained far too little data. When they asked for more, their query came back saying that they had no authority to view further details on Xiao Lin.

Chapter 309 - Wildfire Town

Chapter 309: Wildfire Town

Those three people accompanying him along were individuals of a certain influence and status, yet they were not even able to access a freshman's details. That made them incredibly curious about Xiao Lin, and although they would not directly ask him about it, they had quite a number of speculations over his identity.

"Asabanor." Xiao Lin narrowed his eyes, as if he was reminiscing about what happened. After a long pause, he finally let out a soft sigh. "He's a lunatic."

The other three exchanged glances, but Xiao Lin was obviously unwilling to say any further. It was not appropriate to tell everyone about the things that happened in The Final Land, and moreover, Xiao Lin was not exactly sure as to how much those people actually knew.

A few days later, they arrived at the first stop of the journey—Wildfire Town.

There was more than a dozen variously-sized towns in the entire Silver Province, and the total population numbered over one million, making for quite a large area. Honest folk existed along with scumbags, and almost all races passed through there. The benefits of starmetal were so tempting that even the elves could not resist it.

"Wildfire Town is a town that is close to the Dawn Academy's colonial area. It's not de facto under our jurisdiction, but the mayor here has our support," the Intelligence Agency's Qin Zuo took the initiative to speak. The other two were aware of that already and that statement was more for Xiao Lin's sake.

"I know." Xiao Lin nodded too. He smiled and raised the thick information reports in his hand. It was the same one that Yu Mei passed to him, which he read to throughout his time on the road to relieve himself of boredom.

Qin Zuo was not surprised. “I used to work with Yu Mei in the agency. She was a lunatic too, but the dean values her a lot.”

Xiao Lin pursed his lips. It was a rather apt description of Yu Mei, for she could hardly be regarded as a sane person if she had the galls to blatantly have him commit robbery in Silver Province. In fact, Xiao Lin had yet to tell his three companions about it. Having looked over Yu Mei’s information about the bandits, it appeared that those people were not very strong. However, he was no match for their numbers, and attacking them single-handedly was a suicidal act.

Silver Province’s rule and order was basically maintained by those mayors. Although any form of unification was not allowed there, the mayors possessed extremely wide powers. They were the ones who managed daily affairs, and local noblemen were traditionally the ones appointed to that position. When Earth’s academies gradually became stronger, most of the mayors there were then supported by the various academies, thus leading to the complexity of the sphere of influence within Silver Province.

Once at the town, Xiao Lin got off from his unicorn carriage, he looked curiously at the small town, which was about the size of a county back on Earth. It was different from Dawn City and New Washington in the sense that it retained many of Planet Norma’s characteristics. Although the forces there were supported by the colonial academies, none of those academies interfered directly with the development there.

In terms of architectural features, many of the strangely shaped buildings were more ornate than Dawn City’s buildings, but being ornate was all there was to them. Xiao Lin remembered his previous visit, when the fat An Fumin mentioned that the standard design of Dawn City’s buildings was so they could withstand a certain degree of long-range spell attacks. It was clear that those buildings suffered damage during the war with the orcs.

“Will the mayor come to pick us up?” the military’s Ruan Feiyun asked.

“You must be joking! We’re on a secret operation. To the outside world, we’re just an ordinary merchant group. After all, the mayor is not one of us, so it’s best not to trouble him.” The Foreign Affairs Department’s Zhao Mancheng shook his head and refused.

During the next two days, the group of people would temporarily rest and replenish their supplies in Wildfire Town. Whenever Xiao Lin was free, he would wander around the street to observe the true local characteristics of Planet Norma. The majority race in that town were humans, but they were the local indigenous humans. Their appearance was not much different from that of Earthlings, but their different styles of clothing sufficed to distinguish them from the colonists.

Before arriving, Xiao Lin had already changed into the local clothes. Although it was quite awkward to wear and he could barely handle simple Normese vocabulary, many people actually came to talk to him along the way. When Xiao Lin—whose mastery of the language was mediocre at best—could not understand what the other party wanted to express, some of them actually changed their language to and spoke some terrible Chinese.

What left Xiao Lin rather speechless was that they were coming up to him in order to sell their products. The goods on sale comprised things such as soap and perfume, and Xiao Lin slowly began to realize that the soap brands were getting more and more familiar. Xiao Lin had a sudden

realization and could not help but wipe the sweat off his forehead. The soap was clearly brought from Earth with the wrapping paper teared off!

Earth's products were very popular there, and although the history of colonization spanned more than two centuries, the first century was spent in war. During the peacetime that followed, trade with the locals gradually strengthened. In addition, the modernization of Earth was a recent development during the past couple of decades, with many gadgets and products gradually making their way into Planet Norma.

Such an aspect was unnoticeable in the capital city because that was a colonial stronghold. However, it was within those small towns that Xiao Lin saw first-hand the sales volume of those things.

The colonial academies had always refused to commence rapid development of Silver Province. To some extent, it was probably to ensure that the place had a short enough supply of goods in order for them to make more money.

After declining several attempts to make a sale, Xiao Lin became a little annoyed. There was actually nothing to see in the town itself, and in addition to the local buildings and the natives on the road, many places actually had a strong 'earthly' character to them. For example, Xiao Lin picked a local restaurant at random to have some lunch, and he was stunned by the names of pork slices in garlic sauce and Gong Bao chicken on the menu.

Unfortunately, Xiao Lin was not in Dawn City, where Earthlings might occasionally prepare the dishes themselves if they were in the mood. In Wildfire Town, those dishes were entirely made by the locals on their own, and the taste was simply all kinds of flavors jumbled up. One thing that surprised Xiao Lin was that knives, forks and chopsticks are always available in the restaurants there. He learnt from history lessons that no such tableware existed in Planet Norma, and all of them were basically brought from Earth.

After returning in the evening, Xiao Lin suddenly understood that those invaders from another space and time had been subtly changing many things in that continent over a hundred-year period.

The security in Wildfire Town was not too bad, but Qin Zuo reminded Xiao Lin to return to their merchant group's premises before dark, otherwise they could not guarantee his safety. There were quite a few people in Silver Province who had no qualms about killing and robbing others. Even though they might not dare to go near a merchant group under the banner of a colonial academy, lone individuals like Xiao Lin stood out prominently as an outsider, and even Earthlings were not spared by people like them.

Chapter 310 - The Little Girl from Wildfire Town

Chapter 310: The Little Girl from Wildfire Town

Because of Qin Zuo's reminder, Xiao Lin got ready to head back before the sky was completely dark. The merchant group that they pretended to be had to stay in Wildfire Town for a few more days until America's Judge Academy came. Based on the results of previous discussions between the two parties, the rendezvous point was Wildfire Town. It went without saying that the Americas were unwilling to go to a town supported by Dawn Academy, but they clearly had no other choice.

Wildfire Town's streets were very deserted in the evening. Most shops were closed except for some brightly-lit pubs. That was also one of the biggest differences between a colonial city, as night markets did not exist in Planet Norma.

As a result, Xiao Lin quickly heard the clear voice of a sharp dispute and a crying plea in a remote alley not far away. Passers-by who occasionally walked past the street glanced pitifully in the dark alley before mumbling something that Xiao Lin did not understand at all. Finally, they speeded up their paces and hurried past at once.

The natives in that world did not seem to be in the habit of being busybodies or being good Samaritans. In the first place, Xiao Lin was in a completely unfamiliar town and he was there specifically for a mission. He therefore did not want to involve himself with side issues, but a burst of urgent footsteps and angry shouts had moved closer to him barely after he took a few steps.

Before Xiao Lin could react, a dirty-looking girl had already darted out of the alley. She was pursued by a muscular man and looked rather weak, staggering and falling to the ground after only running a few steps. The man obviously has a certain foundation in terms of strength, and he rushed over to grab the girl in a swift dash.

The man snatched back the purse-like bag that the girl was holding tightly in his palm, and cursed aloud. Since his words had some local dialect, Xiao Lin could only understand stuff like 'You thief'.

It turned out to be capturing a thief.

Xiao Lin understood that, but the man soon vented his anger and began kicking the girl fiercely after regaining the purse. The girl could not fight back, so she could only cover her head and curl up on the ground. Xiao Lin marveled at how the girl did not make a single peep throughout the ordeal, despite the man's immense strength. One would practically think that she was not afraid of pain.

From Xiao Lin's perspective, however, he happened to be able to see the girl biting her pale lips using what little light was present there. There also an unconcealable expression of hatred in her eyes.

Xiao Lin acknowledged that he was moved by compassion, especially since the girl seemed to be about ten-years-old. Regardless of her misdeeds, she would definitely not survive the night after facing the man's punches and kicks.

"Stop it," Xiao Lin yelled as he walked, but the man turned a deaf ear to it. The man did not understand it of course. Just like the crappy Chinese spoken by those peddlers on the street, Xiao Lin's Normese was even crappier.

Xiao Lin repeated his words more slowly when he walked closer. On that occasion, he was sure that he spoke in proper language, but the man simply raised his head, glanced at him impatiently, and dropped a sentence that Xiao Lin also understood.

“Don’t be nosy!”

“You’ve taken back your stuff, so just let her go,” Xiao Lin patiently persuaded.

“Talk nonsense again and I’ll beat you up too!”

“Oh, well, forgive me then.” Words seemed incapable of truly expressing one’s intention in that world. Xiao Lin nodded, then raised his fist and slammed it directly on the man’s right cheek. The man was not a weak person, but he was caught off guard, and the attack only made him stagger a few steps back.

However, the short amount of time was enough for Xiao Lin to support the girl who fell on the ground. At that moment, he also realized that the girl had quite a delicate face, and the reason she looked rather thin was probably due to malnutrition. Her clothes were dirty and they were mixed with this mud and blood. She seemed to be a little confused, and the hatred in her eyes had not completely subsided yet. When she saw Xiao Lin, she whispered a couple of indecipherable sentences.

“Can you run?” Xiao Lin asked.

The girl kept silent and lowered her head slightly.

Xiao Lin discovered that her right foot was bare. It was autumn in Planet Norma, and the small town did not have flat roads like they did on Earth. Although the path was a street, there was still quite a lot of stones and gravel on the road.

In the end, Xiao Lin could only sigh. He saw the fierce man running over and picking the girl up by her legs. After taking a deep breath, he activated his Miracle state instantly and converted all his attributes to agility. Then, he executed his Phantom Step, and within a few minutes, the muscular man was left far behind.

It was only when Xiao Lin approached the merchant group’s residence that he deactivated the Miracle state. He placed her down again only to find that she was looking at him with a weird look. Xiao Lin could not help but blush.

By his own admission, Xiao Lin was actually feeling a bit overwhelmed. The normal routine for heroes who saved a damsel in distress would be to beat the bad guys away, but unfortunately, Xiao Lin understood that there was a great difference in strength the moment he attacked and punched the man. If push came to shove, Xiao Lin might still come out victorious if he relied on his talent and the Miracle state, but Xiao Lin’s purpose of coming to Wildfire Town was not to fight or make trouble.

As a result, there was no other alternative, Xiao Lin could only choose to turn around and escape, though he was lucky that he could be confident in his speed.

“Being a thief is never the right thing to do, but it’s the man was also in the wrong for beating you up like this.” Since he had already rescued her, Xiao Lin felt that it should end there. Nevertheless, he felt that he still had to educate her a little before he left.

The girl continued to keep quiet and the puzzled look remained in her flickering eyes. Xiao Lin thought she did not understand, so he repeated it twice in Chinese and Normese. Since Dawn Academy was Wildfire Town’s benefactor, there were many Chinese-speaking locals there.

The girl’s blankness left Xiao Lin feeling as though he was preaching to deaf ears. The language barrier was a problem indeed. He shoved his educational lectures back down his throat and waved his hand. “Ahem, the point is, hurry home before that guy chases you. And don’t steal stuff anymore.”

Xiao Lin fished three 100-dollar New Dollars from his pocket and stuffed it into the girl’s dirty little hand. She did not refuse, but the look in her eyes became even stranger. Xiao Lin looked down at her little bare foot and showed seven more 100-dollar New Dollars to her after mulling over it for a moment.

When he wandered around Dawn City, he discovered he had quite the purchasing power. At the very least, the girl should be allowed to buy a pair of shoes, or so he thought. As a nouveau riche, he did not really care about the money.

After doing all of that, Xiao Lin turned around and left without even waiting for the girl to say a word of thanks. Deep down, he felt a certain sense of merit and accomplishment.

Half an hour later however, Xiao Lin reached the entrance of the hotel where the merchant group was staying. Upon turning around, he smiled bitterly when he saw that the little girl had been following him, though she did so while deliberately keeping a certain distance.

Chapter 311 - A Guess

Chapter 311: A Guess

Xiao Lin wanted to go straight into the hotel without turning around. He thought of leaving the girl to stand for as long as she could outside, but after feeling the coolness of the autumn weather, he eventually sighed and took the initiative to walk over.

Like a frightened rabbit, she looked as though she wanted to find a shadowy corner to hide, but the cold froze her little reddish bare feet. Simply walking there was already unbearable enough for her, and after running for a couple of steps, she fell to the ground again.

Xiao Lin could only raise his hand helplessly to indicate that he came without any malice. He slowed down his footsteps and finally approached her despite her uncertain-looking gaze, carefully supporting her up.

“If you want to thank me, you don’t need to. Just hurry home.” Although that was what he said, the sun had completely set by the time he walked to the hotel. The Two the world of Norma has been

some time since the Double Moon Festival passed. There was only one half of the two moons left in the sky, and street lights were scarce in that small town too, making it almost pitch black.

Xiao Lin initially wanted to tell her that he might as well send her home by himself, but he also had to take into account his own strength. If he encountered danger at night, he might even have to explain his presence there. A resurrection tower stood tall in Wildfire Town and it was Dawn Academy who provided it as support. In other words, that was the basic condition for all colonial academies to secretly foster their support of the various forces. Still, it was distressing to lose a 20-year lifespan.

“Can you help me?”

The little girl suddenly took the initiative to speak. Although her small dust- and blood-covered face looked pitiful, her husky tone appeared very calm and to Xiao Lin’s surprise, she spoke fluent Chinese. Although it was not uncommon in the locality, the difference in accent caused the Chinese spoken by many indigenous people to be rather awkward, although it was still possible to understand it. However, that girl was different. Her Chinese was almost the highest standard of Mandarin with incredibly accurate intonation.

Their communication went incredibly well, but Xiao Lin was still a little unhappy over why she did not say a single word before. In any case, he still asked, “You can speak Chinese? Are you one of us, ahem, I mean are you one of those people?”

Xiao Lin did not forget that their current status was that of a merchant group, so she pointed to the direction of Dawn Academy’s colony. However, the girl’s hoarse voice sounded once again. “I know you’re an outsider, that’s why I came to you. Can you help me? ”

The little girl’s bright eyes projected a very strong hatred and it seemed that there was a deeply-etched sea of blood as well as intense resentment.

Xiao Lin was not interested in doing so, as he was initially just doing a small favor and did not want to get into more trouble because of that. It did not matter who the little girl hated, because it had nothing to do with him at all.

As soon as the girl noticed that he was inclined to refuse, she continued, “Is there anything you need? I don’t have money, but at least I have myself. I know some of you outsiders have that kind of... Umm, that kind of really special hobby, so I can promise to be your maid.”

The ten-year-old girl spoke extremely calmly in a very immature tone, as if the entire thing had nothing to do with her. Xiao Lin’s brows were furrowed even deeper.

Did the colonists’ have ‘special hobbies’?

He admitted that many people came to the New World with the mindset of pleasure, and a prime example was An Fumin. He believed that the fat man would be able to satisfy that kind of special hobby as long as he was willing to do so.

That did not include Xiao Lin though. Xiao Lin stood up, with his expression already turning a little sour, and he said half-heartedly, “How about this, I’ll get you a room for the hotel and you can stay here for the time being. I’ll leave Wildfire Town in a few more days, and it’s no use even if you

follow us. I'm sorry, but we're just an ordinary merchant group. I can't be concerned with your affairs."

Since the girl did not want any money, Xiao Lin was too lazy to persuade further. He simply used the money to get a room from the innkeeper. New Dollars were a common mode of currency throughout Silver Province. With the growing influence of the colony, the surrounding forces predisposed to the various colonies have gradually accepted that currency even though it had yet to be accepted universally in Planet Norma.

The innkeeper was an old woman in her forties. She seemed rather kind to Xiao Lin, although it might be because the merchant group had brought her a lot of business those few days. She whispered and reminded, "It's probably your first time coming to Wildfire Town. I should remind you not to trust these vagrants in Silver Province."

Although it was a kind reminder, the woman held the money Xiao Lin handed over tightly in her palm. She probably would not refund his money even if Xiao Lin took her up on her advice and changed his mind.

The girl behind was undoubtedly disappointed, but she soon spoke again, changing instead to a pitifully mute tone with tears in her pupils. "Can I bring my mother here? Otherwise, she'll definitely sleep on the street tonight!"

That was how a ten-year-old ought to respond, but due to the contrast with her earlier composure, Xiao Lin was stunned for some time before she shook his head with a bitter smile. Perhaps the innkeeper was right. She was not trustworthy at all, and he could not measure Planet Norma by the standards of similar-aged girls on Earth.

"Why don't I let a few people keep her company?" the innkeeper once again eagerly took the initiative to relieve Xiao Lin of his worries. Of course, the main reason might be that Xiao Lin allowed her to keep the remaining change as a tip when he paid for the room earlier.

According to the Intelligence Agency's Qin Zuo, the hotel was relatively reliable, so Xiao Lin naturally chose to trust her. After handing her over, he went back to his room and headed straight to bed. There was nothing entertaining at night there, and everyone slept quite early as a result.

At breakfast the next day, Xiao Lin casually told the other three people about the incident. Zhao Mancheng and Ruan Feiyun said nothing, but Qin Zuo put down his chopsticks and asked in detail without changing his expression.

After Xiao Lin finished speaking, Qin Zuo pondered for only a few minutes before saying in a certain tone, "That girl isn't a local."

Ruan Feiyun chuckled, "You don't say? There are far too many wanderers like that in Planet Norma."

Qin Zuo did not care for Ruan Feiyun's teasing and continued with his analysis, "She should be quite a noble person, if nothing else, I believe she might even be a member of the Rosa Kingdom's noblemen, but I'm not sure whether she is royalty."

Xiao Lin ate a big mouthful of porridge and looked up in surprise. In fact, he really wanted to know whether Qin Zuo actually knew that girl.

“I don’t know her.” Qin Zuo guessed what Xiao Lin was going to say and continued, “Actually, the reason for my judgment is very simple. You said her Chinese is very fluent. We’re all aware that the Normans speak terrible Chinese, but a few people have a natural gift, language-wise.”

“Now that you mention it, she may actually be a member of the Rosa Kingdom. The language talents of that kingdom are spectacular. Any random person there would’ve mastered several languages. Oh, and by that, I mean Elvish, Orcish, and so on so forth. There are even some that understand Dragish there.” The Foreign Affairs Department’s Zhao Mancheng knew of that as well.

“The Rosa Kingdom is having a civil war.” Ruan Feiyun seemed quite knowledgeable about it too. After some thought, he added, “And it seems that their country is about to be destroyed. God is always fair: they’re blessed with an advantage in terms of language, but their physical fitness is inherently worse than everyone else and their military strength is vastly disproportionate to other militaries.”

Chapter 312 - Asabanor’s Trail

Chapter 312: Asabanor’s Trail

Xiao Lin listened in silence because they were more knowledgeable about the situation in Planet Norma. The Rosa Kingdom was some distance away from Dawn City and was located in the center of Planet Norma. Other than the language talents they mentioned earlier, the country was actually quite a pitiful one because wars and external circumstances could almost certainly destroy the small kingdom.

Dawn Academy had dealings with the Rosa Kingdom before, though it was limited to academic research on language. Dawn Academy wanted to conduct in-depth research on the languages of certain races though the Rosa Kingdom, and based on what Qin Zuo knew, their royal family had some interest in Chinese and many of their members have learnt the language.

“So did that girl flee here?”

“Beats me.” Qin Zuo thought for a while and said, “I’ll go and see her later too.”

“Aren’t you afraid she’s recognized you? If she really is a member of the royal family who came over and had contact with us back in the day, it’s likely that she’d recognize us. Don’t forget that our current operation is a secret one!”

“The earliest contact was more than twenty years ago and she wasn’t born yet.”

At breakfast, the few of them had a brief discussion and decided to meet the girl, although they would do so in their capacity as a merchant group. Unfortunately, when Xiao Lin asked the innkeeper about her, he was told that they left as soon as the sun crept up the horizon. Aside from conveying her thanks, the innkeeper actually returned 1,000 New Dollars to Xiao Lin.

“They? She and her mother?”

“They don’t look like a mother and daughter to me! I heard them arguing in the room in the middle of the night. Before the sun came up, two people came in, quarreled with them, and finally left. Oh, and this money was paid by the other two people.” The innkeeper recounted to him.

Although Qin Zuo seemed a bit disappointed, it was not a bad development because no further trouble would be incurred. Xiao Lin treated it as a brief episode during his stay and no longer dwelled on it anymore.

Two days later, the merchant group finally welcomed the Judge Academy’s delegation. The rendezvous point was carried out in a large manor nearby Wildfire Town. After paying a huge fee, the manor’s owner generously made way for them. Anything was possible in Silver Province as long as one had enough money.

There were no surprises with Xiao Lin and Lilith’s reunion. An exchange of nods from each other sufficed as a greeting, and the delegations on both sides seemed to be old acquaintances. Even the pleasantries were skipped. With freshly-brewed coffee and strong tea, the two sides faced each other at the long table and began a confrontation.

“According to the previously discussed agreement, shouldn’t Judge Academy send Lilith here alone?”

“Yes, Lilith is the only official representative of our academy.” One of the Americans spoke in an innocent manner and shrugged his shoulders before saying with a half-smile, “We’re just a merchant group here to do some business. By the way, aren’t you guys the same as well? I got wind of that right before I came here.”

“ ... ”

In order to facilitate communication, they used Normese to communicate during the negotiations. Xiao Lin felt bored after listening to it for a while, especially since Qin Zuo and the other two did not seem to have the slightest intention of asking him anything. It was clear that Xiao Lin was at best a bonus in their opinion, and had no right to speak at all.

Halfway through the discussion, Xiao Lin casually found a reason to excuse himself and wander around the private manor. After a few minutes, he saw Lilith coming out nonchalantly with a look of irritability and impatience on her face.

“They’re so annoying. I knew I shouldn’t have reported it when I discovered Asabanor’s trail!” Lilith walked straight to Xiao Lin and sat on the soft grass. She stretched her body lazily and her exquisite curves left Xiao Lin ogling a little too much.

As if the fatigue accumulated during the journey had not been relieved yet, Lilith laid down a little lazily and it was obvious she felt comfortable in Xiao Lin’s presence. She then slowly began to explain the entire story.

About a month ago, Lilith was in charge of hunting down a group of bandits, because they repeatedly attacked the caravans near New Washington. The losses were not severe, but the incident itself drew the ire of Judge Academy. In addition, that period was still fresh from the

aftermath of the Blood Moon incident. The academy's higher-ups were incensed at the embarrassment, so they sent the violent Lilith over to lead the hunt. Lilith was fighting that very group of bandits when she spoke with Xiao Lin on the phone about the attributes.

Things went smoothly at first. The bandits were unable to hide from Judge Academy's information network, and aside from that, the Judge Academy also decided to conduct a thorough investigation to destroy the bandits' lair and wipe them out from the base. However, that was only the beginning of the problem.

During the battle, the bodies of those bandits suddenly exploded, severely wounding the Americans who were in hot pursuit and even killing a number of people. After being studied by professional mages, the explosion turned out to be a corpse explosion derived from necromancy. For the record, the natives of the Planet Norma regard necromancy as blasphemous sorcery, and even the most heinous of outlaws would never learn such a spell.

Judge Academy was aware of the seriousness and got lucky enough to arrest several bandits alive. In fact, no torture was needed for the interrogation as they immediately already confessed in a panic. Their leader's mood had suddenly changed a few weeks prior and forced them to attack caravans near New Washington.

Judge Academy also found that the captured bandits' bodies had been implanted with necromancy spells. The caster could detonate their bodies as bombs, and that particular spell was more heinous than corpse explosions, as corpse explosions could only be used on corpses. However, the improved corpse explosion could detonate even a living person.

After several investigations, Judge Academy finally shifted their target to Asabanor, who had escaped from The Final Land. The academy learnt that the gang of bandits had arrived in Silver Province, although their purpose for being there was as yet unknown.

What left Xiao Lin a little speechless was that Lilith subsequently expressed a strong dissatisfaction, because her purpose of looking for Asabanor was solely to fight with him. Back in The Final Land, Asabanor had made things miserable for Lilith and Xiao Lin. A strong personality like Lilith could not possibly stifle the anger she was feeling.

Nevertheless, Judge Academy was not prepared to let her have her way, and the joint operation was a compromise of sorts to accommodate Lilith. She was no idiot though, because roping Xiao Lin in was equivalent to bringing in Dawn Academy's forces too. That way, the people who followed her along probably would not have much time to concern themselves with her.

"In other words, you wanted me to come along just so I can cover you in your fight?" Xiao Lin's lips twitched. As expected, Lilith was the only one who could think of such a powerful reason.

Lilith replied sternly, "No, not my fight, it's our fight! Asabanor is very weak now, otherwise he won't be using bandits to harass us. We can finally avenge what happened to us in The Final Land!"

Chapter 313 - A Crisis in The Making

Chapter 313: A Crisis in The Making

Translator: EndlessFantasy Translation **Editor:** EndlessFantasy Translation

Xiao Lin was still a little concerned about Asabanor due to the third monthly exam. He believed that the dean shared a similar view on it: if the old undead soul really did crack the resurrection law, the colonists would face a great loss of support.

Lilith had not considered any of that though, and their topic soon shifted to necromancy. She said with a bit of flair to Xiao Lin that she was presently learning necromancy.

Xiao Lin's jaw dropped again, and he secretly smiled to himself. It was a coincidence indeed, though his necromantic meditation was not progressing that smoothly. Dawn Academy's unique independent space had no trace of death energy, which forced Xiao Lin to put the meditation technique on hold for the time being. Still, Xiao Lin did not want to give up immediately as he wanted to try it again while he was in the New World.

Although Xiao Lin did not know what Lilith's talent was, he could more or less figure out that it was similar to his learning-enhancement ability. Moreover, her strength was higher than himself, and Xiao Lin thought that perhaps they could discuss the use of necromancy. He then casually asked, "How far have you progressed in your necromancy?"

Lilith was stunned, and reacted in some surprise. "You know about necromancy? Are you learning it too?!"

The two again found a common topic, but the difference was that Lilith had always disdained learning spells. Xiao Lin was very surprised at her eagerness to learn necromantic sword aura. It was on a much higher level than necromancy, and Xiao Lin could forget about learning it unless he reached the minimum requirement of Bronze-rank.

The one thing they had in common was necromancy still remained as their learning foundation and it was necessary for them to feel the death energy. Lilith was distressed over that for a long time, and she was not really interested in the nuts and bolts of spells. However, Xiao Lin happened to be quite confident in that aspect, so he temporarily satisfied his vanity when Lilith humbly asked him for advice.

The argument, or rather, the negotiations in the manor might go on for God knows how long, so Xiao Lin continued talking about the topic with Lilith. He decided to try it out right there and Lilith expressed a willingness to observe and learn.

In fact, Xiao Lin's experience might not be practical for Lilith, as he used a deviant path to enter necromantic meditation, though he himself was not entirely aware of it. He lay on the soft grass of the manor and closed his eyes to concentrate. Before he knew it, he had already entered his meditation realm. He then activated his Miracle state like a switch, and in that starry meditation world of his, the black hole which resembled a bottomless abyss appeared silently again and completely obliterated the surrounding elements.

Xiao Lin had previously already experienced everything up until then, so there was nothing surprising as of yet. From then on however, there was a completely different scene from when he was meditating in Dawn Academy.

A group of jumping gray flames, like ghastly fires, appeared in the empty starless sky. Those flames had no fixed shape and were morphing constantly. Some were long or square, others large or small, and they all floated around like a shadow.

Was that the so-called death energy?

Xiao Lin tried to separate part of his consciousness to touch those gray flames, but he quickly retracted after feeling their coldness. Those flames were extremely cold, but he would not have felt anything if they were not in his meditation world.

It was also a unique balance system in Planet Norma. In most areas, death energy did not exist by itself. They were often accompanied by lifeforce, and the two acted as a counter to each other in order to maintain the balance in that world.

As those thoughts flashed away in Xiao Lin's subconscious, he suddenly felt that something was amiss. However, it was difficult for Xiao Lin to devote his attention to other things in his meditation realm, otherwise he would have exited the realm because of a lack of concentration. Those ghost flames were originally floating around Xiao Lin, but Xiao Lin soon felt that a light source had appeared in a nearby place. It had to be Lilith, who was also trying to perform necromantic meditation at the same time.

He could distinctly sense that Lilith's attraction to death energy was far less than Xiao Lin, which showed that her necromantic meditation was not better than his. Somehow that made Xiao Lin feel rather content.

According to the introduction of the meditation book Xiao Lin read some time ago, the original necromancy meditation technique had been continuously improved through repeated perception of the death energy. For the moment, Xiao Lin was only in the communicative state, as he and Lilith had not yet progressed too far in their meditative state. Once the meditation ended, Xiao Lin opened his eyes and could not help but feel a shiver.

"It's cold." Lilith frowned too.

Xiao Lin raised his head. The sky that was still bright and clear before had turned gloomy at some point. It was the sign of a storm. Although it was strange that the weather would change that quickly, he got up and said, "It'll probably rain soon. Let's head back first."

"Good idea. I hope they're done with it." Lilith was equally as uninterested in the arguments inside the house.

The two of them walked together, but after only a few steps, a very strange thought flashed through Xiao Lin's mind like a spark of lightning. When he was meditating earlier, he felt that something was not quite right. The grey flames which represented death energy seemed to be too abundant in his meditation world.

He knew that death energy was the residual breath left by any creature after death. It was not inherently harmful, but there were no benefits if too much of it was gathered in one place, hence the existence of natural energy to balance it. Although he had not been able to sense that natural energy, the unusual presence of death energy left Xiao Lin with a nagging feeling of uneasiness.

Xiao Lin quickened his pace subconsciously and Lilith also noticed the gloomy expression on his face. She raised her brows and waved her palm, drawing out her huge pitch-black scythe. As someone who possessed an SS-level talent, she had an impressive instinct for danger even though her necromantic meditation skills were inferior to Xiao Lin.

Slam!

Upon opening the door to the temporary conference room, the messiness within caused Xiao Lin's face to turn pale. The individuals from both Dawn Academy and Judge Academy had disappeared, with the tables and chairs scattered everywhere, while the drinks spilled all over the floor. Since the two of them were in a meditative state earlier, they probably failed to notice the abnormality there. One question still remained: what exactly happened?

Lilith, who had been in the New World for many years and was more experienced than Xiao Lin, calmly muttered, "I think they're dead."

Xiao Lin came to his senses too. There was a resurrection tower in Wildfire Town, which meant that the body of anyone who died would quickly disappear as long as they were within the scope of that small town. After that, they would resurrect near the resurrection tower.

No one seemed to be present in the house, but since they were the investigation team of both colleges respectively, it was impossible that they would leave Xiao Lin and Lilith alone without informing the latter two. In that case, the most likely possibility was that they had died and resurrected again.

Chapter 314 - Meeting the High Priest Again

Chapter 314: Meeting the High Priest Again

"Head to the resurrection tower!"

Xiao Lin and Lilith immediately made the same decision. No matter what happened, it would not be something they could handle if even the investigation team completely disappeared without a trace. Xiao Lin knew for a fact that the three that had accompanied him were at least Silver-ranked!

The sky was rapidly darkening, and Xiao Lin felt that something was odd about the dark clouds. They looked like condensed gases, and were even expanding at a constant fast pace. Xiao Lin remembered that the clouds were only above the courtyard before he went inside, and it did not even take a few minutes for it to expand so much.

"Those aren't clouds; they're death energy!"

Xiao Lin suddenly realized it. The dense, mist-like clouds were actually the physical representation of death energy. Back when he was reading books related to necromancy in the library, Xiao Lin had found out that if death energy condensed to the degree that it could oppress the balance of other natural energies, it would start being visible to the naked eye. However, that sort of phenomenon only happened in ancient cemeteries or intense battlefields.

The blood red skies in The Final Lands was actually a form of death energy as well, but it made absolutely no sense for so much death energy to be here!

“Asabanor!” Lilith suddenly said in a low voice.

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly, still deep in thought. “I know there’s no way this has anything to do with that old fart; it’s just that...”

“It’s Asabanor!” Lilith exclaimed impatiently.

Xiao Lin suddenly snapped back to reality, looking where Lilith was pointing. About a hundred meters away from them, a shirtless man was standing imposingly in front of them. On his face was a strained smile that looked uglier than crying. It was not the first time Xiao Lin had seen that strange smile, so he immediately understood that that person had definitely been possessed, and it was by Asabanor.

“I can’t believe I actually found you two here, but no matter, you’re too late to stop it!” the man slowly slurred. It was human speech, but the coarse and arrogant tone was unmistakable.

“What are you here for?” Xiao Lin asked loudly, slowly shifting his steps as he kept an eye on their distance.

“This world has changed,” the man said distractedly. He had left the world for a century; it might not have seemed long, but thanks to the colonists, the changes were drastic. His tone quickly deepened. “You’ve desecrated the world God created. All you demons deserve to die!”

“Your goal is the resurrection tower?”

“There’s no use asking. No one can stop this anymore!”

“You want to bring back your kingdom?”

“Oh, you’ll find out very quickly. I’m only here to greet two old friends. I’m still quite interested in the two of you, so I won’t kill you just yet, so just take the chance and scram!”

Lilith was furious; fear did not exist in her dictionary. She started flourishing her scythe, forming her flames as she slashed at the man.

However, the man only laughed softly as his entire body started to explode. Blood and flesh splattered; it was probably the corpse explosion that Lilith had mentioned earlier, but the scale was not big and it only affected ten to twenty meters.

“He’s been injured ever since he escaped The Final Lands; it’s obvious from the fact that he hasn’t ever shown himself to date. Does he really think he can get me with that useless technique?” Lilith’s rage had turned into a cold laugh, she did not even bother sheathing her scythe as she rushed to the center of the town.

Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows, thinking about Asabanor’s words, especially him asking them to leave. It seemed magnanimous, but knowing Lilith’s personality, those words were clearly mockery, as if challenging her to go deeper if she dared.

Asabanor was trying to make sure they did not leave!

That caused Xiao Lin some surprise. Based on the current situation, the best choice was to leave and report this to the academy. It was different from The Final Lands, and if the academy was willing, they could send a large amount of Silver—or even Gold—experts over to easily suppress Asabanor like a plaything.

Even if the priest's words were a little malicious, no one could possibly be that stupid after living for hundreds of years, so there was no way he did not understand that. If that was the case, the fact that he brazenly showed up there meant he had a reason to, which unsettled Xiao Lin.

However, looking at Lilith's back, Xiao Lin could only shake his head as he smiled bitterly, retrieving his Holy Soul Sword and following closely behind her. Lilith and himself were already friends. Even if they ignored what happened in The Final Lands, she had helped him in New Washington, and Xiao Lin was not willing to abandon his friends.

Lilith might not seem to have cared, but she revealed a slight smile when Xiao Lin followed her. Glancing at his sword, she said surprisingly, "There's an aura of death on your sword."

"Oh? You can feel it?"

"Yes." Lilith merely acknowledged it, not explaining any further.

Xiao Lin knew her necromancy was not as good as his, but to be able to feel the soul in the sword without it being released spoke volumes about her perception.

Xiao Lin somewhat explained how the sword worked, wanting to brag a little, since necromantic weapons were quite rare. However, Lilith poured cold water on him. "I suggest not summoning the warrior if we fight later."

Xiao Lin gaped, asking, "You're worried it'll be controlled by Asabanor?"

"Yes, that old fart might be a nuisance, but he is very talented at necromancy. I've been reading up about it lately, and the blade might be yours. That makes it hard for anyone else to control the spirit you summon from it, but it's hard to say when our opponent is Asabanor."

Lilith's face had a rare look of concern. Just as Xiao Lin was startled by it, she quickly switched back to her look of bloodlust. "That's what makes it interesting. Only opponents like that have value!"

That battle freak!

Xiao Lin's lips twitched. He was beginning to regret following her.

Chapter 315 - Ineffective Resurrection Tower

Chapter 315: Ineffective Resurrection Tower

Wildfire Town was extremely quiet. As a town in between the Silver Province and Dawn Academy, merchant groups would often stop there and rest, so it was usually bustling in the day, never being as barren as it was now. The streets were completely empty save for Xiao Lin and Lilith. There was no one to be seen, even when they went into the inns or the shops. The strange thing was that the objects within the buildings were all still neat and tidy; no signs of a battle could be seen.

The two of them looked around in shock. They had left bright and early that day, but less than an hour later, the priest had somehow made everyone in the town disappear.

“I’m not well-versed in magic.” Lilith shook her head.

Xiao Lin sighed as well. “I’ve never heard of any spells like this. Asabanor seems to have come prepared this time.”

The two of them were on high alert, carefully advancing toward the resurrection tower. Even though the strange atmosphere caused their hairs to stand, they did not encounter any ambushes. Asabanor had not appeared at all since the last time, so Xiao Lin and Lilith safely reached the tower.

However, the sight in front of them caused them to suck in their breaths in shock. The resurrection tower was still there, but the originally silver tower was now ink black.

“A black resurrection tower!” Xiao Lin had never heard of one, but he could just be too inexperienced, but when he turned his head, Lilith’s green face said everything.

“Resurrection towers can’t be black; resurrection towers are always made with starmetal, which is silver!” Lilith said.

Xiao Lin exclaimed, “Starmetal? You’re saying the resurrection towers are made from starmetal?!”

“Please, that’s common knowledge! Why else do you think this province is so important, making the other academies spy on it? I thought you knew.”

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly. He only knew that starmetal was a very rare ore, but no one had told him it was used to make resurrection towers. If that was the case, Asabanor’s goal was suddenly very clear.

Lilith furrowed her eyebrows. “Could that old fart be here for the ore? What use could he have for it?”

In the past century, in order to defeat the outsider from Earth, the natives had constantly thought of controlling the Silver Province to seize the starmetal, but the only consequence was being crushed by the collective might of the academies. Asabanor only had some necromantic magic. He might be able to control Wildfire Town, but there was no way he could control the whole province. It was also easy to anticipate that the academies had probably already assembled their troops after getting the news.

No matter how he looked at it, Asabanor had no chance of success. Trying to attack the resurrection towers by controlling starmetal was an impossible dream.

However, Xiao Lin once again thought back to the third monthly examination and the complete resurrection tower that the elves took, and if Yu Mei's grandfather, the engineer, was taken as well.

Could Asabanor have had any contact with the elves after he escaped from The Final Lands? There were a lot of elves in New Washington!

Lilith did not know about that examination, and would naturally not think about that possibility. In truth, Dawn Academy had covered that battle up; not many people knew about the resurrection tower that had been conquered.

There was still no one even near the resurrection tower. The investigation teams from both academies were definitely not there as well, even if they had resurrected. Xiao Lin recalled that there were still other resurrection towers around the town. It was a common defensive measure to erect many towers around certain key areas, even if it wasted a great amount of resources. The resurrection towers incurred a heavy cost, even to the strongest academies.

That was not good news. It meant that the black resurrection tower in front of them had lost its abilities, which was why they had resurrected at the other ones.

They originally wanted to reunite with the investigation team before defending the area while waiting for reinforcements, but the situation was out of their expectations. It was still fine if they died now, but if they continued and left the area of the other resurrection towers, would they still be able to come back?

Xiao Lin looked at Lilith, and the woman had a rare look of consternation, but she only hesitated for a moment before waving her scythe and charging in.

Asabanor was not someone who would do anything for no reason, nor would he have emptied an entire city just as a show of force. He definitely had something planned. To put things simply, that old fart was definitely still in the town.

That was what Lilith's plan was; whatever he wanted, everything would be fine if Asabanor was dead. It was the simple and effective strategy of pure violence.

However, the problem was actually locating the high priest. Lilith had a plan, which was to use necromantic meditation. That was because Asabanor's body was definitely an undead soul, which meant they would be able to sense him.

The idea was right, but Lilith had failed many times. Under the heavy condensation of the death clouds, it was much easier to use necromantic meditation, but the air was filled with complicated death energy, so it was like trying to find a needle in a haystack.

Xiao Lin had a different thought: entering a state of meditation. Thanks to the dark clouds around, the elemental energies were very scarce around them. He immediately switched into necromantic meditation after that, and the meditative world was filled with grey flames, much more condensed than when he was just meditating.

After that, Xiao Lin used Miracle, and the blackhole once again appeared in that meditative world. He had actually never figured out why that strange phenomenon happened, but after several experiments, he had figured out the use for the blackhole.

The blackhole would frantically absorb all the elements in the vicinity, but it was not absorbed into Xiao Lin's body. At the very least, he could not feel any energy coming into him. It was as if the energies were being eaten away by a monster.

Chapter 316 - Unexpected Reunion

Chapter 316: Unexpected Reunion

What Xiao Lin wanted to do was simple: he was trying to see if the blackhole would also start to absorb the death energy around it. It was impossible to test out the theory at the academy due to the absence of death energy, but logically, death, natural and elemental energies should be similar to each other. Since it worked on the elements, it should also work on death energy.

With Miracle, the circular black hole once again appeared in the galaxy. Even if the blackhole could definitely suck in the surrounding energies, Xiao Lin noticed the suction was not absolute. Just like how the elements would attempt to run when sensing the danger, the death energies also scattered.

Xiao Lin focused all his attention on investigating the star-filled world. This space represented the microscopic world of all the energies within Planet Norma, so meditating in the New World was completely different from doing it at the academy.

If the meditative world within the isolated space of the academy was the Milky Way, then in this vast world, the meditative world was the whole universe.

With Xiao Lin's current abilities, it was definitely impossible to catch or even feel the energies in Wildfire Town, let alone the whole universe. However, under Miracle, his mental strength had increased, and thanks to the blackhole, he did not actually need to feel it. He only had to focus his attention on the mass that did not flee like the other death energies to get a location.

In that space, there were only three flames that did not run. One was nearby, and Xiao Lin was familiar with it since it was the soul in his sword. Another mass of grey flames was also very close—only a few hundred meters away. The last flame was constantly moving, but seemed to be voluntarily heading toward them.

"I've found it!"

Xiao Lin opened his eyes, running toward that flame a few hundred meters away from them. Lilith followed closely behind, not asking Xiao Lin how he did it. "Are you sure it's Asabanor?"

"No, but he's not the only undead soul in this town. Could it be someone he's controlling?"

The two of them were on alert. The place he sensed was at the center of town. There was a tall clock tower. Xiao Lin and Lilith exchanged glances before Lilith said, "The tower is too narrow. We

won't be able to fight properly with too many people. I'll head up myself; since you know magic, assist me from down here."

Xiao Lin nodded in acknowledgement. Luckily, he had brought his Peakfire Staff with him this time. Taking out his staff, Xiao Lin was still unsure if flame magic would be effective on that old fart, but just as Lilith had said, that old man had been gravely injured when he escaped The Final Lands. There was no way he had recovered in just a little over a month. The one in the clock tower was probably just a puppet he was controlling.

Lilith actually stowed her scythe away, instead taking out two short swords. Even though her most comfortable weapon was the large scythe, that woman was proficient in practically every weapon, so short swords were no big deal to her. She waved the swords around before a surge of wind formed around her feet, increasing her agility as she dashed up the stairs.

After a few seconds, Xiao Lin heard a terrified but clear voice from the top of the tower. "No, don't kill me. I'm not a bad guy. Help me!"

It was a female voice, and it started off with Mandarin before quickly noticing something was off and rapidly switching to English. It seemed to be proficient in both languages.

Xiao Lin gaped for a few seconds, a disbelieving look on his face before quickly activating his Phantom Steps. He dashed up the tower as he shouted, "Stay your blade."

After a few minutes, Xiao Lin and Lilith stood atop the tower, and a timid girl stood next to them. Lilith might have been a battle maniac, but she would never harm a defenseless girl, so the girl only received a bit of a fright, but she was not injured.

However, Lilith never dropped her guard, and she did not put away her swords. She looked at Xiao Lin with a half-suspicious gaze, her unspoken question clear.

Xiao Lin had said he felt a mass of death energy, but the tower only had a little girl not even ten years old. Could Xiao Lin's necromantic meditation have been off, or was there something wrong with the girl?

Xiao Lin had a headache as well. Looking at the shivering girl, he sighed and said, "Two days ago you left without saying anything, but I can't believe I found you here. Are you going to give me an explanation?"

It was the girl Xiao Lin had saved two days ago. Xiao Lin never expected they would meet again now. The girl was still in the white dress from two days ago, but her face was no longer dirty. She also had shoes on this time, and alongside her bright and big eyes, she looked quite cute.

"You know her?" Lilith said in surprise.

The girl quickly nodded, embarrassedly saying, "I'm actually this Uncle's female servant."

Lilith narrowed her eyes, looking at Xiao Lin with a different expression, as if she was looking at a pervert.

Xiao Lin hurriedly waved his hands. “Don’t just believe her. I don’t know her at all! We’ve never even talked about being a servant!”

The girl lowered her head, her eyes reddening as tears started to fall. She was already a cute girl, and her pitiful look could inspire kindness in even the most uncaring person. Between Xiao Lin and her, almost everyone would choose to believe that little girl.

Lilith was speechless, but her gaze on Xiao Lin was getting even more unfriendly, as if accusing Xiao Lin of being a pervert that did not even dare admit his actions.

A cunning glint flashed on the girl’s face, but the look quickly vanished in her tears. She swallowed and said, “Sister, Uncle, I’m scared. Can you take me away from this place?”

Saying that, the girl opened her arms, as if asking for someone to carry her. It was a powerful move capable of impacting anyone, especially men.

Xiao Lin rolled his eyes. He was an uncle, but Lilith was just a sister?

Lilith had already walked over with a smile on her face, putting the two swords back into her spatial ring before reaching her arms out toward the girl, motioning to put the girl in her embrace. However, when her hands touched the girl’s shoulders, the girl suddenly felt a cold chill on her neck. As she looked back, her pupils constricted.

Lilith had somehow retrieved her scythe and was aiming it at the girl’s throat.

Chapter 317 - Ibeiya

Chapter 317: Ibeiya

“These little tricks won’t work on me. I won’t fall for your looks like that big pervert!”

Xiao Lin had been nodding along, but he could not help but reject, “Hey, who’s a big pervert? There’s definitely something wrong with that girl. How could you believe her?”

Lilith looked at him. “I never said it was you. Why are you defending yourself?”

“...” Xiao Lin’s eyebrows twitched again. He hurriedly switched the topic to that girl. He knelt down, trying to inject kindness into his voice as he said, “You don’t have to be scared. We’re not looking to harm you. There are just some things we want to know.”

The tears had yet to dry from the girl’s face, but her pitiful expression had already changed into that cold and calm look which did not fit her age when Xiao Lin first met her. She looked at Lilith, tilting her head as she asked, “How did you notice?”

“You just messed up. You tried to use a charming spell on me earlier, but your skills are still not up to par. On top of that, Xiao Lin had felt death energy just now, which means you’re likely a vampire.”

“A vampire?”

“A dark race from Planet Norma. Female vampires have innate seduction abilities. I told you I’ve been reading up about the death energy lately.”

Xiao Lin was in disbelief, especially as he recalled the girl being beaten up on the streets the first time they met.

The girl pouted, guessing what Xiao Lin was thinking as she said, “I never lied to you. I really am thankful that you saved me last time, but even if you did not, I would have been fine.”

Lilith tilted her head and Xiao Lin explained what happened that night. Lilith laughed as she said, “You really did something unnecessary. She may look like she’s still young and hasn’t gone through combat training yet, but as a vampire, how could a beating do anything to her?”

The girl had graciously admitted that she was a vampire. Dark races were not very welcome on Planet Norma. Xiao Lin’s history classes had not explained much about them. However, it was different from how necromancers were treated. The natives just hated dark races at the most, but most countries would still allow dark races to live with them.

“You came from the Rosa Kingdom?” Xiao Lin asked.

“That’s right.”

“I didn’t know that the Rosa Kingdom allowed dark races to stay there.” Lilith quickly saw through it. She was a lot more familiar with Planet Norma than Xiao Lin.

The girl’s eyes once again turned red, but Xiao Lin had already been dulled to the rapid changes in her expressions, and calmly waited to see what she had to say.

A long story followed. The girl’s name was Ibeiya. She was the love child of one of the royal princesses. The princess had fallen in love with a vampire, but the kingdom did not tolerate the existence of dark races, so the romance was killed off in its infancy. However, the princess was very stubborn, forcing herself to give birth to the child. She fell ill not long after that, and the child became a source of humiliation for the royalty. The Rosa Kingdom did not acknowledge Ibeiya’s existence, and cruelly chased her out.

Ibeiya had been raised by a loyal servant of the princess during her childhood. There was a large war in the Rosa Kingdom in recent years, and the servant had lost his life in the chaos, so Ibeiya had no choice but to live a wandering life.

Ibeiya had only been eight then, and she was extremely cute at that. Roaming the lands by herself was obviously very turbulent. She did not even leave the Rosa Kingdom before she was kidnapped by a group of adventurers.

From what she said, Ibeiya had been extremely scared at that point, not even daring to think of what might happen. She had tried to escape, but she was no match for those adventurers. She would be harshly beaten up every time she tried to escape, and she eventually could not take it anymore, choosing to take her own life.

She woke up a few days after her corpse was thrown into the wilderness. It was from then on that she realized what her vampire blood could do, which marked the true start of her wandering life as she learned to use it to her advantage. She lived a life of crime, and every time someone caught her, she would just commit suicide. Regular injuries did nothing to her body.

After that, she learned another one of her racial talents: seduction. The uses were not clear, and it only worked on weak-willed people, but that was enough.

Xiao Lin silently summarized her life of wandering as just swindling and stealing.

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly, saying to Lilith, “I’m not familiar with dark races. How do you kill a vampire? Silver weapons? A holy cross? Sunlight? Garlic?”

Lilith said impatiently, “You watch too many movies. Real vampires aren’t afraid of all that. Don’t be tricked by this brat; vampires have regenerative abilities, not resurrection. They are not actually undying, but regretfully the two of us don’t actually have a way to kill you.”

Ibeiya tilted her head, pitifully saying, “Could you really bear to kill me? Why don’t you just release me? I’d just be a bother to you.”

Xiao Lin said, “Quit acting like you’re innocent. You clearly know he can’t do anything to you.”

“No, I’m not scared of the two of you. I’m scared of this town.”

Xiao Lin fell silent, almost forgetting the main topic. He nodded and said, “Tell me what happened here.”

“I don’t know.”

A bitter look was on her face, but the girl had been playing a part since the very start, so no one knew her real thoughts. Fear, hate or horror—there was no way to know which were her true feelings.

“You don’t know?” Lilith raised her eyebrows, her scythe still in hand as she said unkindly, “I might not be able to kill you, but as long as I’m willing, I can make sure you stay here, unmoving.”

Chapter 318 - Vampire

Chapter 318: Vampire

“Even if you do that, I still don’t know anything.”

Ibeiya did not seem to be faking it this time. From Xiao Lin’s patient questioning, they found out that Ibeiya had planned on staying a few days after leaving the inn before she left Wildfire Town, but she suddenly felt a surge of danger in the morning. She had planned on leaving, but she fainted halfway through, and the town was empty the moment she woke up.

“You suddenly fainted?” Lilith narrowed her eyes, obviously not believing such a vague explanation.

Ibeiya cried as she said, “I only felt a strange energy starting to surge in the town before I lost consciousness. I really don’t know what happened.”

“Why didn’t you leave after that?” Xiao Lin asked.

“I’m afraid that’s probably not possible anymore. Did you two not notice? The whole town has been enveloped by death energy. It’s just like a cage we won’t be able to escape. Any living person would rapidly approach death if they entered.”

Xiao Lin and Lilith exchanged a look, both of them still refusing to completely believe the girl. It was fine if they wanted to leave; the most that would happen was that they would lose 20 years of their lifespan and they would be back in Dawn territory.

There were many holes in what Ibeiya said, or rather, she vaguely rushed past many parts. Xiao Lin even wanted to ask what revenge the girl was talking about that night, but she did not bring it up at all. He could not tell which of the girl’s words were true and which were false.

“Didn’t you say there was another suspicious place? Let’s look at that first!”

Lilith was the one who made the decision. Xiao Lin had felt three different grey flames just now; there was only one left outside of the Holy Soul Sword and Ibeiya.

Ibeiya was not very willing to follow them, but she was even less willing to stay there alone. In her own words, the dense death energy made her feel like she was swimming in sludge, so she unwillingly followed them.

Lilith agreed to it, but Xiao Lin obviously said that it was just to keep an eye on her, since they still did not trust Ibeiya.

“Actually, why would you hate death energy as a dark race?” Xiao Lin asked curiously.

“Uncle, vampires are different from the undead!” Ibeiya had an unhappy expression.

Xiao Lin’s impression of vampires still stemmed from the various movies and novels on Earth. He had actually learned from history class and talking with Song Junlang that the vampires on Earth did seem to originate from Planet Norma, but a lot of the myths were very off.

For instance, vampires actually did not need to drink blood; they just needed to absorb large amounts of protein, which blood was rich in. In truth, any substitutes were perfectly fine as well. Another example was that the fear of holy crosses was just an Earth created myth; vampires also did suffer from lower battle capabilities under sunlight, but they could absolutely function normally otherwise.

Vampires were not actually evil creatures either, so Ibeiya was not horrified when she learned about her bloodline, merely adapting to the new conditions.

There were very few vampires on Planet Norma, but most of them were extremely strong, which was a far cry from this weak little girl. However, Ibeiya explained that it was because she was too young. Ten years old was basically an infant compared to the long ages of most vampires, so Ibeiya practically had no combat ability.

“Are you afraid of death energy?”

Ibeiya frantically nodded; the horror in her eyes did not seem faked this time.

Lilith said meaningfully, “To necromancers, vampires make for very good materials, so you should hide far away later and keep your distance from us.”

“I know. Uncle will definitely protect me, right?”

Xiao Lin looked at the big-eyed girl and said with some annoyance, “I’m not sure what rank a spell charm is, but I hope you don’t use it on me.”

“Relax, my spell doesn’t work on you,” Ibeiya consoled confidently.

“How do you know that?”

“I tried to use it on you that night, but it had no effect. Ah...” Ibeiya quickly stopped herself when she realized she said too much.

Lilith’s gaze once again shot to Xiao Lin, her thoughts obvious. ‘You freaking pervert.’

Xiao Lin felt like he was never going to clear his name.

They were not that far away from the third grey flame, and they quickly stopped outside a regular-looking house. It was very close, based on Xiao Lin’s perception, but they carefully checked the inside of the house, not noticing anything out of place.

“Could there be a room underground?” Xiao Lin asked.

“I’ve already checked; I could not find any entrances to the underground.” Lilith shook her head.

“The two of you really are outsiders. Don’t you know that our underground rooms are never built inside our houses?” Looking at the two of their frantic expressions, Ibeiya smiled off from the side.

Lilith raised her tone. “Why didn’t you say that earlier!”

“You didn’t ask. I’m so sorry!” Lilith’s rage had led to Ibeiya hurriedly covering her head in fear.

Xiao Lin could not help but shake his head at Lilith. Even though they knew she was faking it, her cute and pitiful face had too great of an impact, and Lilith could not release her anger.

“Then tell us, where are the underground rooms?” Xiao Lin asked. It was fortunate that they had brought Ibeiya along, or they would have wasted a lot of time. Lilith and himself were still not that familiar with the natives.

Ibeiya hesitated, “I think it’s better if we hide. I’m feeling a large amount of evil death energy gathering here. It’s not a good sign.”

“Do you even need to say that? We obviously feel it as well!” Lilith said rudely. “If you’re really afraid, you just need to give us the directions and we’ll go alone.”

Thanks to Lilith’s earlier explanations, Xiao Lin could more or less understand Ibeiya’s fear.

Chapter 319 - Dark Shadow Underground

Chapter 319: Dark Shadow Underground

Ibeiya was understandably unwilling to follow them, staying where she was after giving the two of them directions. Xiao Lin and Lilith headed toward a small forest to the east of the house carefully. The underground room was at the edge of the forest. The wooden door was covered in grass, and they would probably not have noticed it if not for Ibeiya’s reminders.

The closer they got, the more dense death energy they started to feel in the air. It was obvious that there was something going on down there. Lilith immediately opened the wooden door, and her scythe appeared in her hand as she shot out flames toward the underground.

Bang!

The flames travelled along the underground room, and ripples could be heard from their vibrations as the flames seemed to have destroyed a pile of pots and bottles. A wave of heat could be felt from the entrance, causing Xiao Lin to wipe away some sweat. He silently remarked to himself that this woman was very aggressive, immediately attacking before even figuring out what was in the room.

However, there did not seem to be anyone alive in there. After Lilith’s attack subsided, she let out a breath as she withdrew the scythe back into her spatial ring to retrieve two daggers instead. In the narrow underground room, daggers were much more useful.

“Your flames seem to have gotten much stronger,” Xiao Lin suddenly said.

“You know I don’t like magic, but flame magic comes very easily to me.” Lilith did not bother hiding anything.

Xiao Lin had seen Lilith use those flames in The Final Lands for the first time, but she could just barely control a few at that time. Now, she seemed to be more familiar with it, but he knew that the special flames were not really flame magic, and something unique to Lilith, like his Miracle.

The underground room was very dark. The remaining flames were barely enough to light up the small space, and a strange smell permeated the air. They did not know what was in the room, but even Lilith had a difficult expression on her face. It looked like she wanted to vomit, but was trying to hold it in. Xiao Lin felt like laughing, but the urge to vomit quickly suppressed that.

It was only as big as two rooms down there, and extremely messy. On the floor were various smashed up bottles and strangely-colored liquids. Xiao Lin quickly figured out where the smell came from as he found a pile of red flesh-like objects in a corner. After checking it out, Xiao Lin almost vomited out his dinner from last night.

They were all clearly various inner organs, including eyes and ears. Even though most of them were destroyed by Lilith's attack earlier, based on the size of the pile, it was clear that the organs belonged to close to a hundred people! Only the organs could be seen, but the people were nowhere to be found. As for the fate of those people, anyone could imagine it. They were probably all the missing people from the town.

Xiao Lin could not help but get goosebumps. Lilith was faring not much better than he was. As the two of them prepared to leave the uncomfortable room, the pile of organs suddenly burst apart as a dark shadowy mess leaped forward. Under the assault of the dense death energy, a few smoldering embers were extinguished.

The room immediately got darker, and they could only make out that the shadow looked vaguely humanoid; its hands and feet were on the ground, and two blood red eyes pierced through the darkness.

Its momentarily locked gazes with Xiao Lin and Lilith, and its blood red eyes were extremely cold. Even Xiao Lin had to suppress a shudder.

"Who are you!" Xiao Lin shouted. It was certain that the thing was definitely not Asabanor, so he also used Normese and English in case it did not understand.

Something shocking then happened. Even as the two of them were on full alert, the mysterious shadow did not respond at all, immediately burying its head as it moved about. With the obscured vision, Xiao Lin could not tell what it was doing.

Lilith used a cold and quiet tone to say, "It's eating!"

Xiao Lin clenched his teeth, immediately shooting out a flame bullet. The shadow did not even raise its head, jumping to avoid the spell. However, with the additional light, Xiao Lin finally saw clearly that the shadow was not bothered by his attack at all. It just continued to shovel large amounts of flesh into its mouth, emitting a strange noise.

"Let's head out; it's too small in here!" Xiao Lin stopped Lilith from attacking. "It's very agile!"

The flame bullet Xiao Lin had shot just now did not shock him because of the horrifying scene. He had intended to test the mysterious thing, and the results were more than he anticipated.

Xiao Lin's flame bullet was the improved version, shortening the cast time by sacrificing spell power. In the narrow space, condensing the elements and casting the spell took only a moment, and it was even a surprise attack. Almost no one could react to that at the same level as he could, let alone dodge it, but that shadow did not even raise its head before dodging it easily.

That thing was strong!

Lilith understood it as well. Against an agile opponent, the cramped room was definitely not a suitable battlefield. She nodded as she retreated with Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin had wanted to get Ibeiya to hide further away, but that intelligent girl had already disappeared. Even though he still had some matters to settle with her, it was not the time to think about that.

They definitely could not give that mysterious monster the time to eat in peace. After leaving the room the two of them frantically attacked it with Lilith's sword aura and Xiao Lin's flame bullets. However good the thing was at dodging, with that amount of attacks, it probably had no chance to avoid everything.

In order to preserve his strength, Xiao Lin did not use Miracle, nor did he use Sword Aura. That was currently the biggest gap between Lilith and himself. Lilith's basic attributes were all a lot higher than his, and she was also quite strong physically, leading to her being able to use Sword Aura at will. The wave of attacks were all mostly reliant on Lilith's relentless assault. The explosions in the underground room got more and more intense, and it only returned to silence after several minutes.

Chapter 320 - Resurrecting Monster

Chapter 320: Resurrecting Monster

"That thing has to be dead right?" Looking at the satisfied look on Lilith's face after her attacks, Xiao Lin could not help but gulp.

"No, that thing isn't so weak." Lilith licked her lips, her taste for battle rapidly rising.

After a few minutes, the ground suddenly erupted and the shadowy mass shot out. Xiao Lin finally saw its true form. It might have had a human's basic appearance, but it could no longer be called a human. Its naked body was all rotting flesh, and its face was extremely muddled. There were no clear features on its face; not even its sex was indiscernable.

Its stomach was bloated, probably from all the food it had shoved in earlier. The strangest thing was there were obvious stitches throughout its body. Some threads were left sticking out. Its appearance was very discomfoting; its hands were mismatched lengths and its eyes were not the same size, as if it had just been randomly put together.

The monster emitted a strange guttural sound, its red eyes looking around before settling on Xiao Lin and Lilith. Its expression suddenly focused, turning fiercer. It opened its mouth, its yellow teeth still carrying lingering stains of flesh. It moved its mouth with some difficulty, muttering with a low voice, "Kill... Kill... Kill..."

The monster could actually talk—definitely beyond their expectations. The third cloud of death energy that Xiao Lin had felt earlier had to be from this monster, which meant it was undead. However, undeads should not have any sentience, only able to be controlled by the necromancer, which was Asabanor.

He did not have time to think about it as the monster started to attack. Its was as fast as lightning. Xiao Lin's eyes widened, he was only distracted for just a moment, but the rotting stench was already right in front of him. He did not even have time to activate Miracle before using Phantom Steps, but he was still hit by the creature's fist. A black wound appeared on his arm.

Lilith's attack closely followed, but the monster's reflexes were extremely quick, and managed to easily dodge. Lilith had already switched back to her scythe, and her range of attack was a lot wider. She noticed how abnormal the monster's movements were as well. Xiao Lin took the change to retreat to the back.

The sword aura that came out from the scythe formed a net in the air, completely capturing the monster within. That was a skill unique to Lilith; as agile as one was, if there was a strong enough onslaught, there was no way to hide from it.

The monster's intelligence was also unexpected. Its body constantly twitched, trying to find a way to escape, but it was unexpectedly completely trapped by the net. On its arms and bodies were countless wounds, but no blood flowed out. Instead, it was a dark yellow liquid.

Feeling like the monster's speed had been suppressed by Lilith, Xiao Lin decisively took out his sword, activating Miracle before pouring everything into strength. He unleashed a wave of Sword Aura. It was his first time using the offensively powerful sword aura in actual battle, and it rapidly shot through the air, piercing through the body of the monster.

The whole right arm of the monster had been sliced through. Xiao Lin clicked his tongue; the monster's agility had allowed it to dodge at the last minute, but of course it could also be his inexperience with the skill. Xiao Lin had actually planned on slicing the monster in half.

The monster once again made a guttural sound and tried to escape, but Lilith had already renewed her onslaught with her scythe. This time, she had gathered up the flames and flashed them at its feet. Lilith sped up again, and its whole left leg turned to mush.

"Slashing!"

Taking that chance, Xiao Lin's Holy Soul Sword slashed down. Slashing was a skill that needed a long time to gather its power, so it was useless in solo battles, but Lilith's attacks had given Xiao Lin enough space and time.

However, just from pure attack power, the Black-Iron ranked Xiao Lin could never compare to Lilith, but thanks to Miracle, his explosive ability was quite high, even attracting a meaningful look from Lilith. Compared to The Final Lands, Xiao Lin's rate of growth was quite shocking to Lilith.

Slashing completely cut open the monster's skull, and its body struggled a little before collapsing. Xiao Lin let out a breath, cancelling Miracle before looking at Lilith. The two of them were shocked.

The monster had given them quite the surprise, but they did not feel like it was too much of a challenge. Of course, their perfect teamwork was a big factor. The Final Lands had already built up their chemistry a lot, so the opponent did not have any chance to retaliate.

"Other than being disgusting, there wasn't much of note," Lilith said with nonchalance, simply giving her evaluation of the opponent.

Xiao Lin had a different view. “If that was created by Asabanor, then it would be a problem. You know too that the undead aren’t terrifying because of the quality, but the quantity. Just imagine meeting a few hundred or even thousands of these creatures. Then, it would not be so easy.”

“That would be a problem.” Lilith thought back how difficult the undead troops in The Final Lands were. If the skeletal troops switched to these creatures that were better in every way, then they would not have been able to escape The Final Lands.

“Let’s just leave. Asabanor doesn’t seem to be in Wildfire Town.”

Xiao Lin turned around, feeling like he should collect some samples to bring back to the academy. If Asabanor was actually able to mass produce these monsters, especially so near the Silver Province, then it was something they needed to be wary of.

However, he had barely taken a few steps when his eyes widened, gasping as he pulled out his Holy Soul Sword and called Lilith back.

The monster that they had cut up into many pieces, head barely intact, was slowly standing up again, its detached limbs slowly crawling back toward each other. Its left leg tended to its wounds and the rotting flesh started to move, quickly mending itself without any scars.

Chapter 321 - Experiment

Chapter 321: Experiment

That thing could revive itself!

Xiao Lin was very unsettled, but he did not hesitate. It seemed like the monster needed some time to revive itself, and the parts that were turned to mush could not be regrown, so the monster was using some method to just grow out new flesh from its wounds, but the process was not quick.

Xiao Lin had already rushed to the front, sending waves of his sword aura over, and turning the flesh that had just recovered back into mush. Lilith, who followed behind, was also very surprised, but quickly joined the attacks.

The recovering monster did not have any way to fight back, but it was still aware enough to try to get away. It was extremely slow, and under their mutual assault, its whole body quickly turned to sludge.

However, before Xiao Lin could even gather his breath, the mush on the ground once again moved, and even the tiniest pieces of flesh started to merge, just like earlier. The pieces of flesh would connect to its body, and the mush started to condense, forming a new shape.

“This... What is this!” Even Lilith was filled with shock.

“Unlimited resurrection? No, that’s impossible!” Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows, once again slashing with his Holy Soul Sword. Lilith did not even need to move; he had already turned the creature back to mush.

However, the creature’s pieces of flesh seemed like they were alive, and once again started to resurrect. Xiao Lin seemed to have noticed something, and suddenly told Lilith, “Let’s use our flames to attack!”

Lilith nodded, immediately waving her scythe around, summoning rings of flame as Xiao Lin raised his sword to gather the fire elements in the air. In a place so dense with death energy, the elemental energies were a lot more scarce, and even spellcasting was affected. Gathering the energy took a lot more time, and even Lilith’s Flame Sword Aura needed a moment, but it was not an issue facing those pieces of flesh.

The elemental damage caused the flesh to slowly be burnt, giving rise to an even fouler smell. Xiao Lin and Lilith could not help but pinch their noses, forcing the urge to vomit down as they stared at the flesh. Since the monster could keep reviving, then they could just burn it all away!

The effect was a lot better than earlier. As the fire slowly died down, the remaining rotting flesh might have been smaller than earlier, but it still started to move again.

“Can this bastard really resurrect without a limit?” Lilith was also speechless. The strength of the enemy did not interest her, but its survivability was staggering.

Lilith’s words caused Xiao Lin to startle. “Resurrecting without limit? Don’t you think that’s a little familiar?”

Lilith thought for a while, and said in disbelief, “Are you referring to the Law of Immortality? What sort of joke is this. Even if I’ve never died before, if our resurrection spell is similar to this, then I’d rather die.”

“That’s right. Our Law of Immortality resurrects us using our soul and reforms our flesh, so the base property is different, but don’t forget we’re very different from this monster, in that we’re live humans, and its an undead creature.” Xiao Lin breathed in, continuing, “Did you forget that resurrection tower? The black one!”

Lilith’s expression started to change. As brave as she was, she still understood that resurrection towers were the basis for their continued existence in this world.

Xiao Lin’s theory was based on Asabanor, and even the resurrection tower that the elves stole a hundred years ago, but the thought itself was extremely shocking, so he could only postulate and not confirm anything. That was no longer something he could handle. He could only wait for help from the academy.

“Let’s first think about how we can kill this monster.”

“If it’s as you say and the black resurrection tower is the reason the monster can keep resurrecting, then why don’t we destroy the tower?” Lilith was beginning to be more confident in Xiao Lin’s theory.

Xiao Lin shook his head. “No, that tower needs to be looked at by the academy. This is no small issue... Our own resurrection is not actually unlimited, and it’s tied to our lifespan. If this monster’s resurrection follows the same principles, then it could never actually have unlimited resurrection, or Asabanor could just take over the whole world.”

In all these years, the humans from Earth had started to strengthen themselves with the help of the Law of Immortality, but the academies had all stopped expanding after a certain degree, which led them to their current state. It was not that no one wanted to expand, but limited lifespans and Lifewater restricted their movement. After all, everyone wanted to have some lifespan left to enjoy their achievements.

“This monster has a lifespan?” Lilith said suspiciously.

“Ah, I don’t know. I’m just guessing.”

“...”

“Ahem, let’s just try it out. Let’s see how much this thing can take!”

So Lilith once again started her assault, while Xiao Lin stood at the side to record how many attacks had happened, the speed of which the flesh would move after, and other data. As for why Xiao Lin was in charge of such an annoying task, it was because Lilith felt like he was not strong enough, and there was no point for the two of them to work together for this.

It was fine; Xiao Lin was a little unhappy, but he could not deny that he was not as strong as Lilith. He decided to just conserve his strength, and Lilith did not seem to be at all interested in recording information anyway.

After that, they started to perform various experiments. Under Xiao Lin’s urging, Lilith even took out a few different weapons to try. It was a pity they only had fire elemental attacks, or they could have tested the effects of other elements.

Just as Xiao Lin guessed, the monster could not resurrect perpetually. Every time it was cut down the flesh’s movement would get slowly, signifying the loss of lifespan.

It took a total of 21 assaults before the flesh stopped moving. It rapidly turned black and turned to dust in the air.

“It’s finally done.” Lilith was a little tired, but the main thing was that she was extremely bored.

Chapter 322 - Night Lodging

Chapter 322: Night Lodging

In a dark room, a man who had a face full of scars opened his eyes, the muscles on his face were twisted but solid. Looking at the dark sky outside, he stared for a long time before saying impassionately, “It’s finally over.”

“Dead?” Sitting in front of him was a man in black robes. His voice was magnetic, filled with curiosity.

“That’s right. I placed a necromantic eye nearby, and saw the whole fight. This result is pretty good; my theory is more or less a success. I just need to improve some things.”

“To be honest, your so-called first experiment isn’t satisfactory. Your intent isn’t the same as ours. If it’s just an undead of this level, I don’t think it’s worth anything.”

“Ah, relax. I said it was only the FIRST experiment!” the scarred man said.

“Don’t forget, this is very close to the colonist territories. We won’t accompany you if you’re planning on playing with fire! We still don’t have the ability to fight them!” the black-robed man said.

“It’s been so many years. I can’t believe you’re still so weak.”

“I will leave if you keep on with this pointless slander.”

“You really can’t take a joke. Just relax. I’ve long since completed my preparations. Ah, those people aren’t completely united. I don’t even need to do anything, and their internal struggles will win us enough time. Just trust me for the next step.”

“I hope that’s true.”

...

Xiao Lin and Lilith did not relax after exterminating the monster. Even if Xiao Lin had entered the meditative world to make sure there were no more points of suspicion, they still did not relax and investigated their surroundings before finally giving themselves a moment of peace.

Ibeiya returned as well, brushing aside any attempts to ask where she was. Xiao Lin and Lilith did not press her either, but Ibeiya said after that, “I forgot to tell you, I noticed a necromantic eye on the clock tower in the middle of town while you were fighting.”

Xiao Lin’s eyes widened. There were quite a few basic necromancy spells in the library, and part of it was the necromantic eye. To put it simply, it was like a modern-day camera. With it, the user could observe everything that was happening in town!

Who had used it?

The answer was clear. Xiao Lin and Lilith both muttered, “Asabanor.”

What was he looking at?

Xiao Lin did not feel like he had that much power, so he probably was just observing the monster. More accurately, Asabanor just needed something to test out his new toy, while Xiao Lin and Lilith happened to be the best choices.

“Asabanor? Do you mean the last high priest of the ancient Thunder Kingdom? Wasn’t he killed off by all of you ages ago. Is he still alive?” Ibeiya was suddenly interested, and asked curiously, but the two of them did not answer her.

The necromantic eye had quickly been noticed in the tower. It was a white eyeball, as big as a fist. It had been cultivated with a specialized necromancy spell, but did not have any other capabilities other than observation, so Xiao Lin quickly destroyed it with a flame bullet.

Just as Ibeiya had said, Wildfire Town had been completely surrounded by a grey mist, which was condensed death energy. Without any special protection, even the Bronze-ranked Lilith would be sent straight to the nearest resurrection tower. The countless bones surrounding the mists were the best proof.

The three of them thus decided to rest in the somewhat safe town for the night. Because they were worried that there might be undead or sneak attacks in the houses, they found a few blankets and bedsheets before setting up camp in the plaza. They were still worried, since destroying the necromantic eye was basically telling Asabanor they knew. No one knew if that old fart would turn up.

Food was also a problem since they did not dare touch anything contaminated by the dense death energies, save for Ibeiya. Even though she hated death energy, it was actually not that harmful to her. Looking at Ibeiya happily munching on a loaf of bread, Xiao Lin could only salivate while staring, but thankfully starving for a day or two was not a big deal.

“If the investigation team is at the resurrection towers nearby, then they should be here by tomorrow,” Lilith said it was not a problem.

The night was very boring. Being a normal man, Xiao Ling staying with two girls could be something filled with intrigue and excitement—something would already have happened if it was a romance movie. However, under the terrifying atmosphere, it was probably closer to a horror movie.

The density of the death energy was even higher than it was during the day, and a strange phenomenon happened in Wildfire Town. During the night, vague green flames could be seen floating in the air.

“This is like the ghost fires on Earth. It’s actually explainable. Death energy condensing to a certain degree would cause strange phenomena to happen, and those fires are one of them.”

Lilith had spent a lot of time looking into necromancy. After finishing that, she looked at Xiao Lin before raising her eyebrow. “Even though I somewhat trust you, I still need to remind you to behave yourself when you’re sleeping.”

As a precaution against sneak attacks, they naturally could not sleep apart, and obviously could not take their clothes off either. However, Xiao Lin cautiously looked at the black scythe in Lilith’s hand and his mouth twitched, not knowing what to say.

Who the hell slept holding a scythe?!

Xiao Lin said exasperatedly, “Relax, I’ll make sure to keep my distance. I’d be in trouble if you suddenly had a bad dream. Oh Lilith, I trust you don’t sleepwalk?”

“...”

Ibeiya did not have any problems at all. As a vampire she actually did not sleep for a few days. However, it was like Lilith had said to Xiao Lin in private, the girl might not be a pureblooded vampire, so she got sleepy at night as well.

Ibeiya slept close to Xiao Lin’s left side, and the reason was just as Xiao Lin had said. She was worried she would find herself missing body parts if she slept next to Lilith. Even if it would not kill her, the pain would still be felt.

The little girl told Xiao Lin some stories about Asabanor. The last high priest of the ancient Thunder Kingdom was quite famous on Planet Norma, so people still remembered him, even after a hundred years.

Chapter 323 - Stories Before Sleeping

Chapter 323: Stories Before Sleeping

Xiao Lin’s impression of Asabanor had always been of a crazy pervert filled with thoughts of revenge in his head. Lilith might have been from Judge Academy, but other than fighting, she was absolutely uninterested in classes like history, so she did not know much more than Xiao Lin about Asabanor.

Ibeiya was not happy her request did not get fulfilled, so in the end, the girl started telling them stories about the high priest. Of course, it was basically stories she heard from her travels.

Asabanor was so famous in Planet Norma thanks to him being a very notable astrologian before. Xiao Lin had heard about astrologians, which was similar to astronomers on earth, but they did not just look at the stars here. Astrology was a very mystical art, and could even be used to cast spells.

“It is said that the high priest could even observe over ten thousand stars at his peak.” Ibeiya’s words were filled with admiration and reverence. The girl seemed to be sincere this time.

Even though Xiao Lin did not know what was admirable about that old fart, he quickly realized Ibeiya only admired his astrology skills.

“Over ten thousand stars?” Lilith did not believe it. “It’s just a myth. Could that old fart really have counted that many?”

Ibeiya nodded earnestly. “That’s what everyone said. That’s the result of his hard work during his lifetime, but his workplace was invaded during his later years, forcing him to stop his research.”

Xiao Lin laughed dryly. As colonists they were not exactly painted in a good light, but if it really was as Ibeiya said, then that old fart would actually be an astronomer on Earth.

Xiao Lin and Lilith did not think anything about it originally, since they did not know where Ibeiya heard all that from. Looking at their uninterested expressions, she pointed, immediately summoning up more energy. She deliberately lowered her voice, but it was still clear in the empty plaza. "I've even heard that Asabanor had even discovered your hometowns."

Xiao Lin's eyebrow twitched. "Our hometown? What do you mean?"

Ibeiya laughed. "Uncle, don't look at me like that. I don't know astrology, and have only heard rumors. They basically said Asabanor managed to locate your hometown through the stars."

"That damned pervert really said that; it's just a load of nonsense to trick naive girls like you!" Lilith smiled coldly. She did not think well of Asabanor at all.

"That's definitely not it. They say he personally saw you coming in from a long corridor between the stars! Oh, I was told it was a long corridor made of gold. It sounds so beautiful. Is it real, Uncle? I want to go see it," Ibeiya said as she shook Xiao Lin's shoulder.

Xiao Lin and Lilith exchanged a glance, unable to mask their shock.

After so many years, the natives of Planet Norma had already changed their attitudes of hate and fear toward the colonists to admiration and respect. They had already gotten used to the existence of the colonists, which was how Ibeiya could talk to them so easily. It was absolutely impossible for that to happen a hundred years ago.

Even if that was the case, the natives did not understand the colonists that much. Every colonist academy had agreed to never reveal anything about Earth to the natives, including any of their secrets, such as the resurrection towers and the wormholes.

The wormholes were filled with Timesand, and every time the interspatial carriage moved, the sand would materialize. Looking at it from afar, would it not look like a golden corridor? It was impossible to make that comparison without personally having sat in an interspatial carriage, and the wormholes were one of their greatest secrets, never exposed to the natives in all their history.

Xiao Lin would obviously not admit it in front of Ibeiya. He told her it was just nonsense and to not believe it. However, he still asked Ibeiya where she heard it.

The natives did not have media or the internet, so if this was actually something everyone knew, there was no way the academies had never heard of it. He had only heard of it from Ibeiya today, which meant that the speculation and rumors were confined to a small circle.

Ibeiya knew what he was asking, but could only tell him she heard it from an inn or some travelling poets. Xiao Lin could not do anything about her vague answer, but he started to doubt her status.

"It's actually no big deal; we just need to kill him." Lilith did not feel like thinking about such a complicated issue. Her thoughts were simple: however much Asabanor threatened the colonists, it would all be useless if he died.

Ibeiya talked a lot more about the high priest, but the rest of what she said was all gossip from back then, such as rumors that the high priest had a relationship with a certain princess, but Xiao Lin and Lilith were not interested at all in his personal life.

As they grew sleepier, the sound of conversation died down. Ibeiya had actually fallen asleep as she talked, and the light sound of snoring could be heard. Xiao Lin felt like his arm was a bit itchy, and when he turned around, he noticed the girl had taken his arm as a pillow, hugging it tightly as she slept against him.

Ibeiya looked quite cute sleeping. As a vampire, Ibeiya had an innate charm, and her cute and lively nature had merged with that seductive allure.

She was going to be a nation-destroying beauty in the future!

Xiao Lin said that in his heart, but he was just admiring her. However, Xiao Lin suddenly felt a sharp gaze. Turning around, Lilith soundlessly mouthed, ‘Freaking pervert.’

He was innocent!

Xiao Lin could not say anything, turning his gaze toward the sky. The occasional green lights flickering in the skies really affected his mood to sleep. To his left were Ibeiya’s trembling eyebrows as she slept. In order to not be a pervert, he could not help but turn to the right, but there, he saw Lilith’s black scythe.

There was no way he could sleep!

Chapter 324 - A Disconcerting Hypothesis

Chapter 324: A Disconcerting Hypothesis

Xiao Lin did not fall asleep until it was very late. By the time he woke up again, he noticed that it was already daytime. He chastised himself for sleeping that deeply, as it was particularly unwise to do so in such an atrocious environment.

The sky—still shrouded by death energy—remained gray without any visible traces of sunlight. There was still nothing for them to eat during the day, so Xiao Lin and Lilith could only continue staring while Ibeiya munched happily on some bread.

“When will your people come here?” Ibeiya became lively after filling her stomach.

“This is the fifth time you’ve asked today. Are you scared? ” Xiao Lin asked.

Ibeiya pursed her lips and did not speak any further.

Based on Lilith’s estimation, Dawn Academy would not be slow to react after detecting the anomalous situation in Wildfire Town. Even if it took some time to break the death energy from

outside, Dawn Academy had plenty of talented people and death energy alone could not possibly stop them.

Therefore, they were definitely going to be safe. Holding on that mindset, they did not make much of it even after enduring hunger that morning. The clock tower in the square allowed them to count down the time, but when afternoon came, they still did not see any rescuers coming over.

Lilith could not resist asking half-teasingly, “Does Dawn Academy place that little importance on us? Or are you guys really that inefficient?”

Xiao Lin did not think that Dawn Academy placed no importance on them. Other factors aside, the fact that he had an SS-level talent meant that the dean could not possibly abandon him that easily. Xiao Lin was absolutely confident in that respect, which was why he did not feel uneasy even until then.

However, Lilith’s casual remark made Xiao Lin’s heart thump uncomfortably, as he realized that he seemed to have forgotten one very important aspect.

Indeed, Xiao Lin had an SS-level talent, but he almost forgot that the scythe-wielding woman next to him had an SS-level talent too!

Xiao Lin could never forget his unjustified house arrest back in New Washington, where he was detained simply on the suspicion of the dragon-eagle knights’ commander. He would not be that naïve to think that the colonial academies would be as united as a family. They all appeared united in the outside world, but the disputes between the academies were more intense internally, especially when it came to resources or the population. In recent decades, the external conflicts with the Normans had gradually eased, while disputes over internal interests have become more prominent.

If the Americans would think of detaining Xiao Lin, would Dawn Academy do the same after knowing that Lilith was close at hand? Or could it be possible that Dawn Academy would do something much more ruthless than the Americans?

On the bright side, it was plainly inappropriate for Dawn Academy to take any direct action, because it would definitely result in interference by all the other academies, which could potentially spark internal wars. However, if Lilith’s life could be ended by Asabanor’s hand, the justifications and excuses were so plentiful that it made for an absolutely flawless plan.

Xiao Lin could no longer remain as calm as he was moments ago. The more he thought about it, the more he felt that the possibility was very high. That Dawn Academy was able to stand tall for more than two centuries was a sign that the higher-ups who controlled the academy were no saints. That was the reason for Xiao Lin’s surprise and hesitation when the student union president proposed for Lilith to come alone. Xiao Lin did not want Lilith to come over and risk her life, but it was unfortunate that the woman inherently enjoyed the fun of taking risks.

He was already mentally prepared for all of that, but the one thing he found unacceptable was that Dawn Academy did not send a rescue team even after so much time had passed. Their hidden intention was clearly to kill him along with Lilith!

If Xiao Lin speculated along the worst possible lines, he was even able to think up a perfect excuse for Dawn Academy: ‘How can Judge Academy suspect that we did this on purpose when we lost our own SS-level too?’

The nearby resurrection tower would be even easier to deal with. Xiao Lin already knew from the third monthly exam that the resurrection tower was not indestructible, and the blame could logically be placed on Asabanor, the old acquaintance of Judge Academy. Without the resurrection tower, Xiao Lin and Lilith could only become wandering souls. Resurrection was no longer possible despite the existence of the resurrection law.

Was it a good deal to exchange Xiao Lin for Lilith?

Xiao Lin did not want to think about such a thing and continued to convince himself that the dean would not do something like that. Lilith still appeared rather indifferent, although she might have also sensed such an intention but kept it to herself instead of expressing them.

The calmest person was still Ibeiya. Contaminated food and water had no effect on her, but her intelligence was very advanced for her age. She could more or less see that Xiao Lin and Lilith were almost given up, so she kindly gave a suggestion, “If nothing else works, why not come and join my family?”

“And become a vampire?” Lilith narrowed her eyes.

“Do you just need to bite us?” Xiao Lin was purely curious. Talking was better than thinking mindlessly to himself.

“Bite? Why do I need to bite you? I don’t eat humans, Uncle!” Ibeiya said aggrievedly.

Xiao Lin cleared his throat a few times and ignored Lilith rolling her eyes. He realized that he had been misled by movies on earth again, so waved his hand and said, “Just kidding. Uh, don’t mind me. You can just explain it.”

“It’s actually very simple. I can use my blood to transform your physique. It’s completely unnecessary to do something as horrible as biting other people!”

“Ah, so you don’t need to bite me, but I would have to bite you?” Xiao Lin teased. Lilith then rolled her eyes at him again, as if to say, ‘You sick pervert.’

Lilith questioned skeptically, “It can’t be that simple? If it was, the number of vampires would have increased everywhere, but as far as I know, your race is actually very scarce in number. You do know that, don’t you?”

Ibeiya pursed her lips, “Of course I do. The blood which has transformative properties derives from lifeblood, and it takes a huge toll on the body. Although the lifeblood of each vampire can be regenerated, the cycle is extremely long, up to decades or even centuries.”

“But you’re only a little vampire. Does that mean you have to transform someone else, then have that person transform another person?” Xiao Lin teased.

“Of course not! Our lifeblood needs sufficient time, and I barely managed to save enough of my lifeblood to transform others!”

Lilith could not help but smile, “Then just let this pervy perv transform. I’m not interested in becoming a vampire.”

“Neither do I! I prefer being human!”

Xiao Lin spread out his palms helplessly. Although that was what he said, an inevitable thought flashed through his mind. If Dawn Academy really wanted to abandon him and Lilith, and if the dense death energy continued to linger in the air for a long time, perhaps becoming a vampire was a good alternative to starving to death there?

Chapter 325 - An Odd Tunnel

Chapter 325: An Odd Tunnel

The uneasy atmosphere gradually intensified, and aside from the occasional chat, Xiao Lin and the others kept silent the entire day. Lilith had probably been able to guess what Dawn Academy wanted to do, and based on her reasoning, Xiao Lin was implicated purely because of her. Even though she did not set aside her ego, her tone was somewhat apologetic.

Xiao Lin remembered that he had read similar information about how people could last up to three days without drinking water or eating. Although Lilith mentioned that their physique was better than that of Earthling after reaching the Black Iron-rank, it only lasted for two to three days.

Death was all but certain if they could not get food and water in time. Meanwhile, Ibeiya seemed even more enthusiastic about recommending Xiao Lin to become a vampire, so much so that she strived to promote the advantages of the vampire race. Although Xiao Lin had no interest in becoming a non-human entity, he had to consider such a possibility if something really could not be done.

It was evening when there was finally a development. Rather than someone coming in to rescue them or the thick fog showing signs of dissipating, they found a secret passage in the basement where the monster appeared earlier.

Neither Xiao Lin and Lilith wanted to go near that place, as it was in ruins after the monster was annihilated, along with the reeking stench of rotting flesh and internal organs.

However, Ibeiya returned there again and seemed to ignore everything. She had been afraid of the undead earlier, but her fear and disgust had been forgotten after the monster died. She said that she was looking for something to use there, and Xiao Lin wondered if she wanted to find some meat to roast for them to eat?

What a sick joke that would be. Xiao Lin did his best to hold back a desire to vomit. He somewhat guessed that the organs were probably from the townspeople of Wildfire Town. All things aside, he would rather die than eat human flesh.

Ibeiya spent more than two hours getting busy before coming back. Instead of bringing back human flesh, she brought back some surprising news. The two of them quickly followed her to have a careful look, and they pinched their noses to endure the stench.

Xiao Lin found that the basement's ruins seemed to have traces of being cleaned up, but none of them touched anything since they left the day before. Ibeiya said that she visited just to pass the time, but it was obviously a half-hearted answer from her. Xiao Lin pondered while looking at Ibeiya, and he later noticed that Lilith was in deep thought too. When Ibeiya turned around again, their expression reverted immediately to calmness.

"Come and have a look! Come here and look! It's here!" Ibeiya did not seem to notice anything wrong and pointed to the innermost corner of the basement. Looking through the cleared ruins, there was indeed a half-hidden wooden door there. Since half the basement had collapsed, the inside was not very dim.

The wooden door was very old and not very sturdy. There were clear signs of rotting from above, indicating that the door had been there for a long time. Their previous day's fight with the monster probably led the doors to become loose, with the door joints being completely broken off too. Xiao Lin casually conjured up a flame bomb and blasted the door open.

Behind the wooden door was a deep, narrow tunnel. There are a few magic lamps hanging at the entrance of the tunnel, but the innermost areas were still dark. In Planet Norma, magic lamps were one of the more practical lighting tools, as they used energy ores to release energy in the form of a light source.

However, such magic lamps were an exclusive item of nobility. Of course, the nobility being referred to were the nobles among Planet Norma's natives. Because of the rarity of energy ores, magic lamps were quite expensive, and ordinary families simply could not afford it. As a result, the entire city was pitch black except for the manors owned by nobility.

"Who's the original owner here? Do you know?" Xiao Lin asked Ibeiya. He suddenly became a little curious about the building's original owner. The house nearby was a three-storey building, which was relatively luxurious in the local area. Such a house was obviously out of reach for ordinary poor people, especially when magic lamps were placed at the entrance of the tunnel. It was unlikely that the local noblemen would do such an extravagant thing.

"I don't." Ibeiya's big bright eyes blinked innocently.

Xiao Lin looked at her for a long time before retracting his gaze. All he could say was that Ibeiya's facial expression was flawless and he was not quite sure what the girl was thinking.

Lilith knew a little more about the New World than Xiao Lin did. She walked to the door and glanced at it twice, then said with certainty, "This is a mine tunnel, isn't it?"

"A mine tunnel?"

"Yes, why don't you know anything, Uncle!" Ibeiya mocked Xiao Lin jokingly, but before the latter could get angry, she immediately changed back to an adorable tone and replied, "What else is worth developing in Silver Province? Starmetal of course. Hehe, this is the most important thing for your people. Don't you know that, Uncle?"

“Ahem, can’t you call me by name?” Xiao Lin felt helpless when she called him uncle, especially since Lilith would easily get the false impression that he was some kind of sick pervert.

“I got a bit used to calling it. I’ve tried to call people by name plenty of times, but the humans on your side—especially the young men around Dawn Academy—seem to be very happy when I call them that. Uncle, the truth is, deep down, you really want me to call you that, right?”

Her delicate tone, coupled with her cute Lolita face, was lethal for many men, especially those otakus from Earth who had graduated in recent years. Xiao Lin suddenly began to believe that she did wander all over the world alone. Setting aside the question of strength, that ability of hers alone would probably cause anyone to willingly protect that cute—or rather, seemingly-cute—girl.

“It’s a tunnel used to develop the starmetal mines.” Lilith’s brows gradually tightened.

“Is there something wrong?”

“Everything’s wrong. You ought to know that all the mining grounds currently discovered in Silver Province have been completely divided up. As far as I know, a mine tunnel leading to Wildfire Town doesn’t exist.”

“It’s an illegal one then.”

Xiao Lin nodded. Such things occurred on Earth, so it was unsurprising that they would occur in Planet Norma. However, Xiao Lin had an instant realization as well—the current eeriness of Wildfire Town must be the doing of Asabanor’s ghost.

According to Xiao Lin’s speculation thus far, it should have been Asabanor who did something to flood Wildfire Town with death energy, and then used a necromantic eye to experiment with the newly created undead monsters and collect various data, like what Xiao Lin did during the battle.

A premeditated process like that could not be completed in one or two days. If that mine was also a part of Asabanor’s plan, then the problem might be more serious than first imagined—it would mean that Asabanor had other accomplices, of which the number was likely to be more than one person.

Chapter 326 - Destroying the Black Tower

Chapter 326: Destroying the Black Tower

Xiao Lin clearly remembered that it had only been about two months since the time he came out of The Final Land and back into New Washington. Based on Lilith’s information, Asabanor used necromancy to control a gang of bandits after leaving The Final Land and subsequently used them to provoke Judge Academy by harassing their merchant caravans.

Of course, Asabanor would not do such pointless acts for no reason. Xiao Lin guessed that it was probably to buy some time. As to the question of what Asabanor was trying to buy time for, Xiao Lin felt that they might get the answer soon enough.

The mine tunnel was now their last hope, but before leaving, Xiao Lin suggested that he and Lilith return to the town square to try and find ways to destroy the strange black resurrection tower.

Xiao Lin initially planned to leave a complete resurrection tower for future people to come in and research, but in the present situation, he was likely to become Dawn Academy's abandoned boy. Even though he still believed that the dean would never make such a decision, it was still very difficult to quell the resentment in his chest. He felt that he had to do something to vent his anger out.

Since they wanted to leave him to his death, Xiao Lin felt that there was no need to leave the complete resurrection tower behind. In any case, the current black tower was completely unable to resurrect the colonists too.

Destroying a resurrection tower was no small feat. The design of a resurrection tower was to prevent ordinary Black Iron- or Bronze-rank individuals from destroying it on a whim. However, the black tower before them could no longer be regarded as a resurrection tower. Perhaps it would have been better to call a resurrection tower for the undead.

A defiled resurrection tower was actually a shadow of its previous self, a fact that Xiao Lin and Lilith found out when they inspected the resurrection tower on the first day. The surface of the black resurrection tower had obvious pits, as if it had been corroded by sulfuric acid.

Lilith was heartily welcomed in the proposal to vent out her anger. Without further ado, she flicked her wrist and acquired her scythe so the two of them could join forces and destroy the resurrection tower. The roaring flames raised the temperature of the town square by several degrees. Ibeiya watched from a distance, her blue pupils turned around in her eye sockets and she seemed to be thinking of something.

Five minutes later, Xiao Lin—who had been attacking with all his strength—was the first to stop. He had to take some rest after using the Miracle state. Lilith immediately stopped too, and the two of them were feeling somewhat speechless as they looked at the completely undamaged resurrection tower.

Could its so-called reduction in hardness be a mere illusion?

Or did it mean that their attacking ability was far from enough even though the hardness was already reduced?

"I remember that the resurrection tower has self-destructive devices," Lilith consciously pointed out.

"Don't put your hopes on it. The device does exist, but the magic scroll which activates the self-destructing device must have been kept at the center of the academy. It won't be in Wildfire Town." Xiao Lin had some knowledge of it since he had learnt quite a lot during the third monthly exam.

"Actually, I think we're using the wrong methods." Xiao Lin pondered and put forward his own point of view, "This black tower does seem to be seriously damaged, but think about it carefully. What could possibly cause such a degree of damage?"

“It has to be that dead old fart.” Lilith thought for a while, then suddenly realized, “Death energy? You’re right, maybe this is the reason why Asabanor gathered so much death energy in this insignificant town. but you and I are just beginners in necromancy, are you sure can— Ah, okay, I understand now.”

Lilith suddenly stopped talking, as Xiao Lin’s triumphant expression reminded her that his Holy Soul Sword had an undead soul in it!

She had earlier reminded Xiao Lin not to use the attached skill lightly, because Asabanor would probably control it. However, it no longer mattered because there were basically no other people in Wildfire Town anymore.

Summoning the undead swordsman could be done by killing a certain number of creatures and accumulating enough blood, but the method was not absolute. In particular, he understood from necromantic meditation that the so-called murder and blood-tainting could simply be explained as an accumulation of enough death energy on the Holy Soul Sword. It was due to the balance of nature energy in most normal environments that led to the scarcity of death energy, and the only way to temporarily increase it was through killing.

However, it was unnecessary in Wildfire Town. The concentration of death energy there would probably exceed that of a cemetery with hundreds of years of history. It should be possible to summon the undead swordsman without the need to kill and taint the sword with enough blood.

In order to ensure that the concentration was sufficient, Xiao Lin chose to summon the soul in the town’s fringe area, since the gray fog there was the strongest. Xiao Lin wielded the Holy Soul Sword and waited quietly for a moment. Sure enough, the Holy Soul Sword produced a grayish gas about ten seconds later. It materialized quickly in mid-air, with the figure of the undead swordsman and his old armor becoming clearer and clearer before gradually landing on the ground.

Clang!

The swordsman in full-body armor landed heavily, producing a cloud of dust. It was the same undead swordsman from back then. Xiao Lin circled him a few times and took a closer look, as he somehow felt that the soul was a little different. Even so, he could not find out why even after looking at the swordsman for a long time.

There was an urging from Lilith some distance away. Xiao Lin shrugged and gave up looking. It was not the first time he had summoned that undead being, and after skillfully giving orders through mental power, the undead swordsman followed him mechanically. As he walked toward the square, Xiao Lin did not notice that behind him, a pair of green flames flickered briefly before returning to calm in the swordsman’s barely distinguishable eyes under that old helmet.

The undead swordsman’s strength was not that strong, and undead creatures themselves had no thoughts, which made its actions seem like a rigid machine. Despite being quite useful as a human shield of sorts, it was still difficult to rely on its combat power.

“However, since it’s an undead creature, its own attacks will be accompanied by undead aura. At the very least, the effects of its attack on the resurrection tower will probably be better than either of us.”

Xiao Lin mentally issued an attack command as he made that remark. The swordsman dragged the huge sword and walked forward slowly. He raised it up high, then swung it toward the center of the resurrection tower.

Clang!

A crisp impact sound was heard. The undead swordsman was slightly shaken back a few steps by the rebound force coming from the hilt, but there were finally traces of a crack on the surface of the resurrection tower.

One strike, two strikes, three strikes...

The uninterrupted attack lasted for more than ten minutes, but Xiao Lin noticed the numerous gaps in the undead swordsman's weapon and could not help but feel frightened again by the hardness of the resurrection tower.

That was the extent of it however, and a dull cracking sound was heard right after the sword's last strike. The whole resurrection tower began cracking from the center, and countless cracks began spreading out to all directions. The tower was about to crash in the blink of an eye, as the cracks had reached deep into the black tower, causing the entire structure to be fragmented. Xiao Lin took advantage of the situation and lightly produced a flame bomb. Following the burst of flames, the black tower collapsed.

Chapter 327 - Going Through the Mine Tunnel

Chapter 327: Going Through the Mine Tunnel

The second the black resurrection tower was destroyed, the entire Wildfire Town seemed to undergo a slight fluctuation. Xiao Lin immediately frowned, and he felt that something in his body was drawn away along with black tower's collapse. Lilith seemed to feel the same way and she nodded at him.

Xiao Lin understood in an instant. That strange feeling probably meant that he was no longer within the scope of the resurrection tower. Earthlings who obtained the resurrection law possessed a thread-like connection with the resurrection tower. Once the structure disappeared, the connection would also be severed and the change was a noticeable one.

It basically verified Xiao Lin's previous underlying concern. Sure enough, the other resurrection tower closest to that place had also been deliberately destroyed, and the purpose is to bury Lilith there!

After destroying the black resurrection tower, they came back to the mine in the basement.

Xiao Lin and Lilith each took a magic lamp from the door and explored the depths of the mine tunnel under the dim yellow light. The air inside was not very good, but the airtightness of the

mine tunnel prevented death energy from coming in. They walked and observed that there were many wheels and footsteps on the wet ground. It was clear that someone had entered and exited there just recently, which meant that there was a functional exit on the other side of the mine.

Of course, it was inevitable that they would consider various other possibilities. For example, there might be more monsters that could resurrect just like what happened a day ago, or perhaps Asabanor himself might engage them in battle. On the other hand, Xiao Lin and Lilith's physical strengths would have dropped after going two days without food or drink.

Most importantly, they were not within the scope of the resurrection tower at that moment, so it did matter how much lifespan they still had because their life would end if they were killed. Neither could not afford to die, and it would be ridiculous for them to claim that they were not nervous at all. Xiao Lin did not retract the undead swordsman but continued to have him lead the way instead.

If they encountered a possible attack, the swordsman would be there to cushion them like a human shield. However, Xiao Lin was well aware that his mental energy would continue being used up the longer the undead swordsman stayed outside. In any case, their hopes of survival caused them to gradually quicken their pace.

The mine tunnel was longer than expected, proving that it could not have been completed in a short time. No one knew how many years ago that place was dug out.

The deeper they went, the fewer the presence of magic lamps. The light was not very strong when they relied on the lamps that the three of them hold. In addition, the mine tunnel was twisted and extremely narrow. Encountering an enemy there would be very troublesome, so their pace once again slowed down.

Two hours later, Lilith, who was still in the mine tunnel, could not but break the silence, "We should've already left the Wildfire Town area, right?"

Although she deliberately lowered her voice, it still reverberated in the mine for quite some time. So far, they did not encounter any monsters or enemies, so the mind was either abandoned, or the miners had left after nightfall.

Xiao Lin nodded. "We might be a bit slow, but Wildfire Town isn't that big. Where are we going if we're leaving Wildfire Town?"

Xiao Lin was not very familiar with Silver Province. Based on the initial plan, they were supposed to rest in Wildfire Town and rendezvous with Judge Academy's people before departing. Neither of those people had the final say on where they were supposed to go, but that was also a silver lining—leaving Wildfire Town was equivalent to leaving the confinement of that thick fog.

Lilith knew nothing about what lies beyond the exit, but she was quite sure that it would not be any of the presently-known mines. The fact that someone dared to secretly mine starmetal in Silver Province under the noses of many colonial colleges was an incident that surprised her even more than Asabanor.

Half an hour later, Xiao Lin and Lilith felt yet another strange feeling in their hearts, similar to when the resurrection tower was destroyed earlier on. However, the present feeling was that of

reassurance. They understood it to mean that they had re-entered the resurrection tower's area of effectiveness.

The subsequent journey was much easier. Xiao Lin did not have to strain himself to maintain the undead swordsman's presence and his exhausted mental energy could finally take a break. What made him a little strange was that the Holy Soul Sword seemed to vibrate slightly in his hand when he retracted the undead swordsman. It was something that never happened before, but it was not the time to be fretting over such trivial matters and Xiao Lin quickly forgot about it.

Without the undead swordsmen, Ibeiya volunteered to lead the way because the vampire race had better vision in the dark than humans, allowing her to sense any danger in advance. The speed of their journey continued to accelerate, and in addition to Ibeiya, Xiao Lin and Lilith's hunger is getting stronger and stronger.

At that point, it was probably nightfall outside of the mine tunnel, which meant that they had gone two whole days without eating or drinking. The mine tunnel that they were originally wary about was slowly becoming a point of annoyance at that moment. They could not wait to see the light at the exit. On the way, Ibeiya continued to explain more benefits of becoming a vampire to Xiao Lin, making Xiao Lin feel as though she had the potential to become a multi-level marketing sales girl. With Ibeiya as the intermediary along the way, the other two did not feel too bored.

About two more hours later, Xiao Lin clearly heard the sound of strong wind and the mine tunnel gradually became bigger. Surprised and delighted, he quickened his pace again. After another quarter of an hour, their eyes suddenly lit up, with the starry double moon sky appearing right before their eyes.

Xiao Lin took a breath of fresh air and his lungs felt unusually refreshed. If he had not considered the fact that they were not entirely safe yet, he would have loved to yell into the sky a couple of times.

The journey lasted more than four hours, and because the second half of the journey was done at a quicker pace, the entire journey added up to nearly half a day. Such a long-distanced mine tunnel left them wondering what the original purpose of developing it was.

"I think we're in the southern part of Silver Province now." Lilith estimated based on the distance and time.

They were located in the depths of a valley, surrounded by stretches of mountains that had lush jungles on top of them. There clearly seemed to be an absence of towns nearby, and according to Lilith's understanding, the entire southern region of Silver Province was surrounded by mountains. Going past those mountains, one would then enter into the central area of Silver Province, where a large basin was situated. It was also the main area that was rich in starmetal.

The three of them advanced slowly and vigilantly through the valleys. At the foot of the mountains were a number of mining tools lying around. Several huge crucibles were also present on the empty ground not far away. However, some of the crucibles had fallen to the ground and the remaining contents were completely solidified, signifying that they had been abandoned there. Despite that, it appeared as though they had not been left behind for too long, perhaps maybe a few weeks or a few months.

Chapter 328 - Mining Ground

Chapter 328: Mining Ground

“So this is the mining ground for starmetal. It’s incredible. This mountain range had been searched through long ago and it should be impossible to find any more starmetal here.”

Lilith walked over and sighed while opening her palms. In it were a few broken rocks. Xiao Lin took them and looked closely with the aid of the magic lamp. They were just ordinary rocks, but there were grains finer than sand mixed on the rock surface. Those particles glowed faintly in a silver-gray light just like stars shining in the night sky.

“Is this starmetal? It’s pretty, but doesn’t seem like a lot.” Xiao Lin threw the rock aside. Very few silver particles were present in those fist-sized stones.

“Yes, starmetal is very scarce in quantity and so far, it has only been found in Silver Province. Although the current reserves are still plentiful, they’ll be used up sooner or later. By then, we’ll...” Lilith suddenly remembered that there the little vampire Ibeiya was right next to her. She wanted to say that their resurrection tower would not be able to be built if that happened, but she thought better of saying those stuff in front of the natives.

Xiao Lin also understood what Lilith meant, but it was not up to them to think about the future. He turned and looked warily at Ibeiya next to him. The little vampire had a look of utter innocence and curiousness. Xiao Lin thought about it and passed her the rock in his hand.

“Thank you, Uncle!” Ibeiya happily took it.

Xiao Lin’s eyelids twitched slightly and he lamented to himself that it would be difficult to change his ‘uncle’ designation.

Ibeiya used her nails to grip the rock forcefully, as if she wanted to dig the starmetal right out. In the normal mining process, the starmetal-rich rocks would be placed into the crucible for heating, stirring and filtering. Since starmetal was extremely heat-resistant, the final filtered product would be pure ore.

An approach like Ibeiya’s was practically torture. Her fingers were soon dripping with blood and her nails were slightly bent. Xiao Lin wanted to stop her, but was in turn stopped by Lilith. The two of them quietly watched Ibeiya’s persistent movements for a moment. After some time, Ibeya exhaled slightly, and stretched out her palm rather proudly. Her blood-stained palm was shining with the silver light of the starmetal.

“Are your hands alright?”

Xiao Lin wanted to look for something to bandage her, but then casually sucked her finger in her mouth. When she took it out a few minutes later, the wound had healed more than half. The healing ability was so powerful that it startled Xiao Lin, and Lilith was frowning pensively too.

The group continued to explore the valley again, and a few stone houses were present at the exit. There was nothing in the house except for basic daily utensils. Xiao Lin was elated because they finally found water and food there. From there on, the death energy seemed to be confined to the area within Wildfire Town. There was no sign of contamination and he could eat it with confidence.

What left Xiao Lin feeling a little concerned was a half-covered pot of soup on the kitchen stove that had long since dried up. It seemed that the owner there had no choice but to leave it behind and depart the area in a hurry, so much so that they could not care less for the food on the fire. It had turned inedible, but there was a lot of dried meat and bread around.

Xiao Lin ate a piece of bread and drank a few mouthfuls of water, but he still felt unsatisfied. He licked his lips after seeing the dried meat, and after less than ten seconds of hesitation, he made the decision to replace a clean pot. He carried up some firewood, lit them, and found some spices. Next up, he started to enjoy himself as he boiled the soup.

Lilith was searching for clues in the other rooms, while Ibeiya was completely attracted by the starmetal outside. Ten minutes later however, they were all attracted by the fragrant aroma of meat wafting around inside the house.

Lilith was a little surprised, perhaps even a little envious, and she asked, “You can cook?”

Xiao Lin nodded triumphantly. His skills were not actually that good, but thanks to Song Junlang and those strange dietary treatments, Xiao Lin’s cooking skills had improved quite a bit. At the very least, his cooking was still considered somewhat delicious.

Lilith glanced at a small half of bread in her hand and threw it aside without a second thought.

That night, under the bright twin moons, the three of them wolfed down the delicious soup. Xiao Lin felt that he had drunk the best meat soup in his entire life. He probably did not even remember what ingredients were in the soup, but in any case, he poured in all the ingredients he found and the result ended up tasting unexpectedly good.

Once they had their fill, they did not even bother to clean up since they figured they would not be back there again anyway. Lilith discussed the next course of action with Xiao Lin. Turning back to Dawn Academy’s colony would require them to go through Wildfire Town again, which was not a good choice under the current uncertainty.

“Let’s go to Gold City then! It’s the biggest city in Silver Province and the largest transit point for the starmetal. Most colleges have offices there,” Lilith proposed.

“Gold City? A city for Gold-rank individuals?”

“Uh, not exactly. The ‘silver’ in Silver Province refers to the entry of people at Silver-rank only, but the ‘gold’ in Gold City refers to gold of actual value. Gold is a precious metal in Planet Norma too. It’s the main currency of the higher-level people. You’ll know when you arrive.”

Although Lilith said that many colleges had offices in Gold City, what she really meant was Judge Academy. It was clear that the woman no longer trusted Dawn Academy.

While she was talking, Ibeiya's expression changed drastically as she drank the soup. She whispered, "There are people coming here. It seems to be a lot of people!"

Ibeiya's vigilance was higher than that of Lilith and Xiao Lin. After the two of them held their breath and focused their attention, they vaguely heard the sound of rapid footsteps approaching them.

"It's too late." Xiao Lin glanced at the pot that was still emanating with the smell of meat. He smiled bitterly and suddenly realized how they had been discovered.

"Let's have a look at who they are." Lilith seemed rather nonchalant about it. She was not afraid of facing an opponent after having her fill, but she did not want to rush into action because countless adventurers and merchant groups went back and forth in Silver Province every day. Although the mining ground seemed to be relatively hidden, it was not unusual for an occasional caravan to get lost and be drawn to the smell of meat.

A few minutes later, the sound of footsteps came closer and the moonlight enabled them to distinguish the appearance of the man leading the group. They were all heavily armed, mostly in light chain mail or leather armor, as well as holding swords or bows of various sizes. They did not look like a merchant group at all.

The other side appeared to be quite alert and did not spring into action too quickly. Both parties soon encountered each other. Xiao Lin took the initiative to greet them in his half-baked Normese and rummaged around his brain for the Normese vocabulary he had mastered. He expressed his intention as clearly as possible, because the accent of those menacing-looking people suggested that they neither spoke Chinese or English. Surprisingly, the subsequent discussion went simpler than Xiao Lin imagined.

"It's only the three of you?"

"Mm, we're a merchant group that lost our way..."

"Only the three of you?"

"Yes?"

"No one else?"

"You could say that. We just happened to pass through by accident..."

"Oh, only the three of you. DIE!"

"What?"

Chapter 329 - An Unexpected Battle (1)

Chapter 329: An Unexpected Battle (1)

The battle started without so much as a warning. Xiao Lin originally wanted to try and negotiate with them, but little did he expect that the other party would show no such intention at all. Instead, they immediately launched an attack when they saw that Xiao Lin's group had only three people.

Lilith probably anticipated that situation and had a sneer of disdain. She turned her wrist slightly and conjured up the jet-black war scythe at once.

The scene instantly became chaotic. Xiao Lin was briefly caught off guard by the opponent's sneak attack, but he did not hesitate either. After realizing that the opponent was going to kill his side, he immediately activated the Miracle state. A burst of sword aura then immediately slashed in half one of the individuals who was nearer to him and had rushed up abruptly. Blood splattered everywhere, with various organs and tissues falling from the sky. The power of the Lightsword was really powerful when used in tandem with the Miracle state.

There were about a dozen people in the other group. They originally thought that Xiao Lin's side were weaklings, mainly because two of the people were delicate girls, and wanted to quickly get rid of all three. Xiao Lin's sudden attack startled them, but all of them were felons that seemed to be quite experienced.

They hesitated for less than half a second before a couple of people immediately dashed past Xiao Lin and headed straight for Lilith. Meanwhile, the rest of them were restraining Xiao Lin from the front, and Xiao Lin shot a sympathetic look to the people moving past.

Sure enough, it took less than ten seconds when those people screamed and fell down. The flames on their bodies continued to burn and as they stuck to their skin and burned violently. One person, who seemed to be half-alive, grimaced at the burning pain and let out a chilling cry that resounded in the dark and empty valley.

They expected to find some pushovers, but it was evident that they had miscalculated. Being well-trained individuals, another four people immediately split from the group and went straight to the left. Their target was Ibeiya, and after their initial miscalculation with Lilith, the few of them attacked with all their might, and Xiao Lin even discovered that some of them were still wielding sword aura.

"Crap!"

Xiao Lin exclaimed. The heat of the fight caused him to nearly forget that the little girl was different from Lilith. All she had was a vampire's strong physique, but in truth, she did not even have the power to tie up a chicken.

He did not hesitate to shift all his attributes into agility and use the Phantom Steps at its highest. He turned around intending to help, but soon felt a slight pain from behind him. When he looked over, he found that someone had shot him using a short bow from close distance.

Xiao Lin could not help but feel a little bit displeased in his desperation, as the limitations of the Phantom Step were constantly increasing. The Phantom Step was definitely not a foolproof skill, but it was time-tested among the freshmen due to its nature as a Black-Iron level skill. Most freshmen who did not even reach Black Iron-level would find it difficult to catch up to it unless they were the small minority who possessed exceptional talent.

In the face of Black Iron-rank opponents however, the role of Phantom Step was reduced tremendously. The problem was not very prominent during the third monthly exam because the orcs they faced were not known for their speed and skill. However, the limitations of the Phantom Step were finally laid bare once again.

The strength of that group was not very strong, and Xiao Lin had an absolute advantage in the Miracle state during brief weapon clashes. However, his defensive ability was very low when facing a longer-range attack.

It hurt!

Xiao Lin gritted his teeth. He originally thought that he would not need to fight since he had powerful companions within the investigation team assigned for the journey. As a result, he only brought the essential weapons and did not wear any armor. After all, it was very uncomfortable to wear heavy armor constantly. Luckily for him however, the arrow did not hit a vital point and merely struck him below the shoulder. Xiao Lin reached back and pulled it out, causing blood to begin spurting immediately. It did not concern him that much though, as his body possessed a dragon's healing ability.

Ibeiya instinctively started running in the opposite direction as soon as battle began. She knew that she was incapable of combat and would only be a burden to Lilith and Xiao Lin if she was captured. Unfortunately, Ibeiya's claims of having no strength turned out not to be a ruse for Xiao Lin and Lilith. She had already been caught after running only a short distance away.

Xiao Lin's pace was greatly slowed down because he was obstructed by a couple of individuals wielding short bows. Annoyed, he directly sliced the air with flame sword aura. While he was at that, he produced flame bombs to block several nearby people who were ready to come over. Then, he pulled away a little and rushed over to Ibeiya.

The man who seized Ibeiya grinned and held a long knife to the girl's neck. His actions stopped there and he shot a provoking look at the oncoming Xiao Lin. After becoming aware that Xiao Lin and Lilith's combat strength was beyond their imagination, they swiftly decided to threaten them by taking Ibeiya—the weakest of them all—as hostage.

The man mumbled something, but his accent was too heavy and Xiao Lin could not understand what those words meant. The situation put him in a tight spot. He had known Ibeiya for just a few days and she was a very mysterious girl, even to the extent that he and Lilith were secretly wary of her throughout the entire time.

In any case, Xiao Lin could no longer bear to act any slower when he saw the adorable girl's trembling pupils and tear-stained delicate face. He shouted in some terrible Normese, "Let her go! You want a fight? I'll fight! Why involve a child!"

The man said something in reply and then stretched out his dirty hand to forcefully stroke Ibeiya's face. He then put on a goading expression for Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin saw red and Lilith was occupied with the others. Although the battle situation was extremely favorable for Lilith, the other party had considerable experience. When they realized that it was pointless to fight the crazy woman from the front, they deliberately distanced themselves and nimbly avoided her scythe's attack range.

Ibeiya originally had a horrified look, but as soon as the man touched her face humiliatingly, a ruthless look suddenly appeared in her eyes and she moved her head forward to the blade, causing it to cut through her neck. Although the man was shocked and quickly retracted the knife, it was already too little too late.

A torrent of blood gushes out, dyeing Ibeiya's white dress red. She used so much force that the sharp blade nearly cut off her entire head. Her kind fell down like a kite on a snapped string. She no longer moved, and the expression on her face remained frozen on her final smile.

“IBEIYA!”

Xiao Lin was utterly enraged. Whatever the circumstances might be, Xiao Lin could never accept the fact that such a cute and lovely girl had died before his eyes. The man opposite was still stunned and stared blankly at the dripping blood on his hands. He probably did not believe that the girl actually had such courage.

“I’LL KILL YOU!”

Xiao Lin felt something blooming in his body. The next moment, his entire body rushed towards the man like a meteor.

Chapter 330 - An Unexpected Battle (Part 2)

Chapter 330: An Unexpected Battle (Part 2)

During the battle, Lilith made a point to pay attention to Xiao Lin's side. She appeared to be more aware of the situation than Xiao Lin was and noticed that his strength was indeed better than that of the opponents. As a result, she never once thought of lending any support for Xiao Lin.

After seeing Ibeiya using suicide to break free from the man's threat, she even nodded her head in a show of praise. However, when she saw Xiao Lin's mad dash as well as the terrible swordsmanship resulting from his anger, she could not help but curse in a low voice, “Idiot!”

Ibeiya came from a race of vampires!

She had to admit that Ibeiya's final acting skills were on point, with most people feeling sympathy for her decisiveness and final liberation before dying.

Xiao Lin did show some signs of losing his mind at that instant, but he soon noticed that something was wrong in his subconscious. Ibeiya had previously stated that she would not die that easily, but when he wanted to calm down the anger in his heart, he was horrified to discover that his anger seemed to have a life of its own, desperately trying to erupt on its own beyond his control.

Xiao Lin had not yet deactivated his Miracle, and after an instant of anger, his speed was once again elevated to a higher level due to the Miracle state's properties. His phantom-like speed left the opponent with no time to react at all.

Clang!

Xiao Lin's Holy Soul Sword had already slashed through the body of the man who had grabbed Ibeiya. The Lightsword's wave tore the man's body in half instantaneously, killing him on the spot.

The other two people next to him quickly evaded and placed their guards up after a brief horror. Their reaction was quick, and they distanced themselves by more than ten meters in just a few seconds. However, Xiao Lin's next move was even more shocking. He directly raised his sword up high, signifying the start of the Slashing skill. In spite of that, it was impossible to strike an enemy that was ten meters away using the Slashing.

After the three-second power-up was completed, Xiao Lin immediately swung the sword from where he stood. A huge wave of sword aura swept ten meters forward within the blink of an eye. The next second, the man's body was crushed by the sword aura. Mangled and mutilated, he fell onto the ground and was no longer able to stand up.

"A fusion attack of Slashing and wave sword aura!" Lilith looked suspiciously from one side and muttered to herself, "Even though it's not difficult, where would someone who just reached Black Iron-level be able to draw out such massive sword aura as?"

The sword aura stunned the last person silly. He turned around and ran wildly, so much so that he did not even notice how Xiao Lin froze on the spot and made no further movements after swinging the sword.

Xiao Lin's consciousness was still sober, though he was hardly able to control his movements when he was angry earlier. After slashing the two of them, that inexplicable anger seemed to have diffused slightly. At the very least, he was aware of his actions and could control his body, albeit with great effort.

Xiao Lin gasped and tried his best to suppress the frenetic anger in his heart. He had clearly considered the possibility that he would go on a rampage, as the side effects of the dragon blood given to him by Song Junlang were like a time bomb lurking inside his body. He never expected it to act up again at that time.

Xiao Lin was already too lazy to take into consideration that his opponents had at least seven or eight people. He believed that Lilith alone could deal with them all and it was only a question of how long since they were not a threat. If his body was allowed to run wild, however, Lilith would probably have to destroy him right there.

While they were still in the middle of the tunnel, they sensed that they had returned without the scope of the resurrection tower. Even if they died, their life span would only be deducted, hence his belief that Lilith would definitely make such a move. However, Xiao Lin did not intend to die in vain and lose 20 years of his life span.

Calming down was of utmost importance!

Even Song Junlang did not know how to suppress the rampaging effect of dragon blood. Despite his solemn vow to study that issue in greater detail, Xiao Lin felt that it would be better to try things out himself. He continued to take deep breaths but found it very difficult to calm his mind. As a result, he simply sat down in the valley and tried his best to enter a state of meditation.

Indeed, that was the idea he had in mind. His boundlessly vast realm that appeared during meditation could make any restless mind fall into a peaceful state. Xiao Lin also tried to calm himself down in that state and slowly quell the anger that was going out of control in his heart.

Xiao Lin had no difficulty in perceiving the elements, and it became much easier after he had reached Black Iron-rank. At this moment, his meditation world was also spiraling into chaos, with countless stars darting in all directions at a ridiculous speed.

It showed that the elements around him were certainly also in an extremely active state. What a strange discovery indeed. The side effect of dragon blood's rampaging ought to only involve Xiao Lin, but it seemed to actually involve a certain range area around Xiao Lin. It was obvious that the effects had an impact on the elements around him, but it was still considered a rather small area, since it occupied less than a meter's radius around his body.

However, the chaos in the meditation world did not last too long, because Xiao Lin was still his Miracle state. Under that circumstance, the mysterious black hole with high suction force would appear in his galactic world and begin devouring the surrounding elements.

Despite his anxiety, Xiao Lin also lamented and wondered what exactly his body wanted to do.

Once there are no more elements within a certain range of his body, he was considered to have entered the world of necromantic meditation, though his then state was still very unusual. Although the surrounding elements were being swallowed, many continued to come closer. At the same time, Xiao Lin could also perceive that the surrounding death energy was also approaching him, and the mass of death aura that had gathered seemed to shroud him faintly in a gray, solid-like mist of gas.

Meanwhile, Xiao Lin was feeling very uncomfortable. More and more energy continued to rage crazily around him and his body. He did not know whether he could survive if that continued. He needed to drain and discharge all that energy, whether it was the elemental energy or death energy.

Xiao Lin then thought of something that might allow him to achieve that goal. He suddenly opened his eyes, exited his meditation world, and eagerly drew out his Holy Soul Sword.

Two consecutive kills caused blood stains to appear on the Holy Soul Sword's blade, but it had not reached an adequate level yet. Fortunately, his brief meditation had allowed him to gather a lot of death energy and his summoning proved to be a success. Indeed, the fully-armored undead swordsman had appeared beside him.

"Lilith! I'll leave you to deal with those people. Don't let them disturb me!"

Xiao Lin turned around and ordered loudly. He then put his palm on the swordsman's armor, and when he closed his eyes again, he gradually felt the death energy starting to gather on the undead being beside him.

Death energy had no consciousness, yet it also possessed the most basic of intellects. Their inherent nature was to gather toward similar energy around it, which explained why places like cemeteries had such a high concentration of death energy.

Chapter 331 - A Suppressed Rampage

Chapter 331: A Suppressed Rampage

The battle was still ongoing, and although the other side still had a dozen people standing and therefore possessed a numerical advantage, they did not dare to draw the ire of the powerful Xiao Lin. In all likelihood, Xiao Lin's act of killing the other two were simply too decisive. Instead, they shifted their target to Lilith, who seemed to be less powerful than Xiao Lin was.

Lilith looked at the closed-eyed Xiao Lin and subconsciously frowned. When she turned her head again, she shot the people around her a petulant look. "Are you planning to come at me from all sides? Who gave you that kind of confidence!"

Xiao Lin, who remained in a state of confusion, suddenly felt that a hotter, more intense energy bursting out near him. He could not look over with his eyes, but he did not need to think to know that there was only one cause—Lilith had significantly increased her own combat strength.

He felt slightly touched that Lilith would protect him from being disturbed, but at the same time, Xiao Lin was once again in awe of her combat power. In fact, it was entirely possible that she did not exert much strength in the beginning.

Xiao Lin's state was rather strange. The negative emotions in his body, which resembled anger, had not been completely vented, but it had unexpectedly turned calm. In simple terms, a balanced circulatory system had formed all over him.

The surrounding elements and death energy circulated between his own body, the mysterious black hole in the meditation world, and the stationary undead swordsman. With each cycle, the irritable energy would calm itself down.

After the end of about a dozen cycles, Xiao Lin was fully able to independently control the consciousness of his own body and mind. He slowly opened his eyes once more and found himself covered with sweat, as if he was a fish out of water.

"You're finally awake?" Lilith's crisp voice suddenly sounded from behind.

Xiao Lin turned his head to speak, but saw the glow of her black scythe barely a few centimeters away from his face. He quickly stepped back, glanced at the ready-to-go Lilith, and waved his hand with a bitter smile. "Whoa there, let's have a nice, calm talk. You gotta put that away first."

Lilith had keen observation. Although she did not know what happened to Xiao Lin, she still sensed danger from the unusual chaotic energy earlier. If Xiao Lin did not answer in time, he was certain that the woman would not hesitate to swing down her scythe and send him back to the resurrection tower.

"You're fine now?" Lilith looked disappointed, for she felt that it was such a pity she could not do battle with Xiao Lin.

That battle-loving maniac!

Xiao Lin wiped the sweat off his forehead. On that occasion, he sweated out of fear for Lilith, but he stopped after taking only a few steps back. He looked at his hands strangely and frowned slightly. A brief moment of thought later, he asked, "How long have I been like this?"

"Three or five minutes," Lilith said before shrugging her shoulders. "Don't panic, I've handled all those idiots."

"Did you kill them all?" Xiao Lin was startled.

"Don't worry, I know to keep someone alive for questioning," Lilith remarked impatiently. Compared with those mediocre guys, she seemed to be more interested in Xiao Lin at that moment. Her blue eyes kept looking closely at Xiao Lin, making the latter's hair stand on end.

The brief rampaging state earlier felt almost as long as a century, but in fact, it only lasted a few minutes. At that moment, the sweat all over his body had been blown by the cool breeze, and he felt a coolness coming all over him. He turned around and saw three disarmed individuals curling up after falling on the ground not far away. They were trembling all over, and their eyes seemed hazy and powerless. Blood stains covered their bodies and they were probably able to survive because Lilith had not been too ruthless.

More than a dozen opponents were originally present, but Xiao Lin killed only two and left behind quite a few others. His gaze shifted again, only to see a pool of charcoal-like bones that were completely scorched. Other than that, he did not even see any normal-looking corpses.

Xiao Lin glanced silently at Lilith and once again marveled at her. He knew that it was impossible for those people to handle Lilith, but he never expected Lilith to end the battle so cleanly in five minutes.

"I see you scared them all off!" Xiao Lin joked. The three people who had lost their fighting capacity were not being looked at, but they seemed to show no signs of daring to make an escape.

Xiao Lin walked towards them, but a thought seemed to appear in his mind after barely a few steps. His expression turned to that of curiosity and playfulness, and his entire body then sped up abruptly, like a burst of wind. When he stopped again, he was already standing by the three stunned people.

"That's mighty fast!" Lilith's pupils contracted slightly. She rarely showed such a surprised expression, but the speed that Xiao Lin displayed in that brief moment escaped her sight. After a while, she said thoughtfully, "It does look a little different now."

The difference was not just 'a little'. A flurry of emotions set off in Xiao Lin's heart. He had yet to enter his Miracle state and his instant burst could not be chalked up to the conversion of his attributes to agility. In that case, where did that sudden speed come from?

Xiao Lin felt that it had something to do with the rampage side effects of his dragon blood, but he was still unsure about it. Once the brief rampage ended, a huge sense of fatigue surged to his mind and his body felt limp. He was aware that he was forced to withdraw from the Miracle state due to the immense consumption of physical strength, and at the same time, the mysterious explosive force also disappeared as well.

“Looks like I’d have to study it carefully when I have the time.”

Xiao Lin could barely support his tired body. He originally planned to interrogate those three people, but it looked like he had to rest first. Besides, nothing useful could be gained from the time being judging from how stunned and silly-looking their expressions were.

“By the way, how is Ibeiya?” Xiao Lin noticed that Ibeiya had not gotten up at some point but was hiding far away, as if she did not want to see him. Xiao Lin had no other choice but to ask Lilith.

Lilith said, “She’s long revived herself, but she said that the scar on her neck is too ugly and she doesn’t want the perverted uncle to see it. That’s all.”

Xiao Lin was a little speechless, and curiously asked, “I remember that her head was almost... Uh, can she even recover with such a severe wound? The merits of being a vampire looks ridiculously amazing.”

Lilith shook her head, but lowered her voice slightly so Ibeiya would not hear from the distance, “I don’t know much about the dark races, but believe me, I’ve never heard of vampires with such a strong self-healing ability.”

“That girl is definitely unusual!” Lilith concluded solemnly and finally added in a low voice, “Just like you.”

Xiaolin could only smile wryly. The ‘unusualness’ that Lilith referred to was his SS-level talent. To date, he was gradually becoming aware of the difference demonstrated by his own body. While the side effects of dragon blood could be traced back to Song Junlang, the significance of the mysterious black hole within his body was still anyone’s guess.

Chapter 332 - Red Beard’s Mercenaries

Chapter 332: Red Beard’s Mercenaries

Xiao Lin rested for more than an hour, but Lilith did not feel tired at all. In her words, it was all just a warm-up.

Xiao Lin went to check up on Ibeiya again. She only turned around to face him when he repeatedly said that he would not hate her for that. In fact, there were only a few shallow scars on her neck, but the rest of her fair skin all around was really dazzling.

No wonder Lilith was that surprised. Back then, Xiao Lin saw that Ibeiya’s head was almost completely cut off, yet it did not take long for her to have healed to such an extent. He vaguely felt that such a strong self-healing ability could not simply be explained by the vampire race’s superiority.

Ibeiya had many secrets, but after Xiao Lin’s rest, his focus shifted to the three captured people. They had also recovered from the initial loss of consciousness and seemed to be very scared of Lilith. As long as that woman was beside them, they felt as though they could not even breathe.

The benefit of that was a very smoothly-conducted interrogation. Xiao Lin believed that they would not dare to conceal any information due to the circumstance of having their life at stake.

The task of translating their statements was entrusted to Ibeiya. Despite Lilith's greater proficiency in Normese compared to Xiao Lin, those people had a thicker accent—in other words, a dialect—that neither Lilith or Xiao Lin could understand. They were lucky to have Ibeiya around, as that illegitimate daughter who claimed to be a member of the Rosa Kingdom's royal family possessed a strong language talent. All she had to do to understand the dialect was focus her attention and listen for a while.

After some questioning, their identity was easily extracted from them. The three men proclaimed themselves to be individuals of Red Beard's Mercenaries. They frequently made trips to-and-fro the mine all year round, their task was to escort the starmetal to its destination. They went there once in the month, but on that particular trip, they discovered that the mine had been abandoned. When their search came empty handed, they planned to leave the place. It just so happened that Xiao Lin's group suddenly appeared, and it was obvious that malicious thoughts surfaced in their mind when they laid eyes on Lilith and Ibeiya.

The reason for the fight was very simple, but in Ibeiya's words, such fights were but a normal occurrence for Red Beard's Mercenaries. Since they had targeted Ibeiya to satisfy their pleasures of the flesh, Ibeiya was filled with righteous indignation and spilled all the information she knew about them.

Although they were called a mercenary group, they actually started off as bandits who made quite a reputation for themselves around the area. About a year or two ago, their leader, who claimed to be Red Beard, was recruited by someone from a merchant group and soon became their private mercenaries. Such incidents were not at all uncommon in Silver Province.

Many thieves or bandits often choose to attach themselves to a certain force in order to prevent themselves from being annihilated. However, it is relatively rare for them to be so attached to a certain merchant group, just like how Red Beard's Mercenaries did. However, Red Beard's Mercenaries could no longer change their fate after being recruited. Whenever they saw any weaker merchant groups during an escorting assignment, they often took advantage of the situation and robbed them, gaining infamy as a result. Except for the merchant group that recruited them, they basically had no contact with other people.

Lilith's appearance seemed rather solemn after hearing their answers. This starmetal had been operating as usual for several years already, and preliminary observations suggest that the metal's contents were not that high, it was not difficult to imagine how much of starmetal ores had been lost after such a long time.

Colonizers had a great demand for starmetal, and Normans of all races knew that very well. Although they were powerless to stop the colonizers, there was no guarantee that the locals would remain similarly idle in private.

As for the origin of the merchant group with which Red Beard's Mercenaries were associated with, all three individuals shook their heads. Lilith's repeated threats elicited no answers and they simply claimed to play a minor role in everything. They escorted the ores purely to get money since the merchant group was quite generous when it came to paying them a commission.

“What else do you want to know?” Ibeiya asked.

Lilith shook her head. She already found the topographic map of the surrounding from those people, but all three clearly knew nothing about the information she wanted, such as Asabanor, for example.

“Then dispose of them,” Ibeiya suggested eagerly in Chinese. Color drained from the face of all three captives, and even though they did not understand Chinese, they could easily guess from that little girl’s gleeful look that things would not be ending well for them.

“It is a bit troublesome to bring them along,” Lilith said vaguely. They would be going straight to Gold City after leaving the valley, making it incredibly inconvenient to have three additional prisoners on the road. However, she still shot Xiao Lin an unsure gaze.

Xiao Lin had a contemplative look and suddenly said, “Red Beard? What a familiar name.”

Lilith originally wanted to listen to what he said. He thought that Xiao Lin was going to say something, but she could only roll her eyes after hearing what he said. She felt that she and Ibeiya had been preaching to deaf ears, but as soon as she was about to get up and settle everything herself, Xiao Lin came to stop her.

“I think I’ve read about Red Beard’s Mercenaries before I came here. Oh wait, it should be the Red Beard Bandits,” Xiao Lin pulled Lilith to the side and chatted in a low voice.

Lilith nodded. “I’ve heard of Red Beard too. It’s normal that you’d know a bit about them seeing as they have something of a reputation.”

“Uh, no, no, no, I’m not talking about the publicly-known stuff. I’m talking about their wealth.” Xiao Lin thought for a while and concluded, “I think I know where their wealth is hidden.”

Lilith’s eyes widened. Even if those bandits had turned a new leaf, the wealth accumulated from their past looting would certainly be a staggering amount. Therefore, the larger the band of thieves, the more concealed their hidden lair was. Some of the more qualified people would even set up various specially-arranged traps in their lairs, and oftentimes it was only their leader and a small number of people who would know about it.

Xiao Lin happened to be aware of Red Beard’s lair. If memory served him right, their location was not too far from there because Red Beard used to be active in the vicinity, hence the reason why that merchant group chose them as the guardian of the mine.

Yu Mei had previously given him a lot of information regarding those bandits before he left. That madwoman wanted him to rob those places should he have a chance of doing so. That would be their way of raising military funds for the sixth regiment. Xiao Lin did not think too much of it initially, but the chance now seemed to have presented itself before him.

Xiao Lin knew the approximate location, but he did not have a clue as to how to reach there. That was where Red Beard’s Mercenaries came in—they would be the ones to point him in the right direction.

“What do you think?” Xiao Lin asked.

“It’s interesting, but first things first, let’s come to an agreement on how to divide it.” Lilith was a fearless person and Xiao Lin’s proposal undoubtedly whetted her appetite. The two hit it off on the spot and quickly started talking about sharing the spoils.

“Fifty-fifty split,” Xiao Lin said decisively.

“Ahem, did you forget that we have a third person here?”

“Oh Ibeiya. Well, she isn’t an adult yet. She has no right to share the spoils!”

“Sick pervert!”

“...”

Chapter 333 - Heading to Silverlight Lake

Chapter 333: Heading to Silverlight Lake

Based on the information given by Major Yu Mei, the Red Beard Bandits had a long history spanning about 40 to 50 years, since its leader—Red Beard himself—was a very cunning man who escaped several attacks and accumulated a lot of wealth at the same time. After Red Beard grew older, he probably wanted to spend his old age in peace and secretly hid all his accumulated wealth. He then sought help from a wealthy merchant group and transformed himself into a mercenary group.

“Dawn Academy is closest to Silver Province, so it’s not surprising that you were able to get this kind of information.” Lilith did not find it too surprising that Xiao Lin knew all that.

“There are plenty of thieves and robbers in Silver Province and repeated prohibition did nothing to stop them. The wealth they accumulated is not a small amount either, but few people dare to plot against them. Do you know why?” Lilith asked.

“Because of the balance. Local gangsters are above the law, and even though colonial academies like ours maintain local law and order, there will always be situations that force you to turn a blind eye.”

Lilith nodded and said, “Yes. It’s because of that balance alright, but it’s pointless. Don’t you think the world is a lot less fun because of that?”

The corner of Xiao Lin’s mouth twitched slightly.

Lilith sighed dispiritedly. “I have no interest in colonial rule or anything, and especially not the kind of sick perverted fetishes you guys have. I just want to fight with more and more strong individuals. I want to feel what it’s like to experience the power of Epic- or even Legend-rank!”

Xiao Lin was dumbfounded for a moment. Lilith’s interest was purely in the pursuit of a higher level of strength. Of course, the vast majority of humans came to the New World because they

craved for power, but the strength they had was nothing more than a means to end. Lilith was different though. Her pursuits were pure and she did everything simply for the sake of strength.

“What about you?” Lilith asked casually, “What’s your reason for coming to the New World?”

Xiao Lin fell silent again. He initially opened his mouth to say that it was to colonize a foreign land, but that was the academy’s goal, not his. Speaking of that, few people had the chance to regret things when they were forced to enroll in the academy at the beginning.

It went without saying that everyone sought profits. After truly realizing the infinite opportunities in the new world, few would want to return to Earth and continue to live an ordinary life.

Xiao Lin sighed because he realized that he was probably one of those people.

“I knew it. Sick pervert!” Lilith probably misunderstood something.

“Look, this is a misunderstanding. I don’t have that kind of sick fetish...”

After coming out of the valley, Xiao Lin and Lilith brought the three prisoners and continued their journey. Under Xiao Lin’s suggestion, the prisoners were temporarily allowed to live, but they were asked to lead the way and the destination was Silverlight Lake.

Panic came over the three people when they heard the name Silverlight Lake. It was the place where Red Beard first made his fortune and was regarded as a former den of theirs. Of course, as their influence continued to expand, they had long since moved from Silverlight Lake into the more prosperous city zone.

Silverlight Lake gradually began to fall into disrepair as Red Beard’s old residence. Hardly any adults lived there except for a few elderly folk and children that were left behind. However, those old people living in Silverlight Lake were basically close to him but not technically his family. Instead, they comprised distant relatives. Even so, it would be very embarrassing for Red Beard if someone really did seize control of his hometown.

Those three people were hesitant, probably because they thought that Xiao Lin and Lilith wanted revenge. Even if they survived there, they knew that they could not possibly survive at Red Beard’s hands later on. Under the threat of Lilith’s glowing scythe however, they were left with no other choice. Either they led the way or let themselves be killed.

The distance to Silverlight Lake was about two days’ worth of journeying. They chose to go off the beaten track as much as possible along the way, just so they could avoid potentially encountering any other people. Fortunately, the area was full of towering mountains and precipitous ridges. Few people would be encountered in such dangerous terrain and remote environs.

“People have long since guessed that boundless riches were hidden in Silverlight Lake. People have attempted to steal before, but it was unfortunate that they did not find anything. Not to mention how full of old people and children the place is. It’s hard for anyone to imagine that there will be treasures in such an undefended place. As time passed, no one went there to look for it anymore.”

As Lilith mentioned that, she also reminded Xiao Lin not to get his hopes up. Silverlight Lake’s treasures were not an unfounded rumor in Silver Province, but rather public knowledge.

“It’s fine. This is just a little detour. ”

Xiao Lin had other thoughts. It would not be wise for them to show up just like that in Gold City. Someone in Dawn Academy seemed determined to kill him and Lilith in Wildfire Town. He did not believe that the dean would make such a decision, but no matter who it was, there were undoubtedly some very powerful individuals.

If the group got angry after finding out that their intentions have not been realized, Xiao Lin had no idea what they would do. Add that to the fact that the enemy was somewhere in the shadows, Xiao Lin felt that it was a very bad sign. It was better to disappear for some time, perhaps to try and get a clearer picture of the uncertain situation.

Ibeiya’s attitude seemed to be uncertain. She seemed unwilling to follow them at first and even offered to part ways there. Her secrets seemed impossible to unravel, but she had little to do with Xiao Lin and the others anyway. Although they were a little worried about her safety in a solo journey, Xiao Lin and Lilith would have no reason to stop her if she really decided to leave.

However, Ibeiya’s decision lasted for less than two hours. Xiao Lin and Lilith were speechless to find her following right behind them as they were rushing to the destination.

“I changed my mind. Red Beard’s men speak the local dialect, which none of you understand at all. If I’m not around, you might not even get into Silverlight Lake!”

Ibeiya gave a rather far-fetched reason to justify her return. Xiao Lin naturally did not believe it, but it was good that Ibeiya helped them a little along the way. At the very least, she showed no sign of hostility toward them and seemed rather trustworthy.

For the supplies and water sources, they obtained a lot of jerky on their prisoners in addition to bringing some from the mines in the valley. The prisoners could imagine their fate, and made a bit of trouble when leading the way. They tried to escape several times without success, and when they tried to lead Xiao Lin in the wrong direction, Ibeiya immediately exposed that.

“So, you actually did know the way to Silverlight Lake, didn’t you?” Xiao Lin looked speechlessly at Ibeiya.

“I don’t know. How would I know.”

“Your smile is a dead giveaway that you’re lying. You know what, forget it...”

Chapter 334 - Silverlight Lake

Chapter 334: Silverlight Lake

With the inclusion of Ibeiya, their journey was not too boring. Lilith was actually not a great companion for conversation; any conversation with her would inevitably shift to fighting after two or three sentences, and now Lilith’s interest in Xiao Lin seemed to be growing exponentially.

Of course, Xiao Lin did not dare think that interest was anything other than wanting to fight him.

Thanks to Ibeiya, their conversations were more centered on Planet Norma's culture and traditions. Xiao Lin's understanding of the New World was obviously pitifully low, and while Lilith might have been there for more than a year, it was impossible to expect the woman to be interested in anything other than combat.

Ibeiya understood a lot of things, which caused Xiao Lin to give more credence to the fact that she was a bastard child of a royal family. On Planet Norma, other than noble women with high standings, it was rare for commoners to receive any form of higher education.

Ibeiya was very well-spoken; coupled with her cute and friendly appearance, conversations with her were very engaging. However, Xiao Lin would occasionally be on alert; the girl would suddenly skillfully and subtly twist the conversations to gain information on them.

Ibeiya seemed to be extremely curious, but Xiao Lin and Lilith were not stupid. Any questions that touched on their important secrets, which were the things to do with Eath, would be waved away by them with a laugh. Ibeiya would only pout for a bit and call them cunning before continuing with the conversation.

Two days passed by very quickly, and they headed south along the foot of the hill after leaving the ravine. Under Ibeiya's instructions, they went through a narrow winding road, using the shortest distance to traverse the mountain range. After another half a day of walking, they went past a small forest before arriving at Silverlight Lake.

It was an extremely large lake. The vast blue and calm surface was very relaxing. There was a wide grassland next to the lake, and something nearby looked like a village. In it were a number of houses of varying sizes. Being evening, lights could be seen, which signified that it was populated.

Ibeiya said, "Silverlight Lake used to be desolate and uninhabited, but an unceasing war about a hundred years ago caused a number of people to escape here before settling down. Red Beard came from this place. I heard that he was unhappy being stuck in poverty when he was young, and started to attack merchant groups. That slowly led to their current power."

"How will we get in?" Lilith was concerned about their plans for once. She thought for a moment before pointing at the three hostages. "They're in the way."

"@#*%...!"

The hostages seemed to have sensed Lilith's unkind gaze before quickly saying a few words. Ibeiya smiled as she translated, "Lilith, your expression really scared them. They said that they were willing to lead us into the village and will be very accommodating."

Xiao Lin and Lilith discussed for a bit before deciding to keep them temporarily. Finding the treasure in Silverlight Lake was not going to be something that could be done in a day or two, and they would probably need the help of someone familiar with Red Beard. Even if Lilith did not completely believe the three of them, with the current situation, keeping them around was better than killing them.

Walking around the lake, they did not encounter any difficulties walking into the village. However, they still drew a lot of curious and alerted gazes. They could see quite a few kids playing around in the narrow streets. It was just as they heard; there were only kids and old people left here.

“It seems like Red Beard doesn’t treat his own people well,” Xiao Lin said.

“Red Beard is a cruel person. I heard that those who came looking for Red Beard’s treasure would always torture the villagers here, so anyone who was not an old person or a child had already left. It’s only after people started giving up on finding the treasure in recent years that the village started to do better.”

“It sounds quite pitiful.” Xiao Lin looked around. As a village that was a hundred years old, it was way too small.

“Ah, pitiful people all have their dark secrets. A lot of people here went out with Red Beard to plunder and pillage all those years ago, so there are not many natives here that can say they are completely innocent.”

Xiao Lin and Lilith were conversing in Mandarin, with the occasional English thrown in. No matter their accent or their words, they attracted a lot of attention. An old, white-haired man quickly walked over with the support of a few children, trembling as he uttered a few words.

He spoke in Normese, but there was not much influence of a dialect so Xiao Lin could more or less understand. They did not need Ibeiya to translate this time as Lilith answered him right away.

The old man was the oldest person in the village, and was in charge of it as well. However, looking at the state of the village, there was not much meaning to being the village leader.

The old man was undoubtedly shocked at the appearance of Xiao Lin and Lilith, asking them if they were here for the treasure. Almost anyone who came here had that goal in mind.

Xiao Lin was about to say something when Lilith responded, “We came from that side, and just passed by to look at the scenery in Silverlight Lake. Nothing will happen if you don’t disturb us.”

“Outsiders? Dawn Academy!”

Xiao Lin heard the words Dawn Academy in the old man’s words. Everything then became very simple after that. The old man’s expression became very humble and even more respectful. He immediately arranged a place for them to stay.

“Outside, especially in our territories, our statuses are quite special. As long as they are natives who aren’t publicly against us, they will often be quite subservient,” Lilith said expressionlessly.

Xiao Lin sighed. He now understood that they were called outsiders when out of their own territories. The academies had long since turned into an overbearing existence to them, but Xiao Lin had a very complicated feeling when he had to take up that role.

The three released hostages also had a room arranged for them. They were initially afraid that the hostages would run, but it seemed like the three of them had a drastic change of attitudes after realizing they would not be killed, trying various ways to curry favor.

Xiao Lin had seen through their intentions. “They want a piece of the pie!”

“We can still use them for now. We’ll talk after we find the treasure.” Lilith did not care. Killing the three of them would not be difficult.

After settling down, they started to research the treasure. The first thing was to determine if the treasure really did exist in Silverlight Lake. The myths and rumors in the outside world had always been without substance, and more and more people started to believe it was not true in recent years.

However, Xiao Lin had faith in Yu Mei’s report.

Chapter 335 - Legend of Silverlight Lake

Chapter 335: Legend of Silverlight Lake

According to Yu Mei’s information, Red Beard’s treasure really was near Silverlight Lake, but there was no accurate location. That night, Xiao Lin and Lilith discussed for a long time, but failed to reach any notable conclusions.

They had a lot of speculations, such as it being somewhere close to the village or deep in Silverlight Lake. However, it was not the first time someone came seeking treasure there. Since no one had found it yet, where it was hidden would not be so simple.

“It’s a pity we lost the report in Wildfire Town,” Xiao Lin said regretfully. He did not expect it would be useful when they left, but thankfully his memory was quite good.

“I took a look at Silverlight Lake during the day. It’s a freshwater lake,” Lilith said.

“Freshwater?”

Xiao Lin paused, quickly saying, “I saw a documentary; lakes would usually be saltwater lakes if they were completely sealed off, while they would be freshwater lakes if they were connected to other bodies of water. Although I don’t know if the rule applies to Planet Norma, but if Silverlight Lake is a freshwater lake...”

The majority of the natural rules in Planet Norma were similar to those on Earth, which was one of the reasons everyone fought so hard to colonize the place. If that was the case, it was possible that Silverlight Lake was connected to somewhere else underwater.

The two of them were quite adept underwater, and according to the native villagers, there were no threatening aquatic creatures nearby. Silverlight Lake was not that deep either, so their safety was quite assured.

The next day, Xiao Lin went over to the side of the lake after some preparations. The lake glimmered, clear enough that even they could see the bottom. Not far away, some villagers were looking over; their status as outsiders having already been spread throughout the village. Xiao Lin

could feel their respectful gazes. No one dared to move closer. A few children wanted to run over to look at Xiao Lin, as if he was an alien, but were stopped by their elders.

Lilith and Ibeiya were in charge of keeping watch at the shore while Xiao Lin was in charge of investigating under water. The water was very cool, but thanks to his improved constitution after entering Black Iron-rank, the temperature did not feel like much.

The clear lake water allowed Xiao Lin to see everything with ease, but Xiao Lin did not find anything after a few dives. Silverlight Lake was very large, but there were not that many spots that could hide treasure or underwater passages that could potentially lead to other bodies of water. After a whole day of detailed investigating, Xiao Lin was freezing, but they did not have too many findings.

Returning to the village in the evening, one of the three prisoners looked for Xiao Lin after some hesitation. With Ibeiya's translation, the man told him he possibly knew something about the treasure, but was not sure if it would be of use.

That man had a reasonable ranking among Red Beard's troops, and occasionally had the chance to meet Red Beard himself. During a certain meeting, the drunk Red Beard unwittingly exposed something. He had said that he saw through Silverlight Lake's legend and controlled the greatest secret of the lake, which was how he went from a poor, common villager to one of the greatest powers in the Silver Province so quickly.

Silverlight Lake's legend was something worth thinking about. That hostage only knew that much; he was not someone close to Red Beard after all. His words did not mean much to Lilith and Xiao Lin, but Ibeiya had a shocked expression on her face.

The hostages had tried to curry favor with them over the two days, hoping they would be able to leave with that. Xiao Lin understandingly told them that as long as they gave him useful information, letting them go was not impossible.

Just like Earth had his own myths and legends, Planet Norma also had countless legends. Thanks to the abundant magic in that world, their legends were even more plentiful.

Lilith and Xiao Lin's history lessons would naturally not include these untrustworthy legends and myths, but Ibeiya was naturally very familiar with them, having gone through Normese education.

Silverlight Lake did indeed have a beautiful legend. It was said that, during ancient times, there was a king with unparalleled heroism and skill. He led the humans and conquered various lands, attempting to unite the world. He had met a beautiful lady as he passed by the lake, and the two of them fell in love.

It was like any melodramatic story. The lady's humble bloodline could not gain the recognition of the royal family, and they felt that the union between the king and the lady humiliated the royal family. As the king went out to war, someone had the lady killed.

The king was furious when he found out, but he could not go against the powerful royal family. He ended up digging a gigantic hole to bury his lady in, filling it up with seawater, which ended up being the current Silverlight Lake.

The story itself was not too special, especially to Xiao Lin, who had consumed many melodramatic dramas and novels.

However, since Red Beard had mentioned seeing through Silverlight Lake's legend, Xiao Lin and Lilith ended up discussing the matter with Lilith through the night.

If the legend contained any secrets or bits of truth, it could only be that the entire lake was the lady's grave, which meant there would be a large tomb under the lake.

Xiao Lin spoke in depth, remembering the various tomb raiding novels he had read before, attempting to gain some insight, even if he did not know if that information would be useful in Planet Norma.

However, Ibeiya poured cold water over him and the girl shook her head with a strange look on her face. "What tomb? There aren't any ancient tombs. I know you outsiders like to bury your dead in coffins and whatnot, but it used to be a taboo in our world. Our lives were all given by God, so it should naturally return to God after we die. Being one with nature is the best burial."

Lilith understood as she listened. "So, even if the legend is true, that lady was only buried in the ground by the king, so there is no grave, not even a coffin."

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly. "After so many years, I doubt even the skeleton is still there."

Even if it was, in such a large lake with so much plant life, it would be no trivial matter to find it.

Chapter 336 - Night Time Stalker

Chapter 336: Night Time Stalker

They were once again stuck. Even if Red Beard had really found where the lady was buried, the secret was not of any use.

Xiao Lin went more in depth, asking Ibeiya various questions about the myth, such as the name of the king and the lady, as well as the various changes in Silverlight Lake throughout the years.

It was then that Xiao Lin had sharply noticed something else: the origin of the lake's name. It was said that many years ago, the lake would emit a silver light during the night when the light of the two moons hit the bottom, which was where the name came from.

"A silver light? Is it the reflection of the moon?" Xiao Lin first tried to find a logical reason for it, but logic was not really all that useful in Planet Norma.

"Uncle, I'm just talking about the legends. In truth, no one living near the lake had ever seen this so-called silver light."

"Why don't we check it out tonight?" Lilith said decisively.

The weather had been quite good those few days. There were no clouds to be seen, and the moonlight was plentiful. Xiao Lin agreed to her suggestion, and the three of them tidied up before heading straight to the lake. It was not yet that late, and Xiao Lin estimated the time to be around eight at night, but Planet Norma did not have much of a nightlife; the same went for the village. Everyone basically stayed in their houses after the sunset.

That was why Xiao Lin was immediately on high alert after noticing some strange movements behind them. Any native who would be outside during the night was probably following them.

The village had a certain relationship with Red Beard. He might have dared to hide his treasure here, but no matter how confident he was that it would not be found, it was unlikely he would leave it unattended. There were definitely some people left around the village to take care of the treasure and prevent anyone from getting too close.

Xiao Lin was prepared for that, and shot a look at Lilith, alerting her. The one following them had an unclear identity, but did not seem too strong with how they were following them. Otherwise, Xiao Lin at his Black Iron rank and Lilith at her Bronze rank would not have noticed.

The two moons were crescent shaped, and the white moonlight shone over the mirror-like surface of the lake. Some bugs would occasionally fly past, causing ripples on the surface. It was a very normal scene, with no silver light to be seen.

Lilith was a little disappointed, and suddenly rushed backward toward the person following them. Her intense speed did not leave the person any time to react, and after a brief struggle, Lilith's threats could be heard before the night once again turned silent.

The one following them was easily brought over by Lilith, but it was unexpectedly a young boy, his age closer to Ibeiya's. His gaze darted around as he faced Xiao Lin and Lilith, fright evident on his face.

"I remember him," Xiao Lin recalled. "When we arrived, this boy seemed to have wanted to walk toward us, but a few old people stopped him."

Was he the spy Red Beard left behind?

Xiao Lin found that hard to believe, but did not eliminate the possibility. However, this dumb-looking boy who could not even follow them properly definitely did not seem like the type.

"What is your name?" Xiao Lin asked.

"Qwei." The boy said nervously in Normese.

"He's probably around Black Iron-rank in skill, and had probably never gone through any proper battle training," Lilith said to Xiao Lin. She was careful, communicating with a mix of Mandarin and English to prevent Qwei from understanding.

Xiao Lin trusted Lilith's judgement. With Lilith's battle sense, her estimation of the boy's skill should be quite accurate after the fight capturing him.

“Qwei, is it?” Xiao Lin knelt down, trying to soften his tone. He could see that the boy was obviously afraid; he was trembling. He gently said, “You don’t have to be scared. We won’t do anything to you. Tell us, do you know Red Beard?”

Qwei nodded his head initially, but quickly shook his head, mumbling something as he did so. Unfortunately, just as Xiao Lin tried to listen, the boy immediately shut his mouth—trembling even harder, the look of terror in his eyes obvious.

“He seems to be trying to tell us something, but he’s afraid to?” Lilith speculated.

“He’s very afraid,” Ibeiya said.

Xiao Lin rolled his eyes. Anyone could see that he was afraid, but he suddenly widened his eyes. The boy’s gaze did not fall on them as he fidgeted most of the time. He furrowed his eyebrows, standing up before whispering to Lilith, “The one he’s afraid of doesn’t seem to be us.”

In truth, Dawn Academy had a pretty good reputation around their territories in recent years. They might be colonists, but they still treated the locals quite well. They did not force too many taxes on them, nor did they kill indiscriminately. Of course, that was putting aside those with thoughts of rebellion. Dawn Academy’s governmental style had actually attracted quite a few native immigrants.

This village was not removed from society, so they definitely knew that. They might be respectful to outsiders, but they would not be so terrified.

It had to be something else that caused the boy to be so scared.

Xiao Lin and Lilith immediately increased their alertness. Xiao Lin shut his eyes, projecting his mental strength outward. His Basic Meditation had already been at LV6 before the third examination, and after his training in Necromantic Mediation, it was not at LV7, but he still could not sense any living things around.

Lilith’s Basic Meditation was even lower. Xiao Lin shook his head at Lilith, indicating that either there was no one around them, or the opponent was a lot more skillful than Xiao Lin, allowing them to avoid being sensed.

Of course, it was also possible that the boy was good at acting—so good he was even better than Ibeiya.

Lilith was more partial to the last possibility. She was always very careful around strangers. In fact, she still had very clear defenses around Ibeiya, even now. Both Xiao Lin and Ibeiya could feel it, they just never brought it up.

“I-I just went out to use the toilet. I-I’m going back.” The boy tried to retreat, but Xiao Lin could not willingly let him go. Yet, no matter how they asked, the boy stubbornly kept his mouth shut.

Chapter 337 - Spirit

Chapter 337: Spirit

The boy's gaze did not stop darting around, causing Xiao Lin to be unable to see what he was looking at, but he was more or less looking at the center of the lake. Xiao Lin immediately turned around, and under the clear moonlight, the lake was a picture of serenity.

Under the cloudless skies and twin moons, it was very hard for anyone to hide in the large lake. Xiao Lin narrowed his eyes, focusing all his attention on every inch of the lake, but he could not find any points of suspicion. He could not even see any blades of grass moving from the wind.

Just as Xiao Lin was mulling over it, something flashed in his mind, shocking him.

It might not be a person!

The thing he had interacted with the most in the recent days were the undead; how could he have forgotten them during such an important time. He whispered to Lilith, "I suspect there's an undead spirit nearby. Let me use necromantic meditation to sense it. You be careful."

Lilith had a shocked expression as well, flicking her wrist forward as her black battle scythe soundlessly appeared in her hand. Qwei must have thought that Lilith wanted to kill him, and he turned around to frantically run away, but Xiao Lin did not bother with him then.

Necromantic meditation and regular meditation were actually quite hard for regular people to enter at the same time, but Xiao Lin had a unique method, which was to enter the meditative state only after activating Miracle. In the meditative universe, the blackhole once again expanded its dark mouth, swallowing every form of energy it could.

The surrounding energies started to distance themselves from it as well, and it was quite easy to notice any energy sources with strange movements in that situation. That proved that the energy did not move on its own will, but rather because it was being controlled. For instance, Lilith who was beside him had energy tightly condensed around her, which was not the slightest bit disturbed by Xiao Lin's blackhole.

Around a few dozen meters away, there was a grey mass of burning flames, a lot more intense than the death energies that were naturally around them.

He found it!

It was not impossible to sense it with just necromantic meditation, but using Xiao Lin's method, it was impossible to get it wrong.

Xiao Lin opened his eyes, rapidly making a judgement. It was around fifty meters away, and the position was right on top of the center of the lake! Following Xiao Lin's line of sight, Lilith and Ibeiya looked over, but they saw nothing but the empty night sky.

"It might be a spirit," Lilith hazarded a guess in a low voice.

Ibeiya nodded. "An undead without a physical body has to be a spirit."

On Planet Norma, every living thing had a soul, but it was not like the myths on Earth, where souls could wander around after they died. That was impossible; souls could not survive for a long time under Planet Norma's laws.

However, there were no special instances. When a soul had enough power to survive under Planet Norma's laws, it would become an undead spirit. Undead spirits were still undead. As for how souls turned into spirits, that was not something Xiao Lin knew at that moment.

It was different from other undead beings. Spirits could not be seen with the naked eye, but spirits were basically a dense concentration of death energy. It was easy for those that knew necromantic meditation to sense them. Xiao Lin and Lilith had that ability, while Ibeiya was a dark race, sensitive to death energy, so it was easy for them to sense it.

Qwei was just a very ordinary boy, so scared that he could not even speak. He definitely did not seem like some hidden expert.

How could he see or sense the spirit?!

Xiao Lin thought of that question even in his state of high alert. He raised the Holy Soul Sword, pointing it at Qwei's direction, but to his disappointment, Qwei's reaction was not at all different from earlier. He was even more terrified than before. "That-that person is coming. Don't drag me down..."

Xiao Lin thought for a moment, suddenly asking, "Lilith, do you have any hammer weapons with you?"

Lilith moved her scythe to her left hand, flicking her right hand as a small hammer appeared from her bracelet. She handed it to Xiao Lin.

"How many items are in that bracelet of yours?!" Xiao Lin's eyes twitched. He actually did not have much hope for it, having not seen Lilith use many hammer type weapons.

"You should ask me what weapons I don't have!" Lilith winked at him proudly.

"Is this hammer valuable?" Xiao Lin asked.

"I don't really use it, but it's a Black Iron-rank weapon."

"How much is it?"

"Around a few hundred New Dollars." Lilith was not very certain, she then asked, "Why are you asking this?"

It really was frustrating to compare to others. Xiao Lin could not help but bitterly smile despite the circumstances. He took the battle hammer. With that weapon, everything would be much easier. The cheap price also caused him to let out a breath of relief.

"Holy Light Blessing!"

Xiao Lin raised the hammer high as a vibrant light shot out from the head. Holy Light Blessing was a skill he had learnt in The Final Lands. Other than being able to cure some light wounds, it also dealt quite a bit of damage to the undead. However, Holy Light Blessing was still a basic skill with some drawbacks, such as needing to hit the undead with the face of a hammer.

Xiao Lin did not know of any method of flight, and wanted to try forcing the mysterious spirit over. The easiest way was to do what he was doing: throwing the hammer with the holy light on it. It caused a streak of white to appear in the night sky.

Lilith could only gape, finally understanding why Xiao Lin had asked about the price. She had thought Xiao Lin wanted to buy it, but the brat had actually used it as a consumable item.

“Relax, I’ll compensate you when we get back,” Xiao Lin said confidently. A few hundred New Dollars was no longer a sum he cared about.

The hammer flew halfway toward the lake before sinking into the water, causing ripples to form as the white light began to fade into the darkness.

After a few seconds of silence, just as Xiao Lin had thought that his attack had failed and as he was preparing to ask Lilith for a second hammer, the piercing sound of a woman crying could be heard.

Chapter 338 - Mysterious Lady (1)

Chapter 338: Mysterious Lady (1)

The cries pierced their ears, like nails scratching a chalkboard. Anyone who heard it shuddered and clenched their teeth. Xiao Lin and Lilith hurriedly put their hands over their ears, but it was not enough to stop the cries.

Thankfully the cry was very short, lasting only a few seconds before ending. Xiao Lin and Lilith felt like the energy had been drained out of them, and their heads were covered in sweat. They were quite well off compared to Qwei and Ibeiya; the two had collapsed unconscious on the ground. Xiao Lin hurried over to check their breathing, sighing in relief as he found that they had just fainted.

“It’s probably a spirit howl.” Lilith had a dark look on her face. “I’ve heard of this spell; it’s a staple for spirits. It can cause very severe mental damage to those with insufficient will.”

Xiao Lin and Lilith might have looked like they were not that affected, but their strength had drastically depleted as well to below half.

The night returned to silence, but there was no movement within the village at all. The entire village had probably gotten affected by the howl. They were either dead or unconscious.

“What level of a spell is spirit howl?” Xiao Lin asked.

“Gold rank.”

Xiao Lin's expression got much heavier. He had some doubts in his mind. That level of an opponent was not something he could handle, even if he had an SS-rank talent. Gold rank opponents could kill him easily.

Lilith suddenly tugged at his shirt as he was deep in thought. Xiao Lin had thought that the battle maniac was prepared to press on, but he noticed a strange look on her face. He followed her gaze toward the lake. In the middle of the lake, the moonlight was vibrant as always, but under the moonlight stood a woman in a white dress.

No, she was not standing, but rather floating. The woman's legs were only a millimeter away from the surface of the lake, but they never ever touched the water. She was a very beautiful woman, with a pure white dress. Her hair flew wildly with the wind, and her beautiful face looked pure and untainted under the moonlight.

If not for the spirit howl earlier, Xiao Lin believed that he would probably have been captivated by her beauty, but he was even more on the alert now. Xiao Lin and Lilith exchanged a gaze, their mutual doubt and confusion clear.

A spirit woman floating on Silverlight Lake. Thinking about the legends, it was obvious that she was the woman that died during ancient times. Xiao Lin did not know the name of the woman; Ibeiya had told them her name had long since been lost as time passed.

"Is that her?" Lilith asked.

"I'm more interested in whether or not she's an enemy."

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly. Lilith and himself were still on full alert, but the earlier spirit howl was still affecting them, and that spirit was quite possibly much more powerful than them.

Thankfully, no fight occurred. The woman's expression was very calm. After circling around, her gaze fell upon Xiao Lin and Lilith and she suddenly moved. Her bare, white feet walked on the air extremely quickly. Before they could even react, she was already in front of them.

Xiao Lin felt that the surrounding temperature had dropped drastically, as if he had been thrown into ice water. The woman looked between him and Lilith before fixing her gaze on him. She bent a little, getting closer to Xiao Lin.

As the woman observed him, Xiao Lin felt like his blood was freezing over. He looked right as the mythical mysterious woman before looking back down in shock.

The woman was extremely beautiful, but her appearance was quite special. Her eyes were a strange silver color, and based on Xiao Lin's knowledge from his classes, there had never been a race with eyes of that color in the history of Planet Norma.

Next to her temples, there were two thin lines of different colors. Xiao Lin had thought it was some form of makeup, but upon closer inspection the lines seemed to be a part of her flesh, completely merged into her skin.

The strangest thing was her forehead. When the wind softly blew her hair up, it would reveal a strange, bulging object that moved. Xiao Lin observed for a moment, before realizing something and retreating two steps in shock.

It was an eye. There was a third eye on her forehead, but the eye was shut tight.

The atmosphere suddenly turned tense. Xiao Lin and Liliti did not say anything. Lilith already had her battle scythe held tightly in hand, but she did not make any moves. It was contrary to her usual style, Lilith was someone who did not care how strong her opponents were.

Xiao Lin felt that it was strange, and he was shocked when he noticed that Lilith was firmly stuck there. She seemed to be trying to move, but powerless to do so, so it was not that she was afraid of fighting, her movements had just been completely frozen. This entire time, Xiao Lin had not seen or felt any spellcasting or attacks from the woman in front of him!

“Ah!”

Following a miserable sigh, a sad look appeared on that woman’s stony face. She muttered a few words that were understood by Xiao Lin. “You’re not him.”

Those words were spoken in Ancient Normese. That long lost language had actually been uttered by the woman, and the pronunciation was extremely clear, indicating that the woman was very proficient in it.

Xiao Lin’s mind was full of questions, but he noticed the woman’s sad expression had returned to her stony look. She floated in the air, closing the distance with Xiao Lin as she looked at him. Xiao Lin felt extremely uncomfortable under her gaze, because she looked like a human about to step on an ant. Cold, uncaring, and disdainful.

Xiao Lin felt a sense of danger, and quickly tried to use whatever Ancient Normese he could muster up to say, “Who is he? Who are you? How do you know I’m not him?”

The woman suddenly stopped, looking curiously at Xiao Lin as a mocking look appeared on her face. She once again said in Ancient Normese, “I can’t believe someone still speaks this language, but do you even have the right to talk to me?”

Chapter 339 - Mysterious Lady (2)

Chapter 339: Mysterious Lady (2)

The woman was not exactly mocking him, it carried a more extreme amount of contempt, as if everything Xiao Lin said or did was beneath her notice.

Was she going to kill them?

Xiao Lin felt like that was not very possible. He might have felt a strong sense of danger, but he never felt any killing intent from her. He tried saying, "If my hammer disturbed your rest, then I'm terribly sorry."

"I won't kill you." The woman's tone was still cold, as if her words were a gift to him. "At least you're a bit better than those stupid humans. You can actually exchange a few words with me."

Xiao Lin could somewhat understand it. The woman spoke in Ancient Normese, a language that was barely understood in the world, and the village definitely had no one who could speak it. He stopped, then formed a sentence. "Have you been trapped here? Or do you not want to leave the place you had your fated encounter with the king?"

"King? Fated encounter?" The woman's tone got more and more condescending.

Xiao Lin then understood that legends were just legends. The woman seemed to be somewhat angry, but it was not obvious. It was possible that she only spoke to Xiao Lin because it was not easy finding someone who spoke the language, but even so, her contempt was obvious.

Xiao Lin's current level of Ancient Normese was no longer that low. Even if he stumbled occasionally, he was already capable of conveying anything he wanted to. Since the other party was willing, he took the change to ask about the legend, not forgetting to translate it to Mandarin for Lilith.

Lilith had indeed suffered. After the woman moved away, the restrictions on Lilith were naturally lifted, but her entire body was weak, unable to exert any strength. She could not even hold her scythe. In this situation, even standing was hard, let alone fighting.

From the woman's answers, Xiao Lin heard a completely different story from the legend.

In ancient times, the woman had lived near the lake. One day, the king who had wanted to unite the world passed by, meeting the woman. The story was similar to the legends still, but in the woman's version, the king had tricked the woman. The fated encounter was something the king had fabricated; his goal was just the woman's abilities.

Once the king used some method to steal the ability, he found a reason to leave for battle before ordering his royal family to kill the defenseless woman. The king did not even let the woman go after death, building the lake to forever trap her soul there.

Xiao Lin's expression was calm when he finished listening to the story. It was a story of betrayal; he had read a lot of those stories before. This version of the story made a lot more sense. How could a king with such lofty aspirations be tied down by personal relationships? The king overdid things, not even letting the woman go in death.

However, Xiao Lin's face looked to the the woman like he felt it was a problem. The woman narrowed her eyes, and the temperature began to drop.

Xiao Lin sneezed, and he hurriedly started cursing at the king, causing Lilith to roll her eyes at him.

The woman's expression turned for the better, but it just changed to the original cold expression as she once again said, "I know why you're here. Even after so long, the greed of your human's knows no bounds. Red Beard's treasure is with me. Are you interested?"

"You're not a human?" Xiao Lin gaped, very curious about the woman's origins. Her answer was actually quite obvious. In all of Planet Norma's history, there had never been any silver-eyed, three-eyed humans.

"Are you willing to give us the treasure?" Lilith focused on something else.

"I can."

The woman's answer caused the two of them some surprise, but she continued, "However, whether or not you can get it will be up to yourselves. Would you like to give it a try?"

The woman's words were filled with allure, but it caused Xiao Lin to be even more alert. He stepped in front of Lilith, saying, "I'm sorry, we don't really need money. You should just hold on to the treasure."

What a joke. He refused to believe that the cold woman would be so kind to them.

"You are quite a bit smarter than the other humans that have come before you, but do you really think you're allowed to reject it?"

The woman raised her right hand, and the water in the lake was instantly split open, revealing a narrow path. The surrounding water seemed to have been stopped by an invisible force.

"Go ahead! The treasure you want is there. Go get it; help me get it back!"

The woman had an alluring voice that was hard to resist. Xiao Lin and Lilith's eyes slowly turned devoid of color. Even though their expressions showed that they were fighting it with all their might, the voice carried an unbelievable magic, passing through their skin and right into their brains, issuing commands to their bodies.

Xiao Lin and Lilith struggled as their legs started to move along the passage toward the center of the lake. Silverlight Lake was not too big, and it only took over ten minutes for them to get close to the center. Xiao Lin's limbs might have been under her control, but he was still very much conscious. He looked at the center, and among countless underwater plants, there was a long sword stuck in the ground. Half the sword had been stuck into the sand, and the half that was revealed had signs of decay.

"Go."

The woman's voice could be heard again, and Xiao Lin and Lilith instantly recovered control over their bodies. However, it was too late for them to turn back. The sword emitted an extremely powerful magnetic force. Before the two of them could even speak, they were enveloped by a gigantic power. Their bodies started to blur and twist as they turned to light, sucked into the sword.

Water once again filled the lake, as if nothing had happened. The woman looked at the calm lake before creasing her eyebrows, uttering, “Was I wrong? Inside that man... No, I was definitely wrong. It’s impossible. However, the two of them have peak-level gifts from God. I hope they don’t disappoint me.

Chapter 340 - Fighting Clones

Chapter 340: Fighting Clones

Xiao Lin was in an enclosed space that looked like a cave when he opened his eyes, his head heavy. Lilith seemed to have woken up at the same time as him, and was looking at their surroundings with alarm.

“Are we inside the sword?” Lilith said in disbelief.

“Does that mean we’re no longer in Planet Norma? Just like The Final Lands?” Xiao Lin said bitterly. Being sucked into the sword was actually a familiar feeling, and upon further thought, it was similar to when they were transported during the examinations.

“That sword is at least Epic, no, Legend-ranked,” Lilith said with a complicated look on her face.

“How so?”

“Ah, even though every weapon is unique, they share similarities. For instance, weapons that have their own domain are all at least Epic-ranked. Considering the surroundings, it’s definitely Legend rank!” Lilith half-guessed as she talked to herself, but her last words were fairly confident.

There actually was a Legend-rank sword under the lake!

If the news spread out, half of Planet Norma could rush over. Legend-ranked weapons were not something that could be easily forged. It needed extreme talent and also materials that were exceedingly rare, on top of a stroke of luck, or it would never succeed. In all of Planet Norma, even including the academies, Legend-ranked weapons and armor were very rare.

However, Xiao Lin recalled something, and was the slightest bit excited about seeing such a weapon for the first time. Then, his expression worsened.

He vividly remembered what the woman said when she sent them in. They were obviously not the first group of people here. Thinking about the legend of Red Beard’s treasure, it was obvious that there were countless people who had tried to find it.

If they had also met the woman and were forcefully sent into the sword’s private domain, then why had there not been any news about it on Planet Norma. News about weapons of this rank were something that could not be suppressed.

The only possibility was that everyone that had come inside had never left. If that were the case, then how did the legend ever spread?

Xiao Lin and Lilith exchanged a glance, revealing their own shocked expressions. The only possibility was the so-called legend had been spread by Red Beard to attract more people.

If they thought about it more, the hostages had told them that Red Beard said all his accomplishments were from something he had obtained in the lake. It was possible that he had discovered the woman first and formed some sort of deal with her.

“What is she out to gain?” Xiao Lin asked in confusion. The woman was definitely not after Red Beard’s treasure sending so many people, including them, here.

“I feel like the sword might be what is keeping her here, and she wants us to release her spirit. Other than that, I can’t think of any other reason.” Lilith had a better understanding of weapons, and made that conclusion.

“That girl, ah no, that old granny is at least tens of thousands of years old. Is it really wise to release her?” Xiao Lin could not help but think of Asabanor. That old fart had only spent a few hundred years in The Final Lands before being twisted by revenge, causing so much trouble for Xiao Lin and the academies.

Now, it was an old lady several millennia old. Xiao Lin got a headache just thinking about it.

“Do we have a choice?” Lilith said unhappily.

It was true; just as she said, they had no choice but to move forward.

Xiao Lin started to shift his focus to their surroundings. It was an empty cave, possibly completely sealed off. There were no lights or any sunlight, but the cave was filled with strange rays, causing it to look like daytime inside.

The two of them walked around the area, but could not find any exits. It really was a completely sealed-off space. Xiao Lin stared into space, wondering what the woman wanted them to do here.

As he was thinking, two pillars of light suddenly shone in the middle of the cave. The two of them were immediately on high alert, but Xiao Lin felt a strange familiarity to the pillars of light. The light started to rapidly condense and take shape, slowly forming a humanoid figure.

“My god! Is there a virtual battle system here? Does that old lady know about the academies?” Xiao Lin felt like it was incredibly similar to the virtual battle system.

“I once heard that the inspiration for the system was unknown, now I finally know.” Lilith’s expression hardened.

When the lights dimmed, two complete humans appeared. The shocking thing was that they were clones of Xiao Lin and Lilith, right down to the clothes they were wearing. The only difference was that there were no expressions on their face at all, as if they were soulless.

“It looks much better than our virtual battle systems,” Xiao Lin praised, despite the situation. The battle systems could not produce such a lifelike simulation.

“So, the granny wants us to attack them?” Xiao Lin suddenly got serious. The clones were obviously not there to drink tea with them.

When they saw the weapons that slowly formed in the hands of the clones, Lilith and Xiao Lin were speechless. They recognized the weapons; they were clearly Xiao Lin’s Holy Soul Sword and Lilith’s battle scythe. The cave could even copy their weapons.

“Let me see how good your imitation goods are!” The proud Lilith naturally could not help herself as she sped forward. Her forceful attack aimed to hit both the clones.

“So fast!” Xiao Lin exclaimed.

The cloned Lilith immediately raised her scythe, adopting a defensive stance, but the anticipated attack never landed. Lilith’s scythe had looked like it was going to attack the two of them, but she suddenly switched angles in mid-air, rushing straight for the Xiao Lin clone.

“She really is a natural born battle maniac...” Xiao Lin could only admire Lilith’s combat abilities. She had been gunning for the Xiao Lin clone from the start.

If the clones perfectly reflected reality, then dealing with the cloned Xiao Lin immediately was obviously the best choice. It would turn into a two-against-one battle after that.

Chapter 341 - Changing Opponents

Chapter 341: Changing Opponents

Lilith’s skills in battle were the real thing, suddenly changing her target mid-attack. This sort of high speed technique was not possible for someone unskilled in battle. Lilith had undoubtedly succeeded, and she was only an inch away from the Xiao Lin clone; it had become hard to avoid her attack.

Xiao Lin had even already set his target to the cloned Lilith, preparing to distract her to aid Lilith’s attack.

The opening of the battle was perfect, but they were shocked by what happened next.

It looked like Lilith’s battle scythe had been about to hit the clone when Xiao Lin’s clone suddenly dodged to the right at high speed, narrowly escaping the swinging scythe.

“So fast!”

Xiao Lin’s eyes widened, asking himself if he would have been able to avoid Lilith’s attack if it had been him in that position. However, the clone had done it, and Xiao Lin intimately knew what skill his opponent had used: Miracle. That skill should have been unique to Xiao Lin. He had tried it on the virtual battle system before, and had been unable to find the skill despite the wide variety of options.

However, the clone in front of him had managed to completely replicate his skill. No, it was actually even better than his own! Xiao Lin had accurately calculated it before, and even if he used Miracle, he would definitely not have been able to react so quickly.

Xiao Lin's expression darkened; he knew that this situation would not be solved easily.

With her sure-hit move missing its mark, even Lilith let out a gasp. She then landed in between a joint attack from the two clones after missing, but Xiao Lin would obviously not let Lilith fight alone. He wielded the Holy Soul Sword and charged in, attacking the Lilith clone.

Xiao Lin's meaning was clear: he wanted to be the distraction, allowing the more skilled Lilith to handle his own clone. Even if he was at a disadvantage, he would be able to hold on for a while using Phantom Steps and Miracle.

The Lilith clone summoned flames around her scythe, using the skill unique to Lilith. However, with the Xiao Lin clone already using Miracle, Xiao Lin was not surprised. He was long since prepared and used Lightsword, dispersing the waves in midair.

By the time the flames dispersed, the Lilith clone had already closed the distance. Xiao Lin did not panic. He could still hold on with Phantom Steps. Lilith lacked a repertoire of long-ranged attacks since she was not great at magic. She used the battle scythe's long reach to make up for that, so all he needed to do was pay attention to that.

Thinking about that, Xiao Lin suddenly thought something was weird. The Lilith clone's scythe had disappeared...

The clone no longer held a scythe, but two shortswords. Xiao Lin had seen Lilith wield them before. She used them in Wildfire Town. Lilith's spatial bracelet had countless weapons, which were all obviously replicated as well.

Xiao Lin's expression once again darkened; the cave's replication seemed to be perfect, even managing to replicate all the weapons and unique skills they had. He was not certain, but he was worried that it could even copy their SS-rank talents.

Of course, he was silently cheering that he did not have any amazing equipment with him. Otherwise, it would have been quite precarious.

The Lilith clone's speed increased with the light swords, and even with Miracle and Phantom steps, Xiao Lin had a hard time keeping away.

Clank!

Xiao Lin's Holy Soul Sword clashed with the cloned swords. His numb hands allowed Xiao Lin to be sure that the clone had also copied Lilith's Bronze-rank skills. Bronze-rank could absolutely oppress those at Black Iron, and Xiao Lin had been forced back a few steps with the attack, but he believed that Lilith would have absolutely suppressed him if it was the real her.

SS-rank talents were impossible to replicate!

Xiao Lin suddenly understood. Lilith had completely mastered her scythe, but it did not mean she had the same mastery with her other weapons. Her skill with the other weapons had probably come from her SS-rank talent, but with the absence of that talent, the clone could not unleash her full strength.

Xiao Lin let out a sigh of relief, converting all his Agility into Strength. With that, he stepped forward. With the Holy Soul Sword in hand, his Basic Swordsmanship was at LV9.

If the clone Lilith took out her scythe again, Xiao Lin would not hesitate to switch everything back to Agility and escape her range of attack, avoiding direct confrontation.

In just a short ten minutes, the two of them had entered an awkward balance. A Lilith without her SS-rank talent and Xiao Lin could not do anything to each other.

However, the situation on the other end was not great either. The cloned Xiao Lin was faster than himself, and with Phantom Steps, Lilith could also not hit the other party.

The two fights ended up circling the cave, neither hitting the other. In the end, Xiao Lin and Lilith returned to the center, and Lilith complained, “How are you so fast!”

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly. “I don’t know either. The clone is faster than me. However, I feel like your clone seems stronger than you as well.”

“Let’s switch.” Lilith let out a breath. She was not used to this sort of fight; it seemed like it was the first time she had met such a fast opponent, and the cat-and-mouse chase was frustrating.

Xiao Lin gaped, and immediately agreed after sensing that Lilith’s breath was a little erratic. The situation was not good for them if it continued because he could feel like the two clones did not seem to be tired at all. Lilith and himself would only get worse as time went on. Using their stamina against them seemed to be how the clones planned on fighting.

Since the Xiao Lin clone was so agile, Xiao Lin would just handle it himself, while Lilith should not have an issue with her SS-rank talent.

Chapter 342 - Reason To Be Angry

Chapter 342: Reason To Be Angry

The plan was good, but when Xiao Lin faced his own clone, the pressure was even greater than before. The clone did not look any different from himself other than the listless gaze. It was like looking in a mirror, making Xiao Lin feel uncomfortable. No one wished for another one of themselves in the world.

That was why Xiao Lin would not give any quarter to his opponent, but he quickly realized that it was not just speed. He was even completely oppressed when it came to power.

Every time their swords clashed, Xiao Lin would be forced back. The difference shocked Xiao Lin; if they were perfect clones, why could he not beat his opponent?

If Basic Swordsmanship was at MAX, Xiao Lin's blade would not only be accurate, it was strong as well, but every single one of his slashes would be accurately predicted and stopped. On the other hand, he could predict the clone's movements as well, but even if he did, he found it hard to defend.

Speed was one matter, since Xiao Lin could not maintain Miracle forever, or his body would not be able to fight for long enough. That was why he would only activate the skill when needed. However, the clone was different; it was quite equal to him when fighting normally, but it was just that bit better than him when it came to sudden attack power.

In just a few short minutes, quite a few wounds had appeared on Xiao Lin. Thankfully they were only light wounds, and he had his dragon blood's enhanced recovery. Still, the situation was getting out of hand.

The clone had its own regenerative ability as well, and any wounds it had gotten while fighting with Lilith had all vanished, which exacerbated the situation.

How could his clone be stronger than himself?

Was there something even he himself had yet to discover?

Xiao Lin's thoughts were a mess, and he looked to the side. Lilith's fight was just as intense, both of their flames were dancing around each other. The flames formed various shapes in the air. The clone was indeed slightly stronger than Xiao Lin, since its flames were oppressing Lilith's, and they were part of Lilith's limited ranged attacks.

Lilith's fight was not too hopeful, so Xiao Lin could only rely on himself.

Xiao Lin tried hard to think if there was anything he had not used. The Holy Soul Sword's spirit could not be summoned since there was not enough death energy there, but what about his Replication skill?

Xiao Lin had not used the skill for quite a while, saving it for key moments. However, as his gaze shifted to Lilith, since she was the only target at the moment, he hesitated. Lilith was using her scythe, and if he copied her skills, he would have to switch to a scythe as well, or it would not be very useful.

As he was once again doubting himself, Lilith suddenly said, "Xiao Lin! From before, your explosive strength. I think it's what the clone is using!"

After exchanging blows with the clone, Lilith was naturally familiar with the clone's strength, and Xiao Lin naturally trusted her judgement, but what she was referring to...

Xiao Lin suddenly realized Lilith was referring to when he almost caused the dragon blood's side effect to take hold of him again when he saw Ibeiya being killed. At the time, he had used necromantic meditation to suppress his killing intent, but he did indeed feel like there was a strange power within him after that, and that strength was much stronger than his usual power.

However, that strength was only present for a moment, like a brief dream, so he had not thought about it after that.

“So, this thing possesses that explosive power?” He still had his doubts. He did not know what would happen with how strong the dragon blood’s side effects were. Would he lose himself again?

In that strange sealed-off cave, he no longer felt the presence of a resurrection tower, so it meant that he would definitely die if he died there, and he did not dare take the risk.

Xiao Lin used all his strength to withstand the clone’s fierce assault. All he could do was defend at the moment, but every time a flurry of blows came in, he would not be able to block one or two strikes.

He no longer had that much time to hesitate. His exhaustion would only get worse with time, but Xiao Lin basically had no idea how he could activate his dragon blood. If he needed to be angry, what could he use to get angry?

His hope of beating his opponent? No, that was just a will to survive, or even the fear of death, not anger.

“Lilith, how do you think I should get angry?” Xiao Lin shouted, but the price for his words was a wound on his left shoulder.

Lilith paused before understanding Xiao Lin’s words. She could not help but mock, “You really are useless! If you just fought a bit more with me, you would not be in such a situation!”

Xiao Lin’s eyes twitched. It was quite true; he lacked practical combat experience. If he had mastered this normally, he would not have been in this current situation.

“Fine, just think. If you die here, your cute little Ibeiya will run away with someone else. Would you not be angry?” Lilith started to help Xiao Lin think about how to get angry, but that instigation only led Xiao Lin to be speechless.

“I’ve already said, many times, I’m not some weird pervert!” Xiao Lin felt like he would never recover his reputation.

“Ah, let’s look at it another way. If you die here, you’ll never have a chance to collect little lolis from every race on Planet Norma.”

“Isn’t that Chen Dao’s dream?”

“Who’s Chen Dao?”

“You don’t know him.”

...

Lilith mentioned a few things; women, riches, power were all brought up. Xiao Lin could not deny, he had those wishes, but they were things everyone wanted, and were not reasons to be angry.

Lilith was getting frustrated, especially since she was not managing to beat her own clone as well. She suddenly said angrily, “You really are troublesome! Then let me tell you a secret. Judge Academy discovered something. There’s someone on Planet Norma who is trying to use our wormholes to head to Earth and eliminate us from the source. Is that enough to anger you?”

Xiao Lin was really dumbfounded.

Chapter 343 - Victory

Chapter 343: Victory

If it was not for the fight, that news would have been enough to shake him for a long time, but under the intense attacks, he snapped back to reality, focusing on Lilith’s words. He said in disbelief, “You’re saying there’s someone out to attack our homelands!”

“That’s right!” The clone’s skill caused Lilith’s words to be much simpler, since she could not afford to be distracted.

Xiao Lin’s mind was in disarray. If Normese troops appeared on Earth, the results would be disastrous. Planet Norma’s skills and magics could all be used on Earth; that was something they had verified.

It was not impossible for Earth technology to beat them, unless they faced some amazing spell. The damage Earth weapons could deal was palpable, but Xiao Lin realized a more severe problem.

Song Junlang had said that Earth’s laws were already in a very fragile state, not able to withstand any more great impacts. If the Normese scheme succeeded, the presence of such strength on Earth might turn Earth to dust.

Xiao Lin did not think he was some savior; he did not care too much about the entire planet, but when Lilith said those words, his parents appeared in his mind.

His parents had worked so hard to raise him, and did not even have the chance to properly enjoy their lives yet. If they had died with the Earth’s demise, how could he bear with it?

How could he accept it!

He could not die here!

Absolutely not!

Xiao Lin’s eyes slowly lost their glow, and his expression turned cold like the clone’s, but his entire body suddenly unleashed a frightening aura.

Lilith glanced at him in disbelief. “That worked? This brat is way too naive!”

Lilith did not know that Xiao Lin had inferred so much from just her one sentence. With those of them that had come to this planet, familial relationships was something that was easily neglected, but the majority of them had a breaking point. It was why Earth was their homeland, and they would not allow Planet Norma to touch it.

The clone sensed Xiao Lin's change as well; even if it was a clone with no feelings, it quickly increased its attacks.

Clank!

However, Xiao Lin raised his sword with one hand, easily swatting away the clone's attack. Inexhaustible energy was wildly rising within Xiao Lin, shocking even himself. As the owner of his own body, he should have been the one who understood it the most, but it did not seem to be the case at that moment.

The origin of the energy was unclear, but Xiao Lin had his guesses. It was that blackhole that appeared in his meditative world. Of course, that was not a real blackhole; it was just a representation that appeared in the meditative world, just like how the elements looked like stars... But what was it?

Xiao Lin could not think about that at the moment; his mind had turned extraordinarily clear and simple. His only goal at that moment was defeating the clone in front of him.

"So, that's how it is? Is that why you are stronger than me in every attribute?" Xiao Lin said to himself, shaking his head. "No, that's not right. You can't use all of this power. You're just a clone. How could you know what anger is, what feelings are?!"

As he said that, Xiao Lin thrust his sword forward, dashing through the clone in the blink of an eye, appearing behind his foe. The Holy Soul Sword pierced through his opponent's left shoulder, and its arm was cut off.

"Cut! You really are using the reflexes enhanced by Miracle." Xiao Lin's blade had been prepared to cut his foe in half, but the clone did not hesitate to avoid it at the last minute.

"How about Strength then?"

Xiao Lin stopped his movements and did not continue chasing, holding his Holy Soul Sword high and sending a Lightsword at his opponent.

Lightsword's aura was not quick, but this shot had a shocking area. Even if the clone had time to try to avoid it, it could not escape the attack radius.

Instant kill!

Xiao Lin's clone was not just cut in half by Lightsword; the intense aura had even cut apart its body, sending it hurtling to the ground.

The increase in his power had been out of his expectations. Xiao Lin stared at his blade in shock, closing his eyes in thought for a few seconds.

He still had Miracle active at that moment; that sort of strength could only be used under the presence of Miracle, using that mysterious blackhole to absorb power to strengthen all his attributes.

It actually had a similar function with Miracle; the only difference was that Miracle changed his attributes, while this power just added onto them.

It was even stronger when he had Miracle active, but could only be used when he was under emotional distress. Xiao Lin closed his eyes, mumbling, “Exceeding Miracle, causing despair in others. Since that’s the case, this state will be called Ruin!”

Xiao Lin looked over to the other side, and Lilith’s battle with the clone was still in the same situation. Feeling like Xiao Lin wanted to help, Lilith suddenly shouted a warning. “Don’t come here! This opponent is mine!”

Xiao Lin shrugged, happy to sit down and watch.

After deactivating Miracle, the strange power in his body receded as well, and a wave of exhaustion and fatigue took its place. He had learned in class before: even if a skill could allow them to temporarily exceed their own strength, under Planet Norma’s balance lawas, those skills would be paid back with fatigue.

Miracle was the same; each use would pile on his fatigue, but it was not as severe as it was at that moment. Xiao Lin could not help but smile bitterly, increasing his power temporarily would have to be paid back by resting for a long time?

Lilith had slowly broken through the deadlock. As she withdrew more and more weapons, she started to overwhelm the clone. The clone did not have an SS-rank talent, and did not have the ability to wield those weapons.

After twenty minutes, the battle ended.

The cloned Lilith collapsed with numerous wounds on its body. Xiao Lin looked at the numerous weapons on the floor, smirking as he said, “Compared to before, your combat style has changed.”

“I was forced to; the opponent was hard to handle, but it was quite interesting.”

It seemed like Lilith was quite satisfied with her clone opponent.

Chapter 344 - Mysterious Ancient Writings

Chapter 344: Mysterious Ancient Writings

The two clones Lilith and Xiao Lin defeated turned into halos on the ground before disappearing in thin air. Not even the slightest trace of blood was left and it looked as though nothing had happened.

“It’s simpler than I thought,” Lilith exhaled slightly and picked up the weapons that had fallen all over the ground. Switching through various weapons allowed her to disrupt the clone’s rhythm and she seemed to have mastered the techniques more skillfully after the earlier battle.

“Now that it’s all over, it’s time for you to explain everything.” Xiao Lin calmed his fluctuating mood but Lilith’s words still left him feeling somewhat worried.

“Explain what?”

“Hey now, don’t you show that innocent look to me! You just said earlier that Judge Academy has information about Normans trying to enter our world!” Lilith’s confusion made Xiao Lin even more anxious.

“Oh, I lied to you.”

“Why I oughta smack you right now!”

“Oh? Are you finally willing to fight with me?”

Xiao Lin did not know how to respond.

“Okay, okay. I won’t joke around with you anymore.” Lilith pursed her lips before adding, “It’s not entirely a joke though, but for the most part it’s all in jest, otherwise I wouldn’t have been able to get the information in the first place.”

Lilith gave a cursory explanation of how her status in Judge Academy made it somewhat easier to get access to a few of the inner secrets, though it was still impossible for her to know the more concrete ones. Like she said, Judge Academy’s intelligence department had initially heard that rumor from the slums.

The slums were basically the bottommost layer of society in Planet Norma, where credibility was not very high in the first place. The situation could be analogous to someone on Earth who proclaimed their intention to destroy the world on the Internet. That person would, at best, be regarded as a mentally ill individual.

“Do you understand now? Judge Academy did investigate this matter a little seriously at first, but they eventually came to the conclusion that it was just a hoax. Don’t worry.”

“I sure hope so.” Xiao Lin was unsure if Lilith was lying to him, but even if it was just a joke, her words had left him with a sense of alertness. If the lowest rung of Planet Norma’s society could have such thoughts, then what about those who really did have the ability to carry it out? Would they try executing such a plan?

On careful thought, such a hypothesis was rather scary, especially when Xiao Lin was reminded of Ibeiya’s conversation with them about Planet Norma’s rumors some days ago. When the high priest Asabanor was still at his peak, he used his knowledge of astrology to explore the humans’ space channels.

Did Asabanor really discover it? If so, could he use it? Or perhaps even go directly to Earth through that passage?

There was no way to know the answer and Xiao Lin felt a headache coming on. In fact, such a possibility was highly likely. Xiao Lin had previously treated Asabanor as Judge Academy's concern, but at that moment, he felt that it was better for that revenge-driven dead soul to be completely eradicated once and for all.

"Lilith."

"Yes?"

"We must end Asabanor for good this time! I think Dawn Academy should help too!"

"Huh?"

"That is why we must get out from here!"

The speechless Lilith had yet to react to Xiao Lin's sudden change of demeanor when something happened in the cave. A door that shone in a milky white light appeared out of nowhere in a corner.

The two of them exchanged glances and Lilith pondered. "What does this mean?"

"It's probably telling us that we've cleared the level."

Lilith was lost for words.

"You obviously haven't played games before. Once you cleared the level, there will be a pathway to a new level. What an old system. We've already used it on Earth. The Normans are so uncreative," Xiao Linban mocked teasingly.

"You're saying there's a stronger enemy in the next level? Let's go then!" The things that Lilith looked forward to completely different from Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin was stunned for a moment and shook his head, unsure whether to laugh or cry. Next up, he walked right through the white gate of light.

A burst of light appeared in front of their eyes as the environment around them changed. In the next quarter of an hour, they were no longer inside a cave full of rocks, but found themselves inside a room covered completely in silver metal. The room had no entrance or exit, no ventilation, and no light source, although there was a strange glow illuminating it.

"What is this place? Are there going to be new clones of us again?"

"That's unlikely. It's useless to use the same trick twice. Hey, this sentence sounds kinda familiar."

When Xiao Lin was poking fun at himself, a square table suddenly appeared in the center of the room. The table was made up of dark halos, but a substance-like quality could be felt upon the slightest of contact. There was a drawing on the table as well. It was a grid similar to a chessboard, while beside the chessboard were various little chess-like pieces that were made out of wood pieces.

“I don’t know how to play chess!” Lilith was the most disappointed one there, since she did not get the battle she had been looking forward to.

“I somehow think that this is for us to put together a puzzle?” Xiao Lin took a closer look. Strange figures were drawn in some of the chessboard’s grids, while other grids appeared empty. It was obviously trying to tell any visitors that they were supposed to fill the grids using the wood pieces.

“Does that mean the first level is a battle level, and the second level is a intelligence test?” Xiao Lin was a little curious. He picked up each wood piece and observed it one by one, but Lilith lacked all interest in it. Fighting was everything for that woman and everything else was boring to her.

After a long time, Xiao Lin’s slowly had an odd expression.

“Have you found the pattern?” Lilith asked.

“Um, this is a bit uncanny. Take a look.” Xiao Lin hesitantly handed over one of the wood pieces, but Lilith simply glanced at it and returned it back to him, shrugging her shoulders. “Just tell me what you found out.”

“Well, I think the graphics on the wood chips are some kind of text.”

“Normese? No, that can’t be. It doesn’t look like Normese. Could it be Ancient Normese?” Lilith asked casually as she felt it was .

“It’s not that either.” Xiao Lin’s expression became more and more weird. He gulped and spoke softly in a very unusual tone, “I think it’s oracle bone script.”

“What?” Lilith was stunned for about a dozen seconds.

“Yeah, you heard it right, and I read it right too. I almost forgot to tell you that I studied liberal arts in the past, so I was fortunate enough to read a few books about oracle bone script.”

“But... But it’s impossible!”

“Exactly. I don’t understand how it could be possible.” Xiao Lin put down the wood pieces and sighed. “I might be able to understand it if it were Chinese or English, but oracle bone script... This has to be a joke. Isn’t this a script from thousands of years ago?”

Chapter 345 - Clearing the Level

Chapter 345: Clearing the Level

Named after the method of engraving the characters on tortoise shells and animal bones, oracle bone script could be considered the earliest form of Chinese characters and one of the most developed writings in the ancient Chinese dynasty.

Even on Earth, such texts could only be seen from ancient ruins or antique books and materials, yet a script as ancient as that happened to appear in a completely sealed metal room in a completely remote world. Had it not been under such a circumstance, Xiao Lin would even have thought that someone had tried to play a ludicrous joke on him.

Xiao Lin studied it carefully for a moment and said thoughtfully, "I think I probably know the rules of this game. It's actually just a very simple translation puzzle. You see, on the grids are basic words written in Ancient Normese, and the missing grid is probably to allow us to find the corresponding translation from the wood pieces, which are all written in oracle bone script."

"Does that mean you're able to solve the puzzle?" Lilith ignored the first half of the explanation and was only interested in the result.

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly. "Well, this will be a bit hard for me. I only know very little about it. It's not like I'm an archaeology professor. In any case, we'd still have to try it."

Oracle bone script was essentially hieroglyphic in nature and was the most primitive way of creating characters. Its limitations were the decline of pictoriality, the rise of symbolism, and the difficulty of drawing certain physical objects or abstract concepts.

Xiao Lin's Ancient Normese allowed him to recognize the words in the table, and he was fortunate that they were the most basic words, such as the sun, the moon, the mountains, the rivers, and the sky. It was slightly better than knowing nothing, although it was still possible to guess the general meaning of the hieroglyph even if he did not recognize the word.

The puzzle was initially completed very smoothly in the beginning, as simple words could more or less be identified according to the graphics and were not that complicated. As it went further however, the increasing difficulty became more apparent, with many strange vocabularies that were unique to Ancient Normese while being absent from oracle bone script. Xiao Lin had to look for the closest possible word to fill the blanks.

Although Lilith had quite some doubts, she still chose not to interfere with him. She rested her chin on her hands in boredom and stared quietly at Xiao Lin, who had a look of seriousness on his face.

The remainder of the time was spent in silence. Xiao Lin thought that deciphering the words would be a big obstacle as the difficulty increased, and that was true at first, but after a short period of decreased efficiency, it actually began to improve again.

It was a very strange feeling. For example, some of the terms which he completely could not understand suddenly became understandable after some time. It was as though Xiao Lin was undergoing self-learning and self-improvement in the process of deciphering the puzzle.

Unbeknownst to him, Xiao Lin SS-level talent was subtly producing a tremendous effect, especially after his learning efficiency had undergone an advancement. The effect was even more startling when he learnt some of the oracle bone scripts which he already had a certain foundation on.

Of course, it could be that he had a language talent that he was unaware of, as that was the evaluation given to him by the central computer after the initial monthly exam.

Xiao Lin did not know how long he took. It could have been a few hours or even more than ten hours. When he finally got ready to stand up, his legs turned numb and he nearly fell, startling the sleepy Lilith.

“Are you done?”

“Uhh, I guess.”

“You guess? ”

Xiao Lin massaged his legs and looked at Lilith yawning again and again. He said helplessly, “You have to at least show some concern for me. This job isn’t any easier than fighting... I can’t guarantee the accuracy of my answers.”

After some time, there was a slight noise in the room, and a milky-white door appeared again in the corner. It was the best answer Xiao Lin could get.

“Thank goodness it wasn’t in vain.” Lilith patted him on the shoulder and gave an appreciative look.

After taking barely a few steps, Lilith discovered that Xiao Lin was standing there in a daze instead of following along. She could not help but ask, “What are you thinking about? Do you need me to lend you some support?”

Xiao Lin refused, not knowing where to laugh or cry, and pointed to the wood pieces that had been filled out according to the notes. He said, “Doesn’t this feel strange to you? Don’t you think this looks more like a translation chart?”

Lilith was silent. Since she was not a linguist, she had no way of distinguishing between Ancient Normese and oracle bone script. However, she could understand the significance of that translation chart.

It was a sign that Earthlings conversed with Normans tens of thousands of years ago, and when any ambiguity in language occurred, someone created that corresponding translation chart to communicate.

Colonial academies first arrived in the New World more than two centuries ago, which was equivalent to four centuries ago in Earth’s time. They were the first batch of visitors, and that was a historical fact recognized by every academy. If the translation table in front of them was not deliberately fabricated by that mysterious woman to deceive them, perhaps there was a need to revise their colonial history textbooks.

Whatever the case may be, far too many mysteries about Planet Norma were hidden in the flow of time. Similar secrets about Earth could also exist, secrets that even Earthlings like Xiao Lin and Lilith had no idea of.

Due to Xiao Lin’s concern of facing more battles down the road, he sat for a while to relieve the fatigue in his entire body, especially in terms of his mental strength. His achievements left him feeling rather satisfied, and he even felt that he ought to take a few more language courses after returning to the academy. Perhaps he might have the talent for it?

A quarter of an hour later, Xiao Lin and Lilith once again stepped into the white light gate. It was the same brief burst of light and the scene before them changed again. This time they did not appear in the sealed environment again, but rather, a vast and huge world.

It was a blood-filled world, where the sky was as red as blood and even the ground under their feet is also stained with blood that had probably dried up after years and years. The soil was reddish-brown on the surface and deep down, with countless skeletons scattered all over the ground. Some had loosened up into bones, while others were turned into powder by the weather and a few were preserved intact. A number of those skeletons were obviously human, but there were those with an alien-like shape.

“Such strong death energy!” Lilith frowned. With her meditation level, she could perceive death energy in almost every corner and every area they walked on. It was obvious that the denseness had reached its ultimate peak.

“This feels similar to The Final Land. Is this the final checkpoint?” Xiao Lin remarked snarkily.

Chapter 346 - Black Dragon

Chapter 346: Black Dragon

The world was quite small when compared to The Final Land and one could see the border at a glance. On the contrary, The Final Land was a place of boundless chaos, as the world that lay beyond it was past anyone’s ability to find out.

As Xiao Lin and Lilith’s guards were up, a black spot suddenly appeared from the blood-colored sky, circling towards them at lightning-fast speed. It was accompanied by a howling that was low-pitched but loud, and an intense pressure descended from the sky. The force was so immense that it felt as though a sharp, unsheathed sword was pressed on top of their heads.

Lilith immediately took out her scythe to guard herself, but Xiao Lin seemed to remember something as his expression changed drastically. He shouted, “Get out of the way!”

BOOM!

Almost as soon as Xiao Lin said that, the black spot had hit the ground heavily. Xiao Lin and Lilith were fortunate to be some distance away, and after the dust had been gradually dispersed, the giant dragon appeared in front of them. Xiao Lin’s face was very ugly, and the familiar Long Yin had already made him guess the answer.

A colossal giant dragon covered in pitch-black scales appeared. Its two nostrils continued to spew crimson flames, and the hot waves made them feel as though they were about to burn.

“Dragon! A black dragon!” Lilith narrowed her eyes and had an expression that was rife with fighting spirit.

Before Lilith lost herself in her lunacy, Xiao Lin seized the moment to grab her tight and whisper a reminder, “We cannot handle such an enemy!”

“I know. Black dragons and gold dragons are the most powerful of their kind. Judging from the color of this dragon’s scales, I estimate him to be more than ten thousand years old,” Lilith’s calm analysis allowed to Xiao Lin to breathe a sigh of relief. Fortunately, Lilith still had some sense in her.

A couple of moments later however, Lilith licked her lips and said, “I’m dying to fight it!”

Xiao Lin’s eyes twitched. Was her earlier sense of reason nothing more than an illusion?

“Does someone want to challenge me? Who? Who the hell is that person!” To their surprise, the Black Dragon suddenly spoke. Its voice was sonorous and loud, and since Xiao Lin and Lilith were just next to him, his voice was as unbearable as a thunderbolt ringing past their ears.

The black dragon took a good look around before finally laying eyes on Xiao Lin and Lilith. It narrowed its eyes and leaned its huge head closer, forcing the two humans to back off and avoid coming into contact by the black dragon’s scorching hot breath.

“Oh? Are you humans?” the black dragon asked, unsure.

“Yes.”

“Well then, will you be coming at me together, or one by one?” The black dragon raised his head again.

“Of course, it’ll—”

“Shut up!”

Lilith was halfway through her sentence when Xiao Lin covered her mouth tightly. Red-faced, the latter stared at him in disbelief.

After feeling the wetness in his palm and realizing what he had touched, Xiao Lin could not help but feel slightly embarrassed, especially when a killing intent appeared instantaneously in Lilith’s eyes. Xiao Lin withdrew his hand quickly and pretended as though nothing happened. He shifted his gaze to the black dragon and said with a wry smile, “Ahem, we’re not here to challenge you. We just entered here by mistake. I’m sorry to disturb you. Please allow us to leave if it’s convenient for you. I promise I won’t come here again.”

Since the black dragon had earlier spoken Normese, Xiao Lin responded in kind. Having Lilith attack was out of the question, or else the black dragon might be forced to strike back even if it was not originally hostile. Should that happen, it would be a disaster that would most certainly result in collateral damage.

Black dragons were on the same level as golden ones, and even someone who thinks with their toes could know such levels of strength were presently unreachable no matter how much effort Xiao Lin and Lilith put in the fight.

The black dragon taunted them, “Deceiving a supreme being like me is no easy feat. Don’t act as if I don’t know anything. Aren’t you here to retrieve that shard and save that little girl, Silverlight?”

The girl, Silverlight?

The mysterious girl in white fluttering clothes appeared in Xiao Lin's mind. Apparently, her name was Silverlight, and Silverlight Lake was named after her. On further thought, it was surprising that an old woman from tens of millions of years ago was referred to as a little girl by the black dragon. Even if she still maintained the appearance of a girl, it was still rather chilling if one connected the dots a little.

"Shard? What kind of shard?" Lilith's focus had always been on a different wavelength as Xiao Lin's and she had no interest in mysterious girls at all.

The black dragon's huge eyes rolled around and it huffed in a mocking, sarcastic tone, "I'm not used to this kind of interrogation. Why don't you tell me how you got here first? Was Silverlight spooked out of her mind? Oh no, no, no, is that girl still grief-stricken until today after being cast aside? Alright, I think you ought to tell me what year it is now!"

Xiao Lin and Lilith exchanged glances. His initial thought was that the black dragon might be an acquaintance or friend of the mysterious Silverlight. Judging from the dragon's tone, she might be an acquaintance, but it would be too far-fetched to call them friends. It was more likely that they were enemies.

That was the best moment for Xiao Lin and Lilith to understand the identity of the girl. Before Lilith could challenge the dragon again, Xiao Lin seized the opportunity and immediately spoke. Moreover, he realized that the black dragon must not have been able to leave that place for a long time, or to put it more bluntly, the dragon was probably unable to leave after being sealed there.

Xiao Lin gave a cursory explanation about the general situation in Planet Norma, but the fact was that he did not really know that much about it. He basically explained everything that had been taught in his history lesson, and at the time, Xiao Lin could not help but be reminded of Gu Xiaoyue. That his knowledge of history could reach such a high standard was all thanks to Gu Xiaoyue's notes in class.

As he was both unsure yet curious about what age the black dragon and the girl came from, Xiao Lin deliberately paused before explaining each period of history and carefully observed the black dragon's expression in an attempt to judge whether it knew what he was talking about.

It did not take long for Xiao Lin to abandon such unrealistic thinking. Discerning expressions from a dragon's face was impossible, but he noticed that the black dragon's violent aura was slowly beginning to settle down during the course of his explanation. The sauna-like temperature began to drop slowly too, indicating that the big creature really was listening intently to his words.

Planet Norma had a rather long history, much longer than that of Earth's. Intelligent beings appeared much earlier in Planet Norma too, but Xiao Lin knew increasingly little about everything that was too far back. There were also a lot of things which he could not speak in normal Normese, necessitating Lilith's help to occasionally correct his pronunciation problems.

The black dragon listened quietly from the very beginning and seemed to do so with great interest. Xiao Lin poked fun at the dragon deep inside his heart but he did not dare to stop talking.

Chapter 347 - The Final Checkpoint

Chapter 347: The Final Checkpoint

An hour later, Xiao Lin's saliva had run dry. More importantly, he basically said everything he could from what little information he heard from history lessons. In fact, he was quite surprised that he could continue fooling the dragon up until then.

After an embarrassing silence, the black dragon sighed, "So it seems that far too many years have passed. Heh. How lonely."

'Just tell us how many years it is exactly!'

Xiao Lin felt helpless, but he would never dare to say that out loud. After ruminating for some time, he cautiously asked, "Can we leave now?"

"Oh? Aren't you curious? Don't you want to know a little bit about all this?" The black dragon suddenly switched to a tempting tone. It would have been pleasing to the eye if it was a beautiful woman, or perhaps even a mysterious old woman that resembled a young girl. Unfortunately, a seductive tone coming from the mouth of a ferocious dragon would only give off a creepy vibe.

Xiao Lin's guard was up and he took two steps back, after which he shook his head and said, "I'm not at all interested. All I want is to leave this place."

"Why?"

"If none of this is a secret, you could've just told me if you wanted to. If all of this was a secret, our death is probably close at hand if we end up knowing too much."

"Hmff!" The black dragon seemed somewhat dissatisfied as it exhaled some flame from its nose. "Cunning human. You're half-right."

Xiao Lin's heart trembled and he said helplessly, "I hope it's not the latter half."

"The existence here is itself the greatest secret to the world. Those who came here never want to leave unless they crack open the secret here. Do you see the bones under your feet?"

The black dragon said slowly in an indifferent and majestic tone, "Those are the people who entered this world over countless years. Among them are cowardly humans, arrogant elves, and irritable orcs... Ignorant adventurers who overestimated their strength, as well as individuals who were world-renowned legendary powerhouses at the time. It's such a pity that all of them were trapped here and even lost their lives."

After a while, the black dragon's tone gradually became mocking. "You're not the strongest among the humans I've met, but you're not the weakest either, although you certainly are down there. On what grounds are you leaving this place?"

Xiao Lin's heart sank to rock bottom and he glanced at the mountains of corpses and armor on the desolate ground. Regardless of how powerful they were during their lifetime, all of them became the soil that Xiao Lin stepped under his feet.

Lilith did the same and looked around the ground under her feet. It had long turned dark brown after being stained with blood, and her expression was so complicated that she did not know whether she felt pity or regret. As a battle fanatic, her goal was to challenge those powerhouses. In a similar way, she had a great deal of respect for them too. However, those very same people lay before her eyes in the form of skeletons, prompting a rare silence from Lilith.

"Then choose a method." The black dragon returned to its lazy tone.

"What method?" This time, Lilith was the one who asked.

"A method for the challenge. You can either choose the method of resistance or non-resistance, although both of them are practically no different for a human of your level. As the first humans who have stepped into this place for the first time in these past few centuries, I'll give you two a bit of special treatment. Tell me your battle conditions."

The black dragon's tone was more like that of a kid who was ready to play with their new toys. In light of the fact that the dragon had been there for tens of thousands of years, Xiao Lin could more or less understand how it was probably driven to madness by the feeling of loneliness and emptiness.

"Are we the first people here?" Lilith frowned.

If the girl in white colluded with Red Beard, used Silverlight Lake's rumored treasure to attract countless adventurers there, then sucked them into the realm of that mysterious long sword, then Xiao Lin and Lilith could not possibly have been the first to arrive there.

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly, then suddenly thought of something and asked, "Then, Old Black..."

He really could not think of a better way to call the black dragon before him and simply called out Old Black, though it seemed that the other party had no objection. Xiao Lin continued, "Old black, have you heard of oracle bone script before? "

"Oracle bone? Is it edible?" Black Dragon asked, licking its lips, "Is it some kind of marine species?"

"Oh, forget I even spoke..."

Xiao Lin and Lilith looked at each other again, and Lilith opened her mouth to ask, "What about the Perfect Clone Technique? What's up with those two independent realms that we had to go through before entering this world?"

"I don't understand what you're talking about?"

Xiao Lin and Lilith briefly explained the contents of the previous two levels, though it went without saying that they omitted the fact that oracle bone script originated from Earth. All they said was that it was a language which had long been lost since ancient times.

The black dragon was silent for a few seconds before suddenly letting out a thunderous roar. “Who! Who did this! I’ve been telling myself that no one has been here in a few years. Someone is deliberately causing trouble! Damn, how boring!”

In other words, did the dragon really treat everyone who came there as toys?

Xiao Lin felt aggrieved when he looked at the corpses on the ground. He had the sudden thought that perhaps their successful completions of the first and second levels were not the right choice. Could they have been able to leave if they were deliberately defeated?

Fighting one’s own clone was actually very difficult during the first level. It was difficult for most people to defeat oneself, especially since the clone might understand one’s own potential better than oneself and copied everything almost perfectly.

That Xiao Lin and Lilith were able to win the battle in a short time, was—to put it bluntly—reliant on their SS-level talent, as that was the only aspect which the clones were unable to replicate.

Although the second level went by without a hitch, it was much more difficult than the first one. In fact, it could even be said that any non-Earthling—specifically that which was not born on Chinese soil and had no knowledge of oracle bone script at all, would find it absolutely impossible to complete the second task.

The significance of those two levels was not so much to bring trouble to an intruder, but was more like a kind of warning that prohibited any intruders from continuing onward, lest they find themselves unable to return after entering that blood-colored land.

On careful thought, the fight against the clone was real and Xiao Lin did not think that the clone had any intention of showing mercy. If they died there without being in range of the resurrection tower, they would have died for real.

At the very least however, Xiao Lin understood that all three levels were much more difficult than the previous one, but none of the three levels were set by the same person. The dragon’s world of blood and despair was the only one that existed, but someone later added another two checkpoints before it.

Chapter 348 - Transforming into A Human

Chapter 348: Transforming into A Human

“Have you figured out what conditions you want?” The black dragon’s words interrupted Xiao Lin and Lilith’s contemplation.

“Do we have to fight with you?” Given the choice, Xiao Lin would certainly not choose an option with death as its obvious consequence.

“This is my world. I have the final say. Here you must obey my words, otherwise you’ll suffer!” The black dragon was as arrogant as ever and added, “That’s actually the best choice, since you won’t be able to get out anyway.”

Lilith asked too, “What are the conditions for leaving? I remember you saying that Silverlight sent us over to look for a shard. What shard is that?”

Xiao Lin had a sudden thought, but he was not entirely sure about it.

On that occasion, the black dragon was silent for several minutes, but it finally said in a frigid tone, “If you can defeat me, you might have the chance to find out. That’s why I’m here. Guarding the shard is the responsibility and mission that I’ve been given.”

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly as he looked at Lilith, who seemed eager to give things a try. He lowered his voice and discussed with her, “Do you really have a chance of winning?”

“How could I possibly?” Lilith looked at him as though he were an idiot. “The opponent comes from a race of black dragons. If you count its age, its strength would have at least been equivalent to Legend-rank. How are we supposed to win against it!”

It turned out to be the answer Xiao Lin expected and he sighed. “Then why are you so happy?”

Lilith’s expression was self-evident from the beginning and she continued, “Don’t you think it’s amazing that we’re able to fight against a Legend-rank opponent?”

“Is dying just as amazing?”

“What’s so scary about death? ”

Lilith turned her head slightly, as if she did not want to let Xiao Lin see her gaze at that moment, but the change in her tone was still very obvious. That momentary flash of indifference was similar to Gu Xiaoyue’s tone when he spoke to her, but Lilith had always been a very straightforward girl, so it was difficult to imagine that she could have such an emotion.

Was it an indifference to life?

Xiao Lin felt that Lilith was not that kind of person, but rather, she simply had no fear of death. However, such people became indifferent either because of exorbitant ideals or goals, or because they had experienced the brink of death far too many times.

‘What did you experience in the past, Lilith?’

Xiao Lin sighed silently in his heart and wisely diverted from that rather sensitive topic.

“If this is the case, leave this battle to me.”

Lilith was shocked, but Xiao Lin had already stepped forward. He raised his head, looked at the black dragon circling in the bloody sky, and said, “You just said that we can choose the fighting conditions. My understanding is that we can choose whatever condition we want, even if it’s beneficial to us.”

The black dragon’s huge eyes narrowed. “You’re right, humans. Let your imagination run wild and think. This special treatment is just for you, even if the end result might not differ much.”

“Oh, then what if I ask you to reduce your strength to Black Iron-rank?” Xiaolin blinked slyly and spread his hand out innocently, saying, “You see, you’re Legend-rank, so wouldn’t it be pointless to bully us like that? You’ve lived here for so long now. Don’t you want to keep yourself busy for longer? After all, no one knows when the next person will come in.”

The black dragon fell to the ground again and hummed in a strong nasal voice. “I knew you’d make this request, and I planned to do this too. If I fight with you with my current strength, I won’t even need a second to squeeze you to death, but then my fun will be much less.”

Xiao Lin exhaled. If that was the case, they could at least give it a try. Lilith calmly questioned, “Although I don’t understand Legend-rank strength, I’m still aware that it’s impossible for a dragon physique to control its strength and suppress it to Black Iron-rank. It’s like a giant trying to draw a circle. The destructive power will still be far superior than an ordinary person.”

“You underestimate the dragon clan!”

The black dragon’s voice gradually became fuzzy and the surface of its body began to emit circles of light-colored halos. Its huge body shrank constantly in that illusory glow and the scales on its body were disappearing very quickly too.

After ten seconds, the halo gradually dissipated, and what appeared in front of Xiao Lin and Lilith was a person—a naked and extremely voluptuous woman!

Xiao Lin was in a complete daze and he rubbed his eyes vigorously. He could not believe what he was looking at and felt that it was impolite to be glaring straight at him. The other party however, seemed to be completely indifferent to their own nakedness and waved her hand. A sparkling stream of ink-black armor of light was equipped on her body, and a long silver sword suddenly appeared in its hands.

“High-ranking dragons have the ability to transform.” Lilith glanced disdainfully at the practically-entranced Xiao Lin, who—in his naivete—was expressing a look of excitement.

“Never expected it to be a female dragon. I really couldn’t tell,” Lilith murmured in some surprise to herself.

“Will females be easier to deal with?” Xiao Lin knew very little about the dragon race, but the impression that men could fight better than women was still deeply ingrained in him.

“Sorry to burst your bubble, but the dragon race is a matriarchal society. The fighting power of females is generally higher than that of males.”

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly. “Do you have even the tiniest bit of useful information?”

“When you put that condition forward, I had a rough guess that it would transform, but to tell you the truth, it’s all pointless. Believe me, even if its strength is suppressed to Black Iron-rank, it will never be on the same level as us. Well, it doesn’t matter though. This may take a bit longer, but I’m really looking forward to experiencing the extent of a black dragon’s power!”

“It sounds like you’re cursing me to be beaten to death so that you can go next.”

“Well, if you prefer, you can think of it that way.”

“You actually admitted it...”

The two of them could still joke around in a time of crisis, but their antics made the black dragon—or more accurately, the woman—a little impatient. Its voice did not change much after the transformation, through there was an additional bit of elegance and magnetism that was unique to women. Nevertheless, the arrogance and indifference unique to the dragon race has become more and more evident.

“Well, in any case, I’ll try first.”

Xiao Lin took out the Holy Soul Sword. He had almost recovered from the exhaustion suffered during the first level’s battle had. Faced a black dragon-level opponent, he was aware of the fact that there was little chance of a victory even though the opponent turned into a human and deliberately suppressed their strength. In spite of his optimism in front of Lilith or how much he silently cursed the mysterious Silverlight’s ancestors, he still had to bite the bullet and face the most difficult obstacle in front of him.

“Don’t be nervous. I’ll make good on my promise to hold back.” The dragon lady had a look of anticipation. It seemed that she really did spend too many years in loneliness.

Chapter 349 - Battling the Black Dragon (1)

Chapter 349: Battling the Black Dragon (1)

If the mysterious girl’s dead soul was on the level of an old woman, then the dragon lady before them who had lived a longer life would probably be on the level of an old witch. Even though their appearance was considered quite superior even by Earth’s standards, one could not help but feel speechless at the thought of their age.

For some reason, Xiao Lin suddenly thought of all that before the inevitable battle. Of course, he could only chastise himself for thinking like that, as the black dragon’s words suggested that she did not take either of them seriously and merely took them for a temporary plaything.

The black dragon was getting a little impatient. “How long more are you going to wait?”

“Can you let me make the first move?” Xiao Lin laughed self-deprecatingly. He knew that the dragon race was very prideful, and in their disdain, would only allow their opponents to make the first attack. The courtesy of giving him the upper hand might as well be likened to charity and pity.

“Now then, show me how strong the dragons in this world are!”

Xiao Lin focused his attention in an instant. His knowledge of dragons originated from the dean’s golden dragon, and Lilith’s remark that the black dragon was of the same level as a golden dragon could perfectly explain the strength of the woman before him.

“Holy Soul Summoning!”

Xiao Lin lifted the Holy Soul Sword. A gray mist engulfed it and he summoned the undead swordsman at once. Death energy was abundant in a world full of skeletons and the swordsman could therefore be summoned without a need to stain the sword with blood.

“Undead creatures?” The black dragon was not too surprised, but frowned and said, “I hate the undead.”

She then squinted and looked indifferently at the undead swordsman, causing the latter to tremble violently all of a sudden. Emotions ought not to have been present in an undead creature like that, but the fear seemed to stem from the most primitive instinct of life—it was a direct reaction of inferior creatures when facing superior ones.

“Dragon power!” Xiao Lin murmured in a deep voice, but only the undead swordsman was affected by it, an indication that the woman did as she said and deliberately lowered her strength to a certain level. The dragon power affected only the undead swordsman, not Xiao Lin himself.

Xiao Lin did not expect the undead swordsman to accomplish much, because the most it could do was help him stall for some time. Taking advantage of the distraction to his opponent’s attention, Xiao Lin did not hesitate to activate Miracle and quickly entered his Ruin state.

It was the strongest combat power he could use as of that point in time. Xiao Lin has done a thorough analysis of his own strength. Apart from his own skills, his abilities could only be considered satisfactory at best, but his explosive qualities were very strong, and his Ruin state was nothing more than a strengthening of that explosive quality.

By converting all his attributes to strength while in the Miracle state, Xiao Lin could achieve an explosive strength that exceeded 60 XP. According to Xiao Lin’s experience in the Ruin state, his strength attributes would further increase to nearly 100 XP.

That kind of strength attribute was about the same level as a Bronze-rank individual, which was equivalent to Xiao Lin gaining an instant increase to Bronze-rank strength while still at Black Iron-rank. Therein lay the reason why he requested the black dragon to lower its strength in the fight.

The instantaneous strength that burst out startled the dragon lady tremendously. Although she was still using the dragon power to tease the undead swordsman, her attention on Xiao Lin was never really drawn away. In fact, she found it quite laughable to see Xiao Lin approaching her at a tortoise-like speed.

When Xiao Lin hacked the Holy Soul Sword down, the black dragon only slightly raised her right arm and was prepared to use her armor to defend against it. Xiao Lin’s sword was indeed very slow. After converting all the attributes into strength, his speed was obviously affected, not to mention how trivial the Phantom Step was in the eyes of an opponent with the level of a black dragon. In truth, Xiao Lin was actually betting on the woman being too full of herself, and that the dragon race’s arrogance precluded her from actually evading the attack.

The bet seemed to have paid off when he saw that woman showing no intention to dodge. Xiao Lin was decisive, and he practically unleashed his strongest sword aura just as his attack was about to land. The fusion of sword aura and sword wave spread like wildfire.

Boom!

A huge explosion ensued, with the pressure of heat and the rebound almost knocking Xiao Lin to the ground. It was the strongest slash he could wield at the moment, and everything else after that was left to fate.

The explosion gradually subsided, and the woman slowly walked out of the smoke while coughing. She looked at Xiao Lin in some surprise and nodded before saying, “Wonderful! This is more interesting than I thought! Hmm, I thought I’d only be able to play for a little while, but it appears I won’t feel too bored in the next few days.”

The excitement on her face sent a chill down Xiao Lin’s spine. Although it was to be expected, he felt despair after seeing her nonchalant tone of speech as soon as she received his strongest attack.

“Armor! What’s the level of armor on your body?” Lilith, who was watching the battle, suddenly raised her eyebrows and asked in a loud voice.

“Oh?” The dragon lady turned her head to look at Lilith, then said in a strange and confused tone, “Do you think I’d wear inferior armor?”

Lilith could not help but remain speechless for a moment. She then sighed at Xiao Lin, “Told you. Why would you be so naïve as to think that we’re fighting on the same level as her?”

Xiao Lin sensed that something was wrong and looked over. The explosion and impact were incredibly strong earlier. The black dragon’s body was so powerful that it could not be injured, while there was not the slightest scratch on her armor, let alone signs of damage. The sheer quality of that armor was simply unimaginable.

“That’s Legend-rank equipment,” Lilith lamented. Even she was beginning to feel a little envious. Although Lilith might be Judge Academy’s most cared for individual, she had never seen a Legend-rank weapon before. The level of such equipment could even be considered useful in all situations.

Xiao Lin wanted to cry, but the tears would not come. There was no way he could fight that battle. Defeating the dragon was a tall order, and Xiao Lin’s initial plan was to use the black dragon’s condescending attitude and at least deal a blow to her by pairing his Miracle with the Ruin state. In hindsight, he was simply too stupid and naïve because her Legend-rank equipment was a total slap in his face.

“Come on now, come on! What other moves do you have? Use them all!”

Xiao Lin was uninterested, but the dragon lady was thoroughly enjoying herself at the moment. The attack gave her a lot of unexpected surprises earlier, and after seeing Xiao Lin’s silly daze, she urged him in dissatisfaction while remembering to praise him, “Your earlier attack was superb! Being able to exert a power one-and-a-half times more than your own ability isn’t easy, especially at this stage of yours. I haven’t seen such swordsmanship in a long time.”

Chapter 350 - Battling the Black Dragon (2)

Chapter 350: Battling the Black Dragon (2)

Probably having felt that her own equipment and strength were simply too formidable, the black dragon thought for a moment and added, “Your attack took me by surprise. My hands are still tingling a little. Amazing. Simply amazing!”

Xiao Lin’s eyelids twitched fiercely. His full-force blow was only enough to make the woman’s hand tingle! He appeared increasingly frustrated.

He undid his Ruin state too, as it was difficult for him to maintain such a high explosive state for too long especially when he was discouraged.

After undoing Miracle and the Ruin state, immense exhaustion poured into Xiao Lin’s heart. That was the price of his instant explosive power. The dragon lady also noticed the rapid decline in his strength and she could not help but show disappointment. “It’s just an instantaneous explosive power, is it? Or could you have given up?”

With no response, the black dragon shook her head. “Die then.”

Sure enough, this woman did not have the slightest bit of sympathy. However, she was blocked by a figure as soon as she began walking. The undead swordsman had resumed his movements after being freed from the dragon power’s suppression.

Xiao Lin raised his head slightly in surprise. He did not remember having given any instructions to the undead swordsman because he was well aware that the clumsy swordsman had little effect.

“I hate the undead!” The approaching woman simply frowned and raised her long sword slightly. A black gleam flashed from the blade and directly hit the swordsman. At that moment, the swordsman’s heavy armor became as fragile as white paper and shattered instantly.

“Dragon breath!” Lilith struggled to spit out those two words and warned Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin could not help but be in awe. Dragon breath was a basic skill that the dragon race had mastered. It was to them what breathing was to humans—an innate ability. Nevertheless, her ability to release the dragon breath through her sword was what made things much scarier.

The power of the dragon’s breath cut with the sword is greatly reduced, but this just shows that this woman has reached a very high level of control over her own power, so she can very exquisitely disperse the power of the dragon’s breath. This is not all dragons. Things that can be done.

The undead swordsman’s collapse shocked Xiao Lin’s spirit a little. A summoner of a mind-controlled summoned creature would face adverse reaction when the creature’s being dies. Only professional summoners could reduce that kind of damage.

The swordsman’s body was finally revealed after the armor was completely obliterated by dragon breath. Xiao Lin laid eyes on its true form under that armor for the first time. It was a cloud of black gas, similar to condensed death energy. Unlike the death energy in the meditation world, the

black gas seemed to have a will of its own and was able to sense the threat being close at hand. It billowed desperately in an attempt to stand up again.

“An undead creature with independent consciousness?” The black dragon was surprised again. After a moment of thought, she seemed to have made up her mind and said, “Fine then, I’ll help you out. Though I hope you won’t let me down like your master did.”

Xiao Lin was confused, but from the looks of it, the other party’s interest seemed to have shifted to the undead swordsman. He did not know whether he should be grateful or depressed. Was his ability inferior to that of an undead creature?

The dragon lady held her sword and paced around the struggling swordsman soul, while the tip of her weapon was drawing something on the ground. Whenever the blade was drawn across the ground, a strange flow of blood began appearing on the brownish soil. The fresh blood flowed on its volition as if it was alive, intersecting with each other and gradually weaving complex patterns on the ground.

“Magic circle! She seems to be drawing some magic circle,” Lilith whispered, having approached closer out of curiosity.

Xiao Lin nodded. He recognized the magic circle, but he did not really understand what the dragon lady was trying to do.

At that point, the dragon lady was actually defenseless., or in other words, she simply ignored Xiao Lin and Lilith for the time being. However, neither of them dared to make a move.

A full half-hour passed just like that, and the dragon lady’s interest seemed rather piqued as she drew a huge and mysterious magic circle using her blood-stained sword, with the undead swordsman situated smack dab in the center of the circle. It struggled initially, the continuous loss of its death energy made it weaker and weaker.

The dragon lady even chanted an incomprehensible spell in a low voice. The language used was more obscure than Ancient Normese. Xiao Lin understood that it was Dragish, which was rumored to be the most difficult language elective course in Dawn Academy.

The entire spell lasted for another quarter of an hour. Once completed, a blinding light that had a similar intensity to the sun burst out of the magic circle. Xiao Lin could not help but cover his eyes. When he reopened them, a small deep pit had already appeared in the ground in front of him. At the bottom of the pit stood a fully armed knight wrapped in black aura.

“Unbelievable!”

The first person to exclaim happened to be the dragon lady, who was the instigator of the entire situation. She approached Xiao Lin again and stared at him with her black, pearl-like eyes, asking, “What have you done to it?”

“I think I’m the one who should be asking you this,” Xiao Lin replied grimly. His relaxed manner was probably due to having resigned himself to the fact that he would never win against the opponent in front of him.

The black dragon pointed to the bottom of the pit, and said, “Do I still need to explain? Your undead swordsman has evolved into a black knight. You’ve given me plenty of surprises. My dragon spellbook only helps to gather the dead energy nearby, but not every soul who has enough dead energy can evolve into a black knight.”

‘In other words, you’re just helping yourself create a more interesting toy,’ Xiao Lin chided her in his heart.

He had read about black knights before. They were considered mid-range undead creatures that far surpassed the power of ordinary skeletons and undead souls. Nevertheless, Xiao Lin did not think that the black knight would have any effect in front of the black dragon.

“Let’s start then! Round two!”

The black dragon once again distanced herself and waited solemnly. As Xiao Lin had guessed, she acted simply for the sake of having a toy to play with and pass the time.

“You can try.” Lilith motioned to Xiao Lin with a look, signaling that she had enough of being alone and was already raring to go.

Xiao Lin silently tried to communicate with his mental strength and was fortunate to discover that the connection still existed between him and the undead swordsman, or more accurately, the evolved black knight. In spite of that, he could clearly sense the knight’s oppressive force on his spirit.

‘The black knight’s strength is probably much stronger than mine,’ Xiao Lin thought to himself a little speechlessly and gave another order to attack.

The battle resumed.