

Elite Mages' Academy Novel

Chapter 351 - Battling the Black Dragon (3)

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Compared to the undead swordsman, the black knight's speed was on a whole new level. Xiao Lin made some comparisons while watching the battle idly and came to a more helpless conclusion: using the Phantom Step in conjunction with his Ruin state was no guarantee that he could reach the same speed as the black knight.

"It's Bronze-rank at least." Xiao Lin suddenly realized a possible problem. Some of the books about basic undead knowledge that he had previously read stated that the master's ability must surpass the undead creature under their control, otherwise the spiritual connection between the two sides would be difficult to maintain.

Of course, the prerequisite was to pass the hurdle that was the black dragon, which did not appear easy to do at all.

After evolving into the black knight, the swordsman's blade was surrounded by an eye-catching black aura, which corroded even the rusty armor and weapons on the ground as it moved past. However, the black dragon managed to only block the blow with one hand.

It was a fierce battle and the clash of blades reverberated in that small realm. The black dragon's fighting spirit was exceedingly high, but she was obviously not using much of her strength, since she still seemed to do everything with ease. From time to time, she scrutinized the black knight from a distance and made comments, one of which was to point out that the black knight's had a higher-than-average speed.

A few minutes later, Lilith identified an appropriate time to conjure up her scythe and join the battle. The black dragon only glanced at her with some interest, but its attack rhythm was not at all interrupted. As always, the dragon lady spoke in an arrogant and slow tone, "I forgot to tell you that I'm only using about one-ten-thousandth of my strength right now. How far do you think you can push me?"

Lilith chose not to hold herself back and used her strongest combat power when attacking. It was none other than her Creation skill. The signature flame in her hand was like an extension of her arm and could change into any shape at will.

After the flames were displayed, the black dragon's face seemed to show some curiosity and said, "This is very interesting. The both of you are very special."

Lilith was a little stunned. "Don't patronize us. Does a spell of this level amount to anything in your eyes?"

The black dragon moved slightly further away and had no difficulty in making small talk during such a fierce battle. "Don't you have any idea of what you have mastered? Ordinary spells are

rearranged based on the four elements, but the difference in your flames is that the element comes from yourself instead of nature. It's rather similar to dragon spells."

"I don't understand! But I seem to think that you're too lackadaisical!" Lilith sped up the rhythm of her attacks as she was peeved that the black dragon still had the luxury of explaining everything to her.

Xiao Lin sighed, and after a short break, he raised his sword and rushed up once more. However, he was temporarily unable to activate the Ruin state for the time being and the explosiveness in his Miracle state was very limited too. Compared to the Bronze-rank Lilith, he was undoubtedly much weaker.

The black dragon hardly looked flustered despite the three-against-one battle, though such a result was entirely within their predictions. Even if a member of the legendary dragon race suppressed their strength to one out of ten-thousandth, they were still a formidable opponent that could not be defeated that easily.

In any case, Xiao Lin and Lilith felt very distressed over the woman's arrogance right from the very beginning. The least they could do was force her to take things a little more seriously. That was the only thought Xiao Lin and Lilith had at the moment.

Xiao Lin knew well enough that the dragon lady could defeat his side in an instant if that was what she wanted. However, it was clear that the dragon lady intended to prolong her game and dragged the battle on for a long time. There was no concept of time there, but Xiao Lin could deduce how much time had passed from his hunger and tiredness.

"Stop fighting!"

The black dragon was also keenly aware of that and ended the battle decisively. At the same time, she changed from her human form back to a black dragon. The sudden change left Xiao Lin and Lilith staring blankly, as they had no chance of attacking if they faced their opponent in dragon form.

"You're too tired! The drop in your strength is too obvious. Hmm, I'll get you something to eat!" After speaking, the black dragon hovered all the way to the distance.

Xiao Lin and Lilith gasped and exchanged glances. The black dragon really was confusing. The battle was actually very mundane even though it was a fierce one. The black dragon was clearly holding back, so much so that they did not even feel the slightest threat, but they still felt exhausted even in such a situation. Even after the dragon transformed into a human, the pressure it exerted was still much more terrifying than they imagined.

The black dragon came back after a quarter of an hour and brought some big fruit. They were gray in color, and each one was about the size of three footballs. God knows what that stuff was or whether it was poisonous, but since there was no other alternative, Xiao Lin took a bite and found the taste to be very astringent. He was barely able to stomach it, but it satiated his hunger. He had enough after eating half of it, but his strength and spirit had been surprisingly restored.

Knowing that it could not possibly be an ordinary fruit, Xiao Lin's bad impression of the black dragon has changed slightly. However, he was well aware that she gave them the fruit just to restore their energy as soon as possible and resume the battle.

The black dragon was also eating the same fruit. Having been trapped there for countless years, it was only natural that there must be something to satisfy her hunger. She ate very quickly, devouring the huge fruit whole in a few bites, then urged Xiao Lin and Lilith.

"How much further do you want us to fight? It's not like we can actually beat you," Xiao Lin tentatively asked again.

"That goes without saying. How can people on your level win against me? When I get tired of playing, I'll be sure to end things quickly. Don't worry, I don't like torturing people, so I won't make it too painful."

Those seemingly kind remarks sounded rather harsh, but those words were the plain facts. The Black Dragon had no reason to let them go. Xiao Lin opened his mouth. In the end, all he could do was exhale fiercely and raise the Holy Soul Sword before saying, "Let's start then!"

Since there is no way to evade it, he might as well have a good time!

Xiao Lin let everything go in that moment of dismay.

The black dragon transformed into human form again and the fighting continued. The silent black knight joined in too, and although Xiao Lin was initially rather worried that he would not be able to control the knight, it seemed that his worries were quite unnecessary. Not only did the spiritual connection between him and the black knight show no signs of weakening, there were even some indications that the connection was strengthening, as Xiao Lin could vaguely sense some of its mood swings when fighting.

"Why didn't you use the Dragon Breath Sword just now?" Xiao Lin asked suddenly.

"Are you sure you want me to use it? You won't be able to stop it!"

"I would love to appreciate the dragon breath's power again."

"But I don't want to reduce my fun time." The black dragon really treated the battle as a fun way to pass the time.

"You don't really dare, do you."

"Are you taunting me?"

"You can think of it that way!"

"As you wish!"

Chapter 352 - Life and Death

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The Dragon Breath Sword was derived from the much-reduced dragon breath which the black dragon used earlier. However, it could be attached to the blade of the sword and slashed out.

When the dragon lady raised the sword again, Xiao Lin activated his replication skill. It had been a while since he used it because it was saved for emergencies. Even so, he was still unsure whether or not it would remain effective in such a situation.

[Replication target: black dragon; replicated skill: dragon breath; skill evaluation: E+; use: limited to dragon race only. Replication complete!]

In an instant, the information pertaining to the Dragon Breath Sword was transmitted to his brain. Xiao Lin thought that it could not be replicated, especially since the skill was limited to one race, but it turned out to be successful.

The power of dragon breath itself was immeasurable, though much reduced in human form. In addition to the black dragon deliberately manifesting the sword aura's form and reduce its power even more, the replicated Dragon Breath Sword only ended up with an E rating, which amounted to a reduction several times over.

As soon as the glow of dragon breath shone on the Holy Soul Sword, the dragon lady's expression finally changed for the first time, and after the initial surprise, she became completely serious and even began to have some killing intent.

Lilith's expression changed slightly too. She tried to stop Xiao Lin, but unfortunately it was already too late.

"Dragon breath is a unique ability of the dragon race, but it's not exclusive to our race alone!" The black dragon explained slowly in an icy tone, "As long as you have the dragon race's aura, other races can possess the same ability of using dragon breath. Humans like you are usually called dragon slayers! I can't believe that a human like you could reach such a level, but since that seems to be the case, you absolutely cannot be forgiven!"

'Dragon slayer? What?'

Xiao Lin's mind went blank for some time. He felt that it was too big of a misunderstanding. What a joke! At his level, if he encountered the weakest member of the dragon race, whether he could slay or be slayed remained to be seen!

Although he was surprised that he was able to copy dragon breath and even speculated that it might be related to the dragon blood fed to him by Song Junlang, it would not be worth it if it annoyed the black dragon. Its anger was simply not something that he could contend with.

He wanted to offer up an explanation but the opportunity to do so no longer existed. The copied Dragon Breath Sword could be described as an arrow on a drawn bow. He could feel the huge power surging from the hilt of his sword, but the dragon lady in front of him was already having a cold expression. With a roar up to the sky, the armor disappeared from her entire body in an instant.

Xiao Lin did not even have the time to glance at her curvy naked body as the black dragon had already soared up into the sky. After turning around in a circle, she swooped down again, with her head opening gradually for gray gas to accumulate inside it like a surging ocean wave. Even though Xiao Lin and Lilith were hundreds of meters away, the majestic temperament made them feel as though they were inside a boat that could capsize at any moment.

The black knight fared slightly better than them, but it was only barely able to move under the support of its black sword. Regardless of how it attacked, the gray sword aura disintegrated before even coming into contact with the dragon's scales.

"This is true dragon breath! It's the aura that belongs to the legendary black dragon!" Lilith sighed blankly, then turned to look at Xiao Lin's Holy Soul Sword before saying thoughtfully, "But I finally have a rough idea of what your ability is."

Xiao Lin froze, then realized that Lilith was referring to his SS-level talent. In fact, the two of them were well aware of each other's abilities since The Final Land but simply feigned ignorance.

"I seem to have caused some trouble." Xiao Lin smiled bitterly. The development did not go according to his plan.

"Dragons, especially the dragons of ancient times, hate dragon slayers. Well, at least we saw an ancient dragon's real aura before we die. This isn't something that any ordinary person can witness."

The resurrection tower did not cover the area they were in, and they would not resurrect anymore if they died. However, Lilith's tone seemed quite relaxed. She had little fear of death and did not blame Xiao Lin either.

In fact, the outcome was not that surprising regardless of what they did. Like the many remains lying there, they would add to the collection of skeletons once the black dragon gets tired of the game. It was only a matter of time.

"At least let me finish this move!"

Xiao Lin glanced at the Holy Soul Sword in his hand. The energy condensed by the Dragon Breath Sword was already quite sufficient, but the difference between it and the black dragon's dragon power was like the stream and the sea.

Real dragon power was definitely not something they could hold out against, but Xiao Lin seemed to have calmed down in the face of the inevitable, perhaps because he had enough time to process everything.

There was little one could consider before one's death. Although there were many things he could think about, such as his parents or his friends, he had spent enough time thinking about that already.

It went without saying that Xiao Lin did not want to die, as he would have a lot of regrets too. However, when he delivered his last swing of the sword, he felt that there was nothing more to think about because there was not much time left for him.

The sword aura which contained the power of the dragon breath surged into the sky. As expected, it hardly amounted to an itch in the face of a genuine black dragon, and the next second, true dragon power descended from the sky with a roar.

Such authentic legendary power was, as Lilith said earlier, not something that they had the chance of seeing. Under that power, the entire blood-colored sky turned white and the earth began to vibrate slightly. Even the remains of those who had been dead for so many years began trembling, with dead souls succumbing to the dragon as well. The wind between the sky and the earth wreaked havoc along with the engulfing energy storm, reminding Xiao Lin of a doomsday scene in the movies.

Xiao Lin could not help but close his eyes when facing the impending dragon's breath. In a moment of life and death, he seemed to feel something pouring out of his body, followed by a sharp decline in physical strength. He felt tired and sleepy, and the entire process lasted no more than the time it took for him to take a breath. He had already fainted to the ground just before the dragon's breath came over.

Lilith did not react any better than him as she could not do much under the dragon power. Her only way of expressing resentment was with her clenched fists. However, she was completely conscious, and in the final moments, she could only hear sporadic sighs of shock and incredulousness, as well as some confused self-mumbling.

“Impossible!

“How could it be you!

“It's been so many years! Why are you here! ”

...

The black dragon's tone gradually turned into a questioning one while also containing a monstrous anger. Lilith soon fainted too, but it was due to exhaustion after having resisted the dragon might's pressure. Just before she fainted however, she could clearly sense that the dragon power's pressure had disappeared above her head.

Could she have survived?

Perhaps!

Chapter 353 - The Fragment's Whereabouts

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Xiao Lin had a very strange dream. A vague figure appeared in it, and he could neither discern who it was nor see the other party's face. All he saw was a rough outline. The person seemed to want to tell Xiao Lin something, but the dream came to an abrupt end there.

Xiao Lin regained consciousness and groggily opened his eyes. The blood-colored sky was the first thing that he saw, but the brown soil no longer had dry bones and discarded equipment, only a bare crater.

“Does this mean I survived? Or is this the netherworld?” Xiao Lin was absolutely stupefied. He did not believe that he had the ability to survive the dragon might.

“Is China’s netherworld even capable of controlling Planet Norma?” Lilith taunted.

Xiao Lin looked at the direction of the voice. He discovered Lilith sitting next to him with a fatigued look on her face and exhaled deeply. At the very least, it was a sign that they had survived. The black knight was nowhere to be found, but Xiao Lin found his Holy Soul Sword. The death energy inside the sword was perceivable, which meant that the black knight had probably returned to the Holy Soul Sword.

Where was the black dragon?

Xiao Lin scanned the surroundings and his gaze finally landed on a mountain not far away. The woman in black armor was standing there quietly with her eyes closed, like a sculpture. She seemed to be resting and listening to the silent world.

Lilith explained away his confusion, “The woman retracted her dragon power at the last moment. There’s no turning back once you start something, and although I haven’t reached Legend-rank yet, I’m well aware that strengths of that level would flow back into her body and cause very strong repercussions.”

Xiao Lin was taken aback. “She’s injured?”

“I think so. She was there when I woke up, so it should be a healing method that’s unique to the dragons,” Lilith guessed.

“She forcibly retracted her dragon power in order to save us and was therefore injured by the repercussion?” Xiao Lin repeated in disbelief.

“Who knows? Maybe her emotions were moved because she suddenly thought that you were handsome?” Lilith shrugged and teased casually, but Xiao Lin did not see the humor in that joke at all.

Xiao Lin kept quiet for some time. The black dragon became more and more confusing. She was moody and changed her temper faster than turning the pages of a book. Her killing intent came out of blue, but then she stopped it at the last minute and rescued them.

“Have...you met her before?” Lilith hesitated and asked suddenly.

“Huh? Who?”

“Her!” Lilith felt that Xiao Lin was pretending to be confused, so she gave him an angry look, and pointed at the dragon lady standing in the distance.

“What are you playing at? It’s only been more than four months since I enrolled in the academy. How do you suppose I’ll know an old woman who’s tens of thousands, or actually, hundreds of thousands of years old?” Xiao Lin paused, then asked in confusion, “Why did you suddenly ask me this?”

A look of suspicion flashed in Lilith’s eyes and she finally shook her head. “Nothing. I was just asking.”

Then came a wait. It was a very long one, and the two humans felt that it was best not to disturb the black dragon at that moment. Fortunately, they found a few nearby fruits that they had eaten previously, which were more or less able to curb their hunger.

About seven or eight days later, the dragon lady finally opened her eyes again and walked to Xiao Lin’s side. Xiao Lin and Lilith both had their guards up even though they both knew that it was pointless to do so.

However, the black dragon did not seem to have the slightest intention of attacking them and did not even take out her sword. When she approached, her gaze was fixed on Xiao Lin’s face, with those deep and bright dragon eyes seemingly capable of penetrating right through his heart. Her look was rather odd, and weird thoughts flashed briefly in Xiao Lin’s mind. For some reason, he suddenly remembered the strange dream he had before waking up, specifically the blurry figure which he was unable to see clearly.

“What’s your name?” The dragon lady’s voice was a little hoarse. She retained a low and indifferent tone, but it was lacking slightly in terms of haughtiness.

Xiao Lin was stunned for quite some time. When they first came in, the black dragon did not even bother asking their identity or name at all, because they were regarded as two ordinary humans at best and were no different from the bones scattered on the floor.

“Xiao Lin.” The two words which he spoke in Normese were a transliteration, causing the black dragon to frown and groan for some time before nodding.

“You’re not from this world,” the dragon lady said in a definite tone.

Xiao Lin and Lilith looked at each other. Throughout their entire time there, they never revealed that they were Earthlings. From the initial reaction of the black dragon, she had been trapped here for thousands of years and seemed not to realize that Planet Norma had already been invaded by Earthlings.

Xiao Lin nodded in acknowledgement. His subconscious told him that there was no need to hide those things.

“Is it that blue planet covered completely in water? It’s a very beautiful world. I’d like to go there again,” the black dragon inexplicably mumbled to herself.

Xiao Lin was overcome with shock once again. Was the blue planet filled with water Earth? From her tone, could it be possible that she had been to Earth before?

The joke was getting out of hand!

Xiao Lin carefully observed the black dragon's expression, but he could not tell if the other party was playing tricks on him or whether she was somehow stealing his and Lilith's memory and deliberately using those words to cloud their judgement.

The black dragon was actually observing Xiao Lin's expression, but she eventually just shook her head in disappointment. Not once did she look at Lilith nearby even though Lilith looked inquisitively at the two of them and began wondering to herself.

The atmosphere became a little weird. Xiao Lin was suddenly very interested in the black dragon's past, but because of the huge power disparity between the two individuals, he hesitated whether or not to take the initiative and ask.

"Are you here to take away that shard?" The dragon lady nodded as she said, "I'll just give it to you."

Lilith finally could not help it anymore and spoke up. "Didn't you say that your duty is to guard that fragment? Why would you suddenly give it to us now?"

The dragon lady squinted her eyes and stared at her. "I'm just returning it to its original owner. Besides, I said I'd give it to him, not you."

An irked Lilith was lost for words.

"Is that shard from the Book of Creation?" Xiao Lin asked hesitantly.

"Oh? So, you do know its origins? I guess it isn't so surprising that you'd know about it."

Xiao Lin smiled wryly and did not quite understand what the black dragon meant by 'it isn't so surprising that you would know about it'. The only reason his guess about the Book of Creation turned out to be correct was purely because Ivan had once told him about it.

After returning from The Final Land, Ivan's residual memory told him that the Book of Creation had become fragments distributed throughout time and space. Xiao Lin created the Miracle skill because he absorbed the fragment. Lilith ought to possess a similar fragment too if everything happened as it did back then.

Chapter 354 - This Woman Came From Earth

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"Who is Silverlight?"

Xiao Lin thought about it and decided to first determine who that mysterious woman was. If the black dragon agreed to give them the shard, then it meant they could probably head back, but it

was still not the end. Considering the fact that the half-dead half-alive woman was still there, whose skill far surpassed their own, Xiao Lin felt his hairs stand on end.

“She came from that beautiful blue planet,” the black dragon said in a calm voice, as if she was saying nothing of importance. She even cast a strange look at Xiao Lin, as if Xiao Lin should be clearer on the subject.

Xiao Lin almost tripped on himself. Regardless of how many possibilities he went through in his mind, the dragon’s answer exceeded them all: that woman came from Earth!

If not for the dragon in front of him, Xiao Lin would have almost jumped up and cursed, ‘Do you think we’re all idiots like you? Quit joking! That woman looks nothing like a human from Earth!’

Xiao Lin definitely had never seen anyone with three eyes from Earth!

He was preparing a retort, but suddenly felt someone tug on his shirt. Turning around, he noticed Lilith shaking her head with a bewildered look.

“Do you think this woman is speaking nonsense as well?” Xiao Lin said those words in Mandarin, and felt a great sense of satisfaction after saying it.

Lilith replied in Mandarin as well, but her tone was a little strange. “Have you ever heard of the legend of Atlantis?”

“The legendary ancient civilization that supposedly sank into the sea? I’ve heard of it, of course, but that’s just a myth with no proof at all. Does it even have anything to do with us?”

“A three-eyed race. In Judge Academy’s archives on Earth, there’s a large amount of information on ancient legends, and a three-eyed race is part of those records. In ancient history, there were once three-eyed humans on Earth, but they disappeared alongside Atlantis and were never seen since.”

After a pause, Lilith continued, “I’ve always treated it as some mythical stories to pass the time with, but if what this black dragon is saying is true...”

If the legend of the three-eyed race was true, then that mysterious woman might really be from Earth, and was a human, but only an ancient species.

Xiao Lin felt like he was in over his head. He then thought of the oracle bone scripts he had seen before. They were shaped like hieroglyphs, which were the earliest form of writing for humans. If that was the case, it was possible that humans had actually visited Planet Norma a very, very long time ago.

Setting aside the problem for now, even if the mysterious woman was from Earth, Xiao Lin did not feel like she would let them off just because they were from the same planet.

Seeing Xiao Lin’s worry, the black dragon continued, “You don’t have to worry. The shard is what’s keeping her here. Without it, she will naturally leave and not cause you any trouble. She’s not someone who enjoys pointless slaughter, I understand that much. Ah, it’s a pity the person who used this shard initially was blind and did not know its true value.”

Xiao Lin almost said out loud, 'I want to know what this shard is used for as well.'

Ivan's memory gave Xiao Lin very limited information, only telling him that those shards were very important, even possibly involving both Earth and Planet Norma, imploring him to collect them. However, Xiao Lin still did not even know what the shards actually looked like despite having a piece with him.

The three of them walked for a long time, eventually reaching the center of this world. There was a tall volcano, and looking down the gigantic mouth of the volcano, dark red lava could be seen flowing. The heat was so intense, it could be seen. Xiao Lin cast a glance before looking away.

"The shard is here."

"How should I retrieve it?" Xiao Lin once again felt like he was in over his head. How could he dive inside to search for the shard?

"Would you like me to help you retrieve it?" The black dragon lady raised her eyebrow, a playful look on her face.

"Since you're helping us, just help us till the end." Xiao Lin knew that the dragon race would not be afraid of lava.

"Fine, but it'll count as me doing you a favor, so you have to pay me back in the future."

Her condition was undoubtedly enticing. After all, if a Legend-ranked being like her could not solve a problem, Xiao Lin would naturally be of no help, so it was practically a free favor. However, Xiao Lin naturally had his doubts. He felt like the woman was hiding something in her words, but Xiao Lin did not really have a choice, giving it some thought before nodding in agreement.

At the black dragon's request, Xiao Lin and Lilith left the mouth of the volcano, even heading a few miles away, only stopping when the woman was just a tiny dot in their vision.

"Do you really believe what the woman said?" Lilith finally asked.

"Not really, but she doesn't really need to lie to us," Xiao Lin said what was on his mind.

"That shard, the one brought back from The Final Lands, you've seen it before right? Ivanovich."

Xiao Lin nodded. "You saw him as well?"

"Yes. The shard has his memory in it. I just feel that it's weird. Since Ivanovich went to The Final Lands and found the shard, why didn't he just take it away instead of leaving it there?"

"I'm more curious as to the use for the Shards of Creation. Ivanovich said that the shards had a great effect on Planet Norma and Earth, so I'm quite curious."

As they talked, the sky was suddenly filled with the cry of a dragon. The woman had turned back into her dragon form and flew into the sky. After that, bright gray light began to condense. That

was the condensation of draconic power, but the condensation time this time was short, showing that the power it contained was also reduced.

Boom!

Xiao Lin actually saw a miniature version of draconic power this time. The incredibly hot energy condensed and shot out as a gray pillar of light from the dragon's mouth, piercing straight into the volcano.

There was less than a second of silence before the entire world began to shake. Even though it was not to the degree it was before, they could still feel it. Even with them being miles away, the force of the power was still very strong. It was no wonder the black dragon had asked them to go far away. Xiao Lin immediately took out his Holy Soul Sword and stuck it on the ground as an anchor. Lilith did the same as well.

They bitterly held on against the shockwave of power. Thanks to the dragon's control, the draconic power only lasted about ten seconds before slowly dissipating, but the volcano erupted after that. Lava started to shoot out with traces of dark gray sulfur.

In the flow of lava, a flaming ball-shaped—a few meters long—object shot up into the sky as well. It then started floating in mid-air as the flames started to dissipate, revealing a vibrantly glowing five-colored orb.

Chapter 355 - Return

Chapter 355: Return

“Is this a shard of the Book of Creation?”

Xiao Lin and Lilith both exchanged looks. They might each have a shard, but neither of them knew what the shards actually looked like to this day, and the scene in front of them was way too odd.

In Xiao Lin's mind, since it was a shard, it should have been something the size of a thumb or something like a diamond, but the ball-shaped object in front of them was as big as half a soccer field.

The volcano was still erupting, and large amounts of lava flowed everywhere. After a few minutes, the dragon went toward Xiao Lin with the strange ball in tow.

The dragon once again turned into a human, and the woman's face basically said it was now Xiao Lin's problem. Xiao Lin said in frustration, “How am I supposed to carry this?”

“I'll help you.”

Xiao Lin let out a sigh of relief. Just as he was about to voice his thanks, the woman walked over to him in large strides, grabbed his collar and threw him into the air.

Xiao Lin cried out as he watched the ball of light close in on him until he went right inside of it. He then noticed that the ball of light actually had no physical body. The outer shell of the colorful lights seemed to be like a bubble, soft and light.

Xiao Lin's view was now completely covered by the five-colored lights, but the scenery in front of him suddenly changed. He noticed that he was somehow in a limitless universe, and in the distance was a bright star. Below him was a yellow earthen planet.

Xiao Lin tried to get a better look at the planet, but the moment he tried to do so, he noticed that his body suddenly started moving. He was moving quickly toward the planet's surface at a shocking speed. His heart had almost jumped into his throat, but when he got within a few hundred meters, he started to slow down until he stopped moving.

It was an empty and desolate planet. Other than rock formations and an endless wasteland, there was nothing to be seen. The sky was covered with a gray layer of dust that even the sunlight was unable to pierce through. Xiao Lin did not feel the cold, but something in his subconscious told him that the planet was extremely cold, to the degree that normal life could not exist.

Where was this?

What kind of place was this?

Xiao Lin shouted out loud, but he did not get any response. All he could do was float around on the surface of the planet. At some point, the dust in the sky started to part. With the introduction of sunlight, the planet's temperature started to rise.

The first thing that appeared were flames, which was the fire element. Next was water, slowly gathering and forming rivers and creeks. The change in the weather started to produce the wind element, and from the nourished lands plants started to grow, forming the earth element.

Finally, that desolate planet started to bear the basic foundations of life.

The scene stopped there, and what he saw in front of him started to rapidly change again. What Xiao Lin saw was actually the product of the ball of light rapidly transferring a large amount of information into his head, basically showing him the birth of the four basic elements.

Xiao Lin returned to the ground. When he looked up, he noticed in surprise that the ball of light had vanished without a trace. He furrowed his eyebrows and looked at Lilith. The latter raised her hands, looking at him with the same difficult look. "You were thrown into the ball of light by that girl just now, and you quickly returned by yourself."

The entire process had only taken a few minutes, and the light surrounding the ball had quickly dispersed. There was nothing within the ball at all, so Xiao Lin was full of doubt. He scratched his head, thinking about the scene he saw earlier before having a moment of realization. A shard did not convey a physical shard, but rather a form of information. Since he had already received that information, he had obtained the shard.

"Leave now! Without the shard, this world does not have the ability to continue existing."

As if hearing her words, the volcano started to erupt even more fiercely. Other volcanoes in the distance started to erupt as well. Large amounts of lava began to cover the land, and the blood red sky started to shatter like glass, large pieces falling toward the ground. The scene was actually quite familiar, it looked like what Xiao Lin saw right before he left The Final Lands.

The dragon woman was quite calm, not appearing to want to bother with their current predicament. Xiao Lin and Lilith did not say anything. Leaving that world naturally needed the help of the dragon, but the woman did not seem to want to leave immediately.

Looking at the world collapsing around them, Xiao Lin could not help but voice his urgency.

The black dragon looked at him thoughtfully, saying with some dissatisfaction, "I've helped you so much. Do you not have anything to ask me?"

"Huh?" Xiao Lin's face was full of sweat. He actually did have a lot he wanted to ask, but he did not feel like that was the time.

Lilith rolled her eyes, nodding to the dragon as she said sincerely, "Thank you for your help. If it's possible, could we know your name?"

The dragon snorted, obviously unhappy that Lilith was the one who had to ask the question. However, she still used a low voice as she said, "Remember this well! Onyxia, that's my name. Don't forget your promise. When I need help in the future, you have to lend me a hand."

Lilith sighed. She noticed that the dragon, Onyxia, did not refer to the two of them when she said that. It was obvious that, in the dragon's eyes, Lilith was not at all important. The dragon only wanted Xiao Lin to remember.

"Onyxia?" Xiao Lin repeated the somewhat familiar name a few times with a strange look on his face. "What a nice name. I'll remember it."

The praise lifted Onyxia's expression somewhat before she cried out toward the sky, turning back into the large black dragon. Two gigantic claws grabbed ahold of them before she flew right toward the shattered sky.

The black dragon was extremely fast. Even though the claws were protecting Xiao Lin, it still failed to block the wind roaring in his ears. As they got higher, Xiao Lin started to feel like the air was getting thinner. When they broke past the shattered sky, there was only darkness around them. Xiao Lin's head started to get heavy. He did not know how long the rest of the journey took, and he felt like he was carried across a dark and extremely long tunnel by Onyxia.

When he opened his eyes again, he noticed that Lilith and himself were lying down on wet ground. The silent night sky had two moons in it, signifying that they had returned to Planet Norma.

However, Xiao Lin was shocked when he noticed where he was lying down. It was actually the center of Silverlight Lake, but the entire lake had been completely dried up. He did not know where the lake water had gone. All that was left was seaweed, mud, and countless fish flopping around.

Chapter 356 - Silverlight

Chapter 356: Silverlight

“You actually came back!”

The mysterious woman, who Onyxia called Silverlight, somehow appeared in front of them. She still had that pure but cold look on her face. She silently floated in the air, looking at the dried up lake, her gaze complicated. “Did you two meet her? I can’t believe she actually let the two of you out.”

“Onyxia?” Xiao Lin tried saying.

Silverlight’s expression changed, her complicated look accompanied by shock this time. “She told you her name?”

“That’s right! She’s our friend.” Lilith suddenly said. They did not know where Onyxia was at the moment. The dragon had disappeared without a trace after they woke up.

Xiao Lin rolled his eyes. The dragon could not possibly be considered their friend, but it was still not a bad idea to borrow her might. He added, “She’s already given us the shard. You have your freedom. No matter what happened to you before, I don’t think we have anything to do with each other anymore.”

Silverlight fell silent for a while before saying, “That’s right. Earlier, I felt that the seal restricting my freedom had been lifted. However, I refuse to believe that she’d be so kind. I need to know what happened, in case this is a scheme by her!”

That woman was obviously not an ally to Onyxia. Xiao Lin really had nothing to say. What a joke; he was visibly sweating at that moment. He did not know why Onyxia suddenly picked himself. As a Legend-ranked black dragon, there could not have been anything on Xiao Lin or Lilith that she would have needed.

The woman looked at them with cold contempt, but Xiao Lin wanted to believe Onyxia’s words. Onyxia had said that Silverlight was not someone who liked slaughter, and the villagers near the lake were still living their lives fairly well, which gave Xiao Lin some basis for the belief, so he stared back defiantly.

Silverlight finally retracted her gaze, sullenly muttering to herself, “I’ve already been sealed here for so many years; this is no longer the world that I once knew.”

Just as Onyxia had said, Silverlight did not seem to have much killing intent. Xiao Lin relaxed a bit, but he now felt like the woman was quite pitiful. She did earn her freedom back, but this was no longer the world she knew, so where would she go? It was definitely not a good idea for such a strong undead spirit to wander around alone, especially since the Silver Province was so near Dawn Academy’s territories. Xiao Lin definitely did not want the woman to wander around and end up causing trouble for the academy.

Xiao Lin suddenly had a brave thought in his mind. He immediately put it into practice, saying, "You're actually not alone in this world. Even though this is no longer the world you know, at least you're not the only one of your race in Planet Norma."

"My race?" Silverlight's face was full of contempt. "Human, don't think that you can just open your mouth like that just because you saved me. Don't group me with that arrogant, idiotic, and egotistical race!"

Xiao Lin nodded. "I know, but I'm not referring to those people. In truth, aren't the two of us the same. Did we not both come from Earth? We're actually your brethren."

Lilith stared at Xiao Lin, realizing what he was doing. However, she was never good at that sort of thing, so she kept her mouth shut.

"Earth?" Silverlight's face was blank.

Xiao Lin's head hurt. He did not know if they called the planet Earth in ancient times. He could only use Onyxia's words, "That blue planet filled with water; did you not come from there?"

"She even told you that!" This time Silverlight was not that surprised. Instead, she had a dark look on her face. There was even a trace of killing intent.

"Hey hey hey! Hold on, we're your people!"

Silverlight snorted. "Stop joking! Do you really think you know where my homeland is? Do you think my race would have people as weak as you two?"

"Atlantis; originally the island facing the Pillars of Hercules. Oh, it was also called the Strait of Gibraltar. Around those islands, there used to be a large landmass surrounded by the sea. I don't know what it was called then. According to Legend, Atlantis was built by the sea god Poseidon, and ended up in a war against Athena. That war caused massive earthquakes and tidal waves on Atlantis, ending with it submerging beneath the sea."

Lilith said all this in a cool voice. She paused for a moment before saying, "With that, surely you believe us? Did you tell the black dragon all that too?"

Xiao Lin shot a glance at Lilith. The latter told him in Mandarin, "These are all records of Ancient Greek legends because I used to... Uhm, basically I know quite a bit about Greek legends."

It was hard to believe in just talk, but if the words were built on a foundation of truth, then it started to be more believable.

Silverlight was in shock, her face uncertain. The shaken and unbelieving look on her face was obvious; it was also accompanied with a look of anguish. However, Xiao Lin silently sighed in relief. Thanks to Lilith's knowledge of myths, Silverlight was starting to believe them.

Xiao Lin was actually quite shocked as well, because it meant that Silverlight really was someone from ancient Earth, and she was very possibly an Atlantean that only existed in legends.

“I still don’t really believe it.” Silverlight’s voice returned to her cold tone, but it no longer had any killing intent. It was definitely a good sign. “That’s why I wish to return and see for myself.”

Lilith looked at Xiao Lin with an accusing look, probably feeling like he was very troublesome.

Xiao Lin’s expression did not change. He was already prepared for that. “That’s fine, but you’ll need to help us solve a problem first. There’s a very tricky opponent; the two of us probably can’t handle them ourselves.”

“I have no reason to help you! If you are just using this as an excuse to trap me...”

Xiao Lin interrupted her, “You misunderstand. This helps us, but it helps you too. Our opponent is an enemy of Earth. He is filled with thoughts of revenge and wants to destroy Earth. Are you really willing to look on as civilization on Earth meets the same fate as Atlantis back then?”

Lilith was speechless at how thick Xiao Lin’s face was. Asabanor really was filled with hate toward Earth thanks to them destroying his kingdom, and had his heart set on revenge. However, there was currently no sign that the old fart wanted to destroy Earth. Furthermore, he did not have the ability. He did not even have the ability to get to Earth.

“Surely you understand that sort of pain.” Xiao Lin tried pushing.

Silverlight started to hesitate, asking, “Who is this person?”

“Asabanor.”

Chapter 357 - The True Treasure

Chapter 357: The True Treasure

Silverlight furrowed her eyebrows in thought, shaking her head and she indicated she did not know who that was.

Xiao Lin understood as well. Asabanor was just a somewhat famous astrologian at that time, but to Silverlight, that sort of reputation did not amount to much.

“I can go with you to take a look, but whether or not I help will depend on my mood.” Silverlight did not give a clear answer, but that was already enough to make Xiao Lin happy. It meant that she was already beginning to come around.

The rest of the night passed by quietly. According to Silverlight, the villagers were only temporarily unconscious thanks to her hail, so they would not know what happened that night.

As for the boy who could see Silverlight, she calmly explained, “That boy was merely someone chosen by God. There’s no surprise he has some special skill in this regard.”

Xiao Lin did not pay it too much mind initially, but hearing that the boy was chosen by God caused him to raise an eyebrow. On Planet Norma, that meant that the boy was a talent holder. It was a pity they had no way to find out what rank the boy's talent was.

However, Xiao Lin still made a mental note of it, planning on reporting it when he went back. He had heard that those with talent were quite rare in Planet Norma, not even managing to compete with those from Earth in terms of numbers. Now that they suddenly discovered one, he felt like it was important to let Dawn Academy know.

Ibeiya was still unconscious. In truth, the time they were sent to that mysterious world might have felt like a very long time, but they noticed it was actually but a moment when they returned.

Now that Silverlight was going to accompany them, Xiao Lin took the initiative to introduce Ibeiya to the mysterious woman, emphasizing that she was a vampire. Thankfully, Silverlight came from ancient Earth, so she did not have any prejudice against dark races.

However, looking at Ibeiya, Silverlight coldly said, "This child's dark race blood is extremely pure. Of all the dark races I've met, I've never seen one so pure."

Ibeiya had said herself that she might actually be a mix between a human and a vampire. On Planet Norma, mixed-races could not compete with pure-bloods. Xiao Lin had some doubt in his heart, but Ibeiya already had so many mysteries surrounding her, one more made no difference.

After that, Xiao Lin went to the center of the lake in search of that potentially Legend-rank sword that sucked them into itself. Even if it looked like a rusted sword that the lake corroded, according to Lilith, a weapon that had its own domain would not be weak at all.

Silverlight dashed his hopes at that. The sword really was Legend-ranked, but regretfully, it had long since lost its luster thousands of years ago. It had used the last of its power to maintain that space, and once the shard was retrieved, it lost all its power.¹

"From a practical standpoint, this blade is just scrap metal, not even comparable to what you have now."

Silverlight's words disappointed Xiao Lin, but no matter what, it was the first time he had ever seen such a high-level weapon. Even if it was now trash, he still felt like he should keep it as a souvenir, and so, he handed the sword to Lilith for safekeeping.

"Why should I hold on to it?! I am not interested in keepsakes at all!"

"Don't you have a spatial bracelet? It's very inconvenient for me to carry it around."

Lilith was rendered speechless.

More and more, Xiao Lin felt like a spatial accessory was a very important thing. Now that he was swimming in money, he would have to think of a way to buy one.

"Red Beard's treasure is actually here. If you're interested, you can just take it. I don't wish to owe you two anything." Even though Silverlight maintained her cold face, her words piqued Xiao Lin's interest.

“Treasure? So Red Beard really did keep some treasure here.”

“It’s right below your feet.”

Xiao Lin jumped in fright, but looking around him, other than seaweed and some trash, there was nothing that looked like a treasure in the mud.

“You’ll know once the sun comes up.” Silverlight was too lazy to explain.

They decided to just wait there. Ibeiya woke up not long after. She was not at all afraid of Silverlight’s spirit, nor was she too interested in the third eye on Silverlight’s forehead. She even affectionately walked up to Silverlight. It was obvious that the cute girl did not mind working her charms on anyone.

Even the cold Silverlight revealed the slightest of smiles at Ibeiya’s efforts.

Dawn approached quickly. In a world with no pollution, the sky was clear enough for everyone to observe the entire sunrise. The dried-up lake basked in the sunlight, shining vibrantly.

Wait, hold on...

Xiao Lin suddenly felt like something was off, casting his gaze around. There were jewel-like shining spots everywhere in the mud. If not for the sunlight, it would have been very hard to notice.

Xiao Lin cast an inquisitive gaze at Silverlight. “Are these all pearls or jewels that were buried in the mud? That’s weird. If people searched for it before, there’s no way they didn’t find it.”

“It’s powder.” Lilith bent down and checked. She swiped a little on the fingertip, revealing a silvery-white powder that was very fine. She smelled it and appraised, “It’s not a gem; it’s starmetal!”

Starmetal could only be produced in the Silver Province, and had always been extremely valuable. On top of that, the recent decades had seen the colonists take over every ore deposit, strictly controlling every source of starmetal. It was incredibly hard for regular people to obtain it.

In Planet Norma’s native black market, starmetal had already surged to an absurd price. Other than being used to make resurrection towers, starmetal was also used in very high-ranked equipment, even those in Legend-rank had it as an important component, so the demand was always high.

Under the various academies, starmetal was a strictly-controlled military good, so it was not easy to obtain. Even with Lilith’s standing in the Judge Academy, she might not even have the chance to easily get any, let alone Xiao Lin. Before coming to the Silver Province, he had never seen the ore before.

However, how were they going to gather all that powder? Xiao Lin started to frown.

Silverlight helped him with that problem. With a wave, a gray mass of light formed. The mass of light rose into the air before unleashing a powerful suction, but the suction only worked on the

powder on the ground. It was all sucked inside. The powder shone like stars under the sunlight, making for a magnificent sight.

After about ten minutes, the light started to dim and it started to descend. As Xiao Lin retrieved the mass of light, the outer luster had dissipated, leaving a spherical chunk of ore the size of a fingernail.

Chapter 358 - Silverlight Joins

Chapter 358: Silverlight Joins

A silver glow could be seen on the surface of the starmetal, especially under the sunlight. It looked as vibrant as a star, so the origin of the name was obvious. Xiao Lin was a little disappointed though. He did not know what he could do with so little starmetal.

“Red Beard’s accumulated wealth yielded all this. Later on, I helped him turn the starmetal into powder, dispersing it into the lake for storage.”

“This is highly refined starmetal.” Lilith’s eyes were sharper than Xiao Lin’s. She immediately saw that the ore may not have been big, but it was definitely extremely valuable. She then gave Xiao Lin an explanation.

Starmetal was impossible to use right after extracting it. It needed to go through repeated refining to ensure the purity. As purity increased, useless materials were discarded as well, so the ore would continuously shrink.

In terms of starmetal, purity was not usually too emphasized. Thanks to the limited amount of starmetal that existed, most academies would save up where they could. That was because the minimum requirement of purity for resurrection towers was 70%, so there was no real meaning in going beyond that. As for using it in equipment, the purity requirements were even lower.

However, with the size of the starmetal in front of them, the purity had to be way higher.

“80%? Or 90%.” Lilith looked at it with a curious gaze.

“100%.” Silverlight gave a shocking answer without any change in her expression.

“That’s impossible!”

Before Xiao Lin could even express his shock, Lilith immediately interrupted, “Based on what I know, starmetal can only reach 99.9999% purity. It’s impossible to reach 100%.”

Silverlight did not seem to have any intention of explaining. Her cold face seemed to be mocking them for not being able to appreciate the goods. No matter what, Xiao Lin believed that Red Beard would definitely not be able to get to this point with just his mercenaries. He definitely needed Silverlight’s help. However, Xiao Lin really did not know what the difference between true 100% purity and being so infinitesimally close to 100% was.

Their trip to Silverlight Lake basically concluded on the second day. Xiao Lin privately chatted with Lilith, saying that their total rewards from this trip were: Spirit woman +1, trash sword +1 and shard +1.

With that in mind, they actually did not get much that they could use. The only thing that could be useful was the starmetal, but they were now faced with an awkward question, which was who would get the starmetal. The mysterious woman threw that question to them. Xiao Lin and Lilith had faced death together twice, so they would not fight over that, but they eventually decided on avoiding the topic for now. They agreed to make a decision when they reached their destination.

They did not feel like explaining anything to the villagers, so they decided to leave before the villagers woke up. As for what the villagers would think about Silverlight Lake drying up, that had nothing to do with the two of them. Xiao Lin even joked that it could be the birth of a new legend, passed down for centuries or millennia. This time, the few of them would get to be the main characters.

Talking about legends led to Ibeiya's intense interest. After all, she was the one who brought up Silverlight Lake's legend, and also the one who guessed the identity of the undead woman. However, Silverlight did not like the topic, and after a few fruitless attempts, Ibeiya smartly decided to shut her mouth.

As a spirit, Silverlight would usually be under a lot of restrictions in the day, especially on a sunny day like that one, but Silverlight was not affected at all. However, she still did not like to be under the sun. Most of the time she chose to stay in the Holy Soul Sword.

Yes, Xiao Lin's Holy Soul Sword. The sword had always been made of material that could house undead spirits. It had plenty of space for Silverlight. Silverlight would only come out when evening fell. She sat on the side of her road, her hands folded as she stared at the sunset.

"This world is very similar to Earth." Since they left Silverlight Lake, it was the first time Silverlight struck up a conversation with Xiao Lin by herself.

"That's right, but the scenery looks much better than Earth. Earth is way too polluted," Xiao Lin said. Feeling Lilith's gaze on him, he felt his head hurt. "If possible, you could actually learn our language. I can't always be the one translating."

The only language Silverlight had in common with them was Ancient Normese, so Xiao Lin had to play the role of the unpaid translator. It was fine for the moment, but he did not want it to be a long-term job. He actually suspected that the reason Silverlight decided to go with them for the moment was because Xiao Lin was the only one who could communicate with her.

Xiao Lin asked how she had communicated with Red Beard back then, but Silverlight just said that they did not communicate at all. That tone of hers led Xiao Lin to relax; it at least meant that Red Beard and her were definitely not allies or friends.

"I know what they say." Silverlight said coolly.

"Oh? How do you know?"

"Because I want to know, so I know."

“Can you explain it to me in words that I can understand?”

“Oh, it’s just like how your mouth can speak. The logic is the same.”

Xiao Lin moved his mouth and finally understood. Silverlight meant that it was an innate ability of hers, just like how his mouth can speak. If he were to try to explain how his mouth could speak, he would struggle to do so.

“I’m actually quite curious; how could they not understand me? That’s why I still can’t be certain you’re the same race as I am,” Silverlight said calmly.

The entire way, Xiao Lin tried to ask about Atlantis. The beautiful country that only existed in legends definitely roused his interest. Unfortunately, Silverlight maintained her silence, it seemed like she had yet to acknowledge them as fellow citizens of Earth.

“Ahem, well you should still try to learn our language. Surely you can’t have me be your translator forever. Oh, that’s right, what language did Atlantis use?”

“@#!*...&”

“What?” Xiao Lin rubbed his ears. Those words were not Ancient Normese.

“That’s my old language.”

“I see. The language did not survive at all.” Xiao Lin sighed. Atlantis was an extremely advanced civilization based on the legends, but nothing about them had survived after sinking.

Xiao Lin had way too much he wanted to know. Based on his speculation, Silverlight might be someone who survived the sinking of Atlantis, and with a stroke of fate, or maybe thanks to that black dragon Onyxia, she was brought to Planet Norma. With that, the ancient languages that looked like hieroglyphs in this world had a logical reason to appear.

Even if Silverlight did not reveal anything, Xiao Lin took the initiative to introduce Earth’s developments to her. It was much easier than explaining the advances on Planet Norma. Xiao Lin used to be a liberal arts student, so that bit came to him naturally.

Chapter 359 - Arriving At Gold City

Chapter 359: Arriving At Gold City

Xiao Lin’s explanations were very in-depth, and Silverlight would occasionally voice a few questions. When they slowly got to modern history, Silverlight completely shut up, her cold face not showing a shred of emotion.

As Xiao Lin stopped as well, tacking “That’s all!” at the end, Silverlight seemed to have sighed in resignation before going into his Holy Soul Sword.

Xiao Lin was a little speechless, he had wanted to hear her views on the difference between the ancient and modern civilizations, but it seemed like Silverlight still had some apprehensions toward them. Thankfully, he did not lack time, so he could afford to be patient.

As for what level Silverlight's power was at, Xiao Lin and Lilith discussed it in private. Silverlight had brought up before that she had lost a great deal of power after she was sealed, so Xiao Lin felt that her power level was around the Gold or Epic level.

"So are you planning on making her your personal bodyguard?" Lilith said with some annoyance. She had seen through Xiao Lin's goal of inviting Silverlight.

"Who are you protecting yourself against?" Lilith asked curiously.

Xiao Lin did not reply to that; they were heading toward the largest city in the Silver Province: Gold City. There were various academies stationed there, even the various native kingdoms had their own stations there, so the situation was quite complicated.

As for who Xiao Lin wanted protection from, it was something that did not need to be said. Other than Asabanor, who was a huge potential threat, what had him worried was the fact that Dawn Academy seemed to have wanted to use the fact that he was with Lilith at Wildfire Town to handle him.

Even if Xiao Lin wanted to believe that the amicable dean would not do something like that, the whole thing still felt very unpleasant. As reluctant as he was, Xiao Lin still felt like he should have some preventive measures.

"How long has it been since we left Wildfire Town?"

"It's been around half a month. Where do you think Asabanor is at the moment?" Even if they had wasted some time at Silverlight Lake, Lilith did not forget their initial goal for being at the Silver Province. Asabanor was her final target here.

"Why do you think Asabanor is here?" Xiao Lin asked.

"Revenge."

"Right, the resurrection tower."

"There's also the starmetal."

At that stage of their conversation, Xiao Lin could not help but recall the black resurrection tower in Wildfire Town, as well as that undead creature that kept resurrecting. Both of their moods plummeted at that moment.

They were quite glad that their entire journey had been within the vicinity of resurrection towers. Most of the Silver Province had been covered up by resurrection towers, which indicated that Asabanor's assault was not as fast as they thought.

Getting to Gold City took up seven days. Even if the distance was a little far, they were no longer in a desolate landscape after leaving the mountains. The Silver Province had quite a prosperous trade industry, so there were quite a few inns around the area, and transport was not lacking either.

Of course, there was nothing as high-classed as unicorns. What they used were generally some regular gray-furred wolves. Those were magical wolves who had been trained, so their speed was fast, but they could not carry too heavy of a load, nor could they withstand long journeys. However, it was quite a good option for those that were looking to travel short distances.

New Dollars were used in the Silver Province, but under Ibeiya's vague warnings, they exchanged their money for the local currency at an inn. To merchants that came from elsewhere, Planet Norma's native currency was much more attractive than New Dollars since a good amount of those merchants came from territories that were not under the colonists.

They reached Gold City after a few days. The city was quite prosperous, even if it was quite far off from the likes of New Washington and Dawn City. It was about ten times larger than Wildfire Town, and there were no walls surrounding it. There were only a few sentry and archer towers in the vicinity which felt purely symbolic.

That level of defense would definitely not work against any attack that was remotely thought out, but no one dared to bring any armies into the Silver Province. All the academies were there, and anyone who dared to cause any trouble would incur the wrath of all of them. Even bandits who caused trouble everywhere they went did not dare to move inside easily. That was why Gold City had practically no defenses. The peace that the various academies maintained seemed to be quite well-received based on the number of merchants that were around. It had naturally caused the entire city to prosper.

Xiao Lin had learned quite a bit about the city from Lilith and Ibeiya, which was why he did not react when they reached Gold City and saw the various checkpoints in the city which were filled with fully-equipped soldiers conducting identity checks.

There were just identity checks; there were no body checks done at all. The soldiers in charge spoke in thickly accented Normese, indicating that they were natives. The checks were very simple. They would put a transparent jewel close to everyone before issuing a simple pass to everyone who went in the city. The guards would also repeat a warning that there would be checks conducted in Gold City, and those without a pass would be arrested.

"They are checking for death energy! If there's any death energy on your body, the jewel will light up."

Lilith recognized the use of the jewel. The purpose was quite obvious, which was to prevent any suspicious undead from entering Gold City. Asabanor would naturally not come here personally, but the humans who were controlled by him would not be able to enter either.

Xiao Lin was suddenly in a hard spot. With that kind of a check, their group would naturally not be able to get through. Ibeiya was obvious; even if the dark races were very different from the undead, they still exuded thick death energy, which would definitely cause problems. Xiao Lin's Holy Soul Sword also had two undead spirits residing within it.

Even if they were Dawn Academy and Judge Academy's students, which meant that they would definitely be able to get through if they explained the situation, Xiao Lin did not dare to cause any sudden problems before making sure what the current situation was.

So, they decided to temporarily avoid the checkpoints during the day, deciding to try to enter when night fell. Even if Gold City's defenses were strengthened, with so many years of carelessness, the residents of the city had long since been used to a life of luxury.

Most of the city had dispersed when night fell, and night time would naturally limit everyone's vision. Other than the occasional passing merchants, there were very few travellers entering the city.

Entering the city was a hard proposition. Even if it was native territory, they had used a lot of high-ranked magical scrolls, such as scrolls that illuminated large areas, revealed invisible objects, and stopped flying objects. Those scrolls were definitely not cheap, and it was obvious that they had been provided by the academies.

Those scrolls had basically cast an impenetrable net around Gold City, making it so that it was impossible to penetrate, and that any attempt would be noticed.

Chapter 360 - Entering The City

Chapter 360: Entering The City

The cost to set up such a defense was naturally expensive. Covering the entire city with magic needed a large amount of magical scrolls, which meant that this sort of defense would not last long, but Xiao Lin's group could not afford to keep staying outside the city.

Lilith actually did not think too much of it, feeling like they should have just reported themselves in, but Xiao Lin had some doubts in his mind. The two of them discussed for quite some time, failing to figure out a foolproof plan. Xiao Lin even called out Silverlight, but the woman did not give any solid suggestions. Of course, she did not understand Xiao Lin's doubts either.

After their arguments yielded nothing, it was actually Ibeiya that asked in her clear and crisp voice and with a strange look, "Don't you have a lot of money?"

Xiao Lin and Lilith were momentarily speechless as they stared at each other before their faces reddened. They had seen plenty of that sort of thing on Earth, but they had never actually done it before. They had forgotten all about it when they were in Planet Norma. Planet Norma and Earth had a lot of similarities when it came to human nature.

Xiao Lin was actually quite nervous initially. He was even prepared to fight at the drop of a hat. That was exacerbated by the fact that they were checked by a vulgar-looking man. He even catcalled Ibeiya and Lilith when he saw them. Lilith's face froze as she felt the urge to pull out her scythe.

However, after Xiao Lin took out three pieces of gold, their expressions changed. Planet Norma's currency was still stuck with gold and silver. Both of those metals were considered rare metals.

“We just got here from Wildfire Town, so there might be some death energy lingering on our bodies. I hope you all can help us out!” That was the excuse Xiao Lin had discussed with the rest of them.

The man waved the jewel around his body and the jewel emitted a faint white glow. Just as the man was about to make a move, Xiao Lin pushed the gold in his hand over.

The three bright pieces of gold were exchanged with over three thousand New Dollars by Xiao Lin. There were three people at the checkpoint. Their greedy looks were not concealed by the moonlight, but their faces still looked uncertain. They muttered a few words, but were very soft. Xiao Lin still managed to understand what they meant. ‘It’s not enough.’

“Looks like the Normans are greedy folk as well!” Xiao Lin felt some disdain, but thinking about it, it was best to avoid any trouble, so he produced another three gold pieces.

Lilith opened her mouth to interrupt, but shut it when she saw that Xiao Lin had already done something.

The man stubbornly shook his head after taking the gold. Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows, using Normese that he was not very familiar with to ask, “Is it still not enough?”

In order to blend in, Xiao Lin and Lilith had put on native attire. The night was already quite late and there were quite a few clouds in the sky, so with their stammering, it was not easy to find any fault in their disguises.

The man at the checkpoint probably believed that they were just merchants travelling from abroad. Hearing Xiao Lin’s somewhat fluent accent, the one in charge paused before revealing a strange smile. He then said a few more words.

Xiao Lin and Lilith froze. The man thought they did not hear him properly, so he unhappily raised his voice. The checkpoint was still some distance away from the city, so it was unlikely anyone would have heard him.

“Her! She’s quite suspicious! We’ll need to detain her for some inspection. The rest of you can go first!” The one who spoke was a short man; his skin was quite dark and half his face was covered with a beard. He was pointing at Ibeiya, who was behind Xiao Lin.

Ibeiya’s status was more sensitive, so she had been lowering her head quietly the entire time. However, the delicate girl had a natural countenance that could charm anyone, so she would naturally draw the gazes of men no matter where she went.

Xiao Lin narrowed his eyes. He finally understood that they were not happy with just money. They wanted Ibeiya as well.

Xiao Lin turned around to look at Ibeiya. The girl had her head lowered, holding Xiao Lin tightly as her large eyes blinked with grievance. Even though the girl was good at acting, Xiao Lin still could not help but feel angry when he saw her adorably pitiful face.

“You’d better not do anything stupid! Where do you think this is?! Whose territory do you think you’re in?!” As if noticing Xiao Lin’s anger, the man stubbornly refused to back off. He moved one step forward, very obviously attempting to threaten them.

“Oh? Whose territory is it?” Lilith’s tone was playful, but her expression remained cold.

“We’re part of the Public Security Alliance. You should know to whom this place belongs! Offending us means you’ll never leave this place!”

“Public Security Alliance?” Xiao Lin did not understand.

Lilith whispered, “It’s an organisation supported by a few academies. It basically helps us manage native problems. Our numbers are small, and we can’t afford to send our people everywhere.”

Xiao Lin understood. The guards were probably just trying to scare them, but they were regretfully messing with the wrong people.

“If we kill them here, would we be noticed?” Xiao Lin asked, deliberately using Normese. The bearded man froze when he heard that.

“It’ll be difficult. The scrolls nearby are all automated defense mechanisms.” Lilith paused before adding, “Although if you’re fast enough, we can probably escape before anyone notices.”

“If we’re fast enough? Alright, I understand.”

“You... What are you trying to do? Quick, sound the alarm! Activate the defensive scrolls!”

Bang!

Xiao Lin did not even give them any chance to react. The guards were not all that strong, only barely reaching Bronze-rank, but with Xiao Lin’s Miracle and Ruin activated, his explosive power was not something normal Bronze-rank foes could withstand. Their actions earlier had infuriated Xiao Lin, adding to his power as well.

Lilith suddenly moved as well. Her speed made her look like a blur. This time she used two daggers. To Lilith who was good at a myriad of weapons, there was no issue at well.

Silencing her foes with one stab, the two daggers were immediately lodged into the other two’s throats before they could even flee.

The fight only lasted a few seconds. Thanks to the fact that their opponents did not have any armor, there was no surprise the opponents were executed so quickly. As long as they did not meet anyone who specialized in strengthening themselves, Xiao Lin’s explosive power was more than enough thanks to Ruin.

“Run!”

The two of them did not waste any time. Before the magical scrolls were activated, they quickly fled. Xiao Lin still maintained his Ruin skill, grabbing Ibeiya hand as well. Lilith was also not far behind him.

After a few minutes, the air outside of the city started to shake, which was a sign that the automated defenses had been activated, but thanks to Xiao Lin and Lilith's explosive speed, they had already run quite the distance.

Chapter 361 - News From The Inn

Chapter 361: News From The Inn

Xiao Lin was actually a bit sad. Even though he did not forget to retrieve his gold before running, he felt like he had done a lot for no reason. He should have just barged in at the start.

Even though the Normans were just as greedy as anyone else, there were so many other ways to solve problems on this planet. Xiao Lin was deep in thought.

Gold City might not have had any defenses, but they still had their own ways of defending themselves. The body in charge of the city was the Public Security Alliance that the man talked about earlier which was supported by a lot of academies. With the magical scrolls outside the city being activated, there were naturally a lot of people shocked into action.

The quietness of the night was broken as people started to make noise on the streets. There were quite a few squads of people gathering toward the outside of the city, but Xiao Lin could not make out their identities thanks to the night. Xiao Lin's group had managed to avoid their sight thanks to breaking in so quickly.

Xiao Lin and Lilith were actually not sure if those guards were still alive, but they did not attack with the intent to kill, since they bore no deep grudges against the guards. Xiao Lin looked quite worried, but it was Ibeiya who felt like their reactions were strange, not feeling like anything big happened.

"We don't really need to hide like this, your statuses are as kings here. Hey, don't you know who you guys are here? You're nobles! To be honest, even if you killed those natives, no one would dare investigate you."

Ibeiya voiced her unhappiness at having to hide in the darkness, but after that, she blinked her eyes, using a look of admiration that all men would enjoy as she said to Xiao Lin, "You really are a good person, Uncle."

Lilith fixed a judgmental gaze on Xiao Lin, not saying a word.

Xiao Lin's head felt somewhat larger after being called a good person. He suddenly understood what Ibeiya meant. As a student of Dawn Academy, he did enjoy various privileges here. However, he still did not have the mental preparation, nor was he used to any special treatment.

It was especially so after Ibeiya said he would not be investigated for killing someone. Xiao Lin could not help but feel strange about it. He opened his mouth, but finally settled for a bitter smile. It was not the time to discuss such things.

Once the Public Security Alliance started to move further away, their group finally came out of hiding. Gold City was very quiet at night, which fit perfectly with how Planet Norma worked. They naturally were not in the mood to go sightseeing, so they just found an inn to stay in. Ibeiya seemed very familiar with the place, managing to maneuver around and find them a decent-looking inn.

“This inn was invested in and built by your people and is operated by the natives. I think it’ll fit your requirements quite well.” Ibeiya giggled.

“I think you’re the one who wants to stay here!” Xiao Lin said, exasperated. However, he did not object. They spent so much time travelling outside lately; he did want a nice and comfortable bed to rest in.

After spending all this time in the New World, Xiao Lin started to develop an understanding of the life of colonists on Planet Norma. Things such as investing in a business and leaving it to be operated by the natives was quite common. Their special privileges were mostly superficial. Internally, there were actually quite a few colonists who were not very well off, only being at the level of a common citizen. There would always be people looking out for ways to make money.

That particular inn was invested in by the Royal British Academy. The outer or inner decorations both had a majestic look to them. The Normese and Earth standards of beauty were quite similar, but the natives were still lacking in terms of luxurious appearances.

The inn was built based on five-star specifications on Earth, but the boss and all the staff were natives. Most of the people who stayed there were natives who wanted to experience life on Earth.

“There are quite a few rich natives. Starmetal had always been a rare metal, but after finding that starmetal was needed to build resurrection towers, the price skyrocketed. There are many natives who got rich from starmetal.”

“No wonder.” This place was not really a colonist territory, but the influence of the various academies was strong. Skill was one thing, but more importantly, the colonists represented a chance for the natives to get rich, which would naturally generate quite a few followers.

The inn’s price was not cheap, costing 500 New Dollars a room per night. Xiao Lin volunteered to cover all of their expenses, but when he prepared to pay for three rooms, Ibeiya considerately said that they did not need to waste the money; only two rooms was enough.

“That’s fine.” Xiao Lin did not lack money, but he had limited funds on hand. He also did not want anyone to feel like he was a rich foreigner, since that could cause unnecessary problems.

Xiao Lin paused for thought after paying, explaining to Lilith, “You’ll room with Ibeiya. I’ll stay alone.”

Lilith raised her eyebrow, “Of course. Were you thinking about something else? You really are a stinking pervert!”

Xiao Lin looked at Lilith in exasperation while Ibeiya swaggered off with a smile on her face. He shook his head, grabbing his key before a young, beautiful and sexily-dressed lady brought him to his room. After looking up, Xiao Lin took off his clothes and took a bath. The travels had left his body filthy and fatigued.

The bathrooms here were even better than the ones at New Washington. They used some magical incantations to control the heat of the water, which meant the baths did not need hot water to be manually added, even if some people would have preferred those beautiful women on staff to come in.

After his bath, Xiao Lin yawned and he prepared to sleep before he suddenly noticed a woman in a white dress sitting next to his bed, staring at him unblinkingly.

“Ah, Silverlight? Silverlight!”

Xiao Lin slapped his forehead, an annoyed look appearing on his face. He had only been thinking about Lilith and Ibeiya when he booked the rooms, but he had forgotten about the spirit that was temporarily staying in his Holy Soul Sword. Even though she was a spirit who had been dead for who knows how many millennia, she was still a person, and a woman at that.

Xiao Lin then noticed Silverlight’s gaze seemed to be looking at his body curiously. Thankfully, he had his underwear on, but he still had nothing on the upper half of his body.

Xiao Lin’s face reddened at being stared at before he rushed back to the bathroom, hastily putting on a shirt before coming out. Even though he had to admit that Silverlight was a woman who did not lack in looks or demeanor, the moment he thought about Silverlight’s age, looked at her third eye and thought about the fact that she was a ghost, Xiao Lin lost absolutely all interest.

Chapter 362 - Xiao Lin’s Worry

Chapter 362: Xiao Lin’s Worry

“Why don’t I bring you over to Lilith’s room.” Xiao Lin broke the awkwardness in the air. He felt like Silverlight might not be comfortable being in a room with him alone.

“No need. I don’t have a common language with her.” Silverlight’s Ancient Normese was better than Xiao Lin’s.

“Fine, there’s no problem if you’re fine with it. Oh, if you feel like it’s not comfortable in the Holy Soul Sword you can walk around here.” Xiao Lin maintained a certain amount of respect toward Silverlight. She was the trump card against Asabanor that he had invited, so he obviously needed to treat her well. If Silverlight left due to being unhappy and Asabanor appeared, he would really be caught off-guard.

“There’s no need.”

Silverlight was still cold as usual, but her gaze never left Xiao Lin's body. After a few minutes, Xiao Lin coughed dryly in awkwardness, half-jokingly saying, "Your face is really scary. If it were on Earth, we'd say you have horror movie vibes."

"Horror movie?"

Looking at Silverlight's curious expression, Xiao Lin sighed, too lazy to explain to her what movies were.

After a long silence, Xiao Lin had thought that Silverlight planned on passing the night sitting like that. Silverlight withdrew her gaze, saying in her cold and puzzled tone, "Your physique is very special. How do I say this; it's a little..."

"I'm just at Black Iron-rank," Xiao Lin said unhappily. He thought that Silverlight was criticizing him for his bad physique. Even if the initial examinations when he entered the academy proved Silverlight right, he was only at the Black Iron-rank now.

"No, I'm not talking about that. I'm comparing you to my race."

"Oh, the Atlanteans?"

Silverlight nodded.

Xiao Lin was a little curious. Silverlight had kept quiet about Atlantis the entire journey. Lilith had speculated to him privately that Silverlight did not want to open that particular wound, but now Silverlight actually brought it up by herself.

Xiao Lin said, "I'm not that familiar with Atlantis. Ever since your civilization was destroyed, practically any trace of your kind had been wiped out. How do I put this... Are you saying that your race's physique used to be very good?"

Silverlight nodded, adding, "We felt like our bodies were the greatest gift God bestowed unto us, so we had to refine them."

Was this the difference between a civilization that emphasized skill and a civilization that emphasized technology?

Xiao Lin cursed silently, smiling bitterly as he said, "I don't have the natural gifts of your race. In truth, based on what I know, most humans on Earth have pretty bad physiques nowadays. Our foundations can't even compare to the natives here, even though we improve faster than they do."

"I don't mean it like that." Silverlight furrowed her eyebrows, thinking for a moment before saying, "I'm not saying that your physique is bad. It's just special."

"Which part of it is special?" Xiao Lin had a head full of sweat talking to Silverlight.

"It's very similar."

“What? What’s similar?” Xiao Lin was getting impatient. Why could the woman not just finish what she was talking about?

Silverlight breathed in deeply; it was not that she was doing it on purpose, but her tone sounded very reluctant. After seemingly making up her mind, she slowly said, “With my race! To a certain degree, your body is very similar to my race’s. I feel a sense of familiarity from your body.”

After that, Silverlight sighed. She knew that her race no longer existed.

Xiao Lin was dumbfounded. Silverlight’s words were rather unclear. That woman seemed a little like Gu Xiaoyue, always leaving things half spoken.

After Silverlight finished, she did not seem to have any intention of continuing, instead changing the topic. “I just wanted to tell you, that swordsman in your sword is quite interesting. I bet Onyxia helped you level it up. I’m intrigued. Let me play with it for a few days.”

“What? Play with it?”

Before Xiao Lin could finish, Silverlight returned to the Holy Soul Sword. Xiao Lin shook his head in resignation, but as long as Silverlight was willing to stay around, there was no reason to refuse her, even if he could not figure out what she meant by playing around...

Even with a female ghost that could appear at any time by his side, Xiao Lin had a very good rest that night. It was also due to the fact that he was too exhausted from the past few days.

The next day, it was almost noon when he woke up. The inn also mimicked Earth and had a buffet prepared. Since it was near Dawn Academy, the dishes there were mainly eastern, on top various local native delicacies. The taste was not bad.

He saw Lilith and Ibeiya there. Noticing that Ibeiya seemed to have a new ornament in her hand, Xiao Lin paused before asking, “Where did you go this morning?”

“It’s not like everyone can sleep like a log like you did!” Lilith said, rolling her eyes before saying, “She insisted on going shopping this morning, so I went out with her.”

Xiao Lin obviously knew what Lilith meant. Lilith did not like shopping personally; she only accompanied Ibeiya to protect or look after her.

“What’s it like outside?”

“The checks are quite strict. The Public Security Alliance has been looking all over the place.” Considering there were others in the restaurant, Lilith did not say that the checks were due to what they did last night.

“Don’t worry!” Ibeiya said without a care as she smiled. “Their checks are just formalities. They only do it for you guys, and for everyone else to see.”

“What’s the situation in Wildfire Town?” Xiao Lin asked. He believed that Lilith would have tried to get some information.

Lilith nodded. “Even though they suppressed the news a bit, it’s too big of an issue. There’s a lot of chatter around the city, most of it without much substance. However, there’s one piece of news that’s quite interesting. Listen up.”

Lilith lowered her voice a little. “Some of them are saying that Planet Norma’s true God was ascending and preparing to cleanse the world of filth. Only following them to defeat the demons would anyone earn the right to a new life. Otherwise, everyone would be subject to heavenly punishment.

Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows. “The origin of this rumor is definitely not simple.”

“That old fart is definitely the one who started it. I tried listening around; it seems quite a lot of people have heard about this.” Lilith’s face had a faint trace of worry.

Xiao Lin sighed. “That old fart is really crafty.”

This was the Silver Province’s most bustling area; all the merchants and mercenaries on Planet Norma passed through the area. If the news started to spread, it was not a stretch to assume that the news would spread like a plague across Planet Norma in just a short time.

The world did not have any networks or media, so it was not easy for rumors to spread. However, Asabanor had figured out one of the best methods, and Wildfire Town’s sorry state fanned the flames even harder.

Chapter 363 - Arrest Warrant

Chapter 363: Arrest Warrant

Gold City was incredibly busy during the day, the merchants walked around like an endless stream. Countless stalls littered the streets. Earthen and Normese buildings could be seen everywhere, the luxuriousness of the city definitely living up to being named after gold. Everything was extravagant without limit, and even the statues in the middle of the city were made of violet gold. It was the biggest currency in Planet Norma; one violet gold coin could be traded for 1,000 normal gold coins.

Even though the city’s security had been increased by several times, it did not really seem to affect the regular trade. It was more accurate to say that the greedy merchants had long since treated money as more important than their lives.

From the rumors related to Asabanor that Lilith heard, Xiao Lin’s heart was even more unsettled. He suddenly understood that even if Lilith and himself were Asabanor’s targets, they were definitely not the only ones. Asabanor had big ambitions.

“Should we contact our academies first?” Xiao Lin suggested.

“I actually don’t think so.”

Lilith unexpectedly rejected it. She had been the one who initially suggested looking for the academy offices in Gold City. After all, she had gone missing, and Judge Academy was definitely frantically looking for her. It was also where Xiao Lin and her opinions differed.

“You changed your mind?” Xiao Lin asked as he smiled.

“I’m doing it for your own good.” Lilith glanced at him, hesitating before producing a roll of paper, and sighed.

“What’s this?”

“See for yourself.”

Lilith and Ibeiya’s expressions were not good. Xiao Lin unfurled the paper, and the words on top were written in Normese, Mandarin, and English. His face darkened as he read it.

To be accurate, it was an arrest warrant, and one issued by Dawn Academy’s officials. The contents were: ‘Student Xiao Lin from the academy has violated the academy rules, abandoning his duties. If anyone finds this person, contact any of Dawn Academy’s offices. Any reliable information will be rewarded with 10,000 New Dollars.’

What did Xiao Lin do wrong?

Thinking about it carefully, he had come with a few departments from Dawn Academy to investigate Asabanor with Judge Academy. Three of them were killed unexpectedly in Wildfire Town, and after that, the academy had deliberately not sent reinforcements, forcing Xiao Lin and Lilith to find a way out themselves. After a few problems, they finally safely reached Gold City.

It was not hard to see that Judge Academy and Dawn Academy had both definitely inspected Wildfire Town and did not find their corpses. To the outside world, they really were missing, but Xiao Lin did not expect that Dawn Academy would release such a notice.

“What kind of joke is this?!” Xiao Lin was trembling with anger. In that situation, Dawn Academy did not even help them, and he could only choose to save himself. Yet, that was seen as a violation of academy rules.

“Be quiet! Do you want the entire city to know that you are here?” Lilith stared at him. She then asked curiously, “I thought that your academy was just targeting me, but it looks like you were caught up as well. It’s strange though. Look at the seal on the bottom. It’s not your dean’s seal.”

Xiao Lin gasped. There was a Dawn Academy seal at the bottom, but he could not see anything off about it. After that, he recalled that his letter of appointment had the dean’s seal on it.

Taking out the letter, the seal was formed with various complicated patterns, and in the middle of it was a very clear ‘Li’. Xiao Lin only knew that the dean’s surname was Li from that, but comparing it to the arrest warrant, it was completely different, meaning that the arrest warrant was not issued by the dean.

“It could have been issued by someone else.” Xiao Lin was still unhappy, but knowing that the dean did not do it relaxed him a little.

“Do you understand or not?” Lilith said. “This is a warrant that goes past the academy’s territories, so it needs the dean’s personal seal to be in effect. Otherwise, every other academy can just ignore it!”

Lilith sighed. “If I’m not mistaken, this seal probably comes from your army. As for Dawn Academy’s governmental structure, you should know about it by now.”

Xiao Lin nodded. He was no longer a complete rookie. Basically every academy had two power structures: one for the academy and one for their colonial territories. Being military organisations, they were especially sensitive to that. Every academy operated differently, and in Dawn Academy, the one who held the power for both was the dean.

Of course, because he held the most power, the dean naturally had enemies, especially within the army. He had heard from Yu Mei that, in order to preserve internal balance, the dean had divided up a large amount of his power in the army in order to achieve a temporary unity within the academy. That was why Yu Mei had established the sixth regiment.

Xiao Lin thought about the assessment at the end of the third examination. Those old folks with military backgrounds obviously charged at him to make things difficult. That was when he started to feel the internal power struggles within the academy.

Was he to be the sacrificial object in the struggles of the higher-ups again?

Xiao Lin was not certain, but it was obvious someone was out to get him. It really was not a good time to approach the academies and hand himself in. In the same way, if Lilith appeared, she would definitely be pressed for information on Xiao Lin, and he would be exposed then too.

Lilith really did treat Xiao Lin as a friend, and did not want Xiao Lin to enter an awkward position because of her. That caused him to feel incredibly grateful.

What caused Xiao Lin some relief was that there were no pictures on the arrest warrant. All they had were some descriptions of his appearance. He did not need to worry about anyone noticing him in the streets, and Lilith felt that the warrant was only sent to the various offices within the colonies, probably anticipating that Xiao Lin would definitely immediately head to an academy branch office if he did not die in Wildfire Town.

Since he guessed their intentions, Xiao Lin naturally could not fall into their trap. Even if he did not know what would happen to him if he went, he knew that it would not be anything good.

“The best way is to return to the academy right away. Every Academy has their own jurisdiction, and the army can’t interfere with it. They won’t be able to do anything to you if you return.”

Lilith’s suggestion was actually what Xiao Lin was thinking of. The two of them discussed for a bit before deciding on it. However, Lilith could not accompany Xiao Lin there. As a student of Judge Academy, she could not enter Dawn Academy’s territories as she pleased.

Chapter 364 - Spatial Equipment

Chapter 364: Spatial Equipment

Lilith's journey would end there. Gold City was well-connected and acted as a central zone due to its nearby roads, which led to places near and far. According to Lilith's plan, she was to return directly to the Judge Academy's colony. Upon arrival in New Washington, she would report the incident to the academy's senior management once more, and anything after that would be discussed between the academies themselves.

Before parting ways, the two of them settled their debts with each other first. The starmetal from Silverlight Lake, which was said to be 100% pure, was eventually given to Xiao Lin, but he had to pay a certain amount of money to Lilith as compensation. They argued for half a day before finally reaching a decision: the total he would have to pay Lilith was 50,000 New Dollars, and he was required to transfer the money over to Lilith after returning to Dawn City.

The damaged sword from the center of Silverlight Lake was given to Xiao Lin too, because Lilith did not have any interest in a useless sword. It went without saying that there was no charge for that.

Xiao Lin himself chose to stay in Gold City for a couple of days before returning to Dawn City. Come the next morning, it was not a very sentimental parting of ways, since they were bound to meet each other again in the future anyway. Ibeiya however, seemed to be more reluctant. She pulled the hem of Lilith's clothes and had a sad look in her eyes.

A man in Lilith's place might not have the heart to leave and would perhaps have stayed behind too, but Lilith was a woman. She gently pried away Ibeiya's hand from her shirt and left expressionlessly.

Xiao Lin did not know whether laugh or cry, though he could not help recalling Lilith whispering to him before she left, "Beware of Ibeiya."

Lilith had been wary of Ibeiya right from the outset, while Xiao Lin's vigilance had reduced significantly. In fact, the adorable little girl never did anything suspicious or acted in a way that was unfavorable to them. On the contrary, she harrowed through each and every crisis alongside the two of them.

"That girl is no ordinary girl. Don't underestimate a dark race. They're the best at hiding their true colors. Frankly speaking, I suggest that you directly send her to Dawn Academy for investigation, if that's possible. This is the best choice," that was Lilith's last advice to Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin laughed at that, but when Lilith left, he mulled over it for a moment before looking for Ibeiya and chatting casually with her.

It had been two days since he came to Gold City. Back when they were still in Wildfire Town, Ibeiya was forced to follow them for her own survival due to the undead attacks that could have come at any time. She ended up tagging along for the remainder of their journey, and even though Gold City was relatively safe, Ibeiya showed no sign of leaving alone.

Ibeiya's reasoned that she was originally homeless to begin with and therefore wandered around everywhere, though saying by Xiao Lin's side made her feel safe. After sensing Xiao Lin's

intentions, she immediately changed into a coquettish tone and shook Xiao Lin's arm, saying, "You're a good person, Uncle. You'll never leave me alone. I can do whatever you ask me to, if that's what you want, so don't chase me away!"

Xiao Lin frowned at her repeated calls of 'Uncle'. He was lucky that Lilith had left, otherwise he would be on the receiving end of a few eye-rolls that said, 'Sick pervert'. He nevertheless had his own plans, so he patiently persuaded her, "I'll arrange a place for you to stay in Gold City so you don't have to wander around. I'm not in a really good situation right now. It might be difficult to protect myself and it will be equally as hard to take care of you."

"I don't want it!"

"Be good!"

"NO!"

"Listen to me!"

...

After a while, Ibeiya still insisted on following Xiao Lin. In the end, she proposed a compromise: Xiao Lin ought to at least let her follow him back to Dawn City, as she claimed that there was good law and order there.

Xiao Lin froze. He did not immediately agree and simply said that he would reconsider.

As a capital-level colony completely controlled by Dawn Academy, Dawn City was different from other cities in Planet Norma. The authority in Gold City was very broad despite the existence of numerous powers from various universities. People were quite free to go in and out, which led to a plethora of characters inside the city.

However, incredibly cumbersome procedures were required when entering Dawn City. Xiao Lin heard about them before and he did not want to add more headaches to an already troublesome situation. More importantly, Lilith's words made him feel as though he could not fully trust Ibeiya. Letting such a mysterious girl enter their city was out of the question. If something went wrong there, Xiao Lin would suffer the consequences too.

Fortunately, there was still long to go before he had to deal with all that. Xiao Lin wandered around during his few days in Gold City, and he was initially worried about whether others would recognize him and report him directly to Dawn Academy's local office. It did not take long for him to breathe a sigh of relief over that. In fact, the arrest warrant was not put up everywhere as he expected. Like Lilith said, the arrest warrant was only posted in a few places where the Earthlings were more concentrated.

Whoever issued the warrant clearly did not want it to be too publicized due to the lack of the dean's official stamp.

Xiao Lin made plans to buy spatial storage equipment for himself. In the previous battles, Lilith's spatial bracelet seemed quite nifty and he felt a little envious of it. Purchasing such an item was much easier in Dawn City, but Gold City's business scene flourished quite well too. Well-connected

transportation allowed a large number of merchants from various areas to gather there. Due to the larger number of mercenary groups and adventurers nearby, the trade in weapons and equipment was more abundant as well.

After hearing Xiao Lin's intentions, Ibeiya volunteered to lead the way for him. Her knowledge of the Gold City was far more than Xiao Lin, and she knew which weapon stores had poor quality or lacked resources. She finally introduced him to what was said to be a century-old shop. It had somewhat of a reputation in Planet Norma, and it happened to be a shop that was famous for creating spatial-type equipment.

After Ibeiya brought him there, Xiao Lin came to discover a large number of spatial props, though the price nearly gave him a heart attack. The cheapest items cost tens of thousands of New Dollars, while prices for the slightly higher-grade ones hovered around the hundred-thousands.

Of course, Xiao Lin had more than enough money to afford it, but the quality was not as high as he imagined even if he bought them at that kind of price

For example, a spatial ring with a value of 40,000 New Dollars only had the function to provide about one cubic meters of storage space, which was far too small and differed greatly from his expectations. Xiao Lin shook his head decisively when he thought of the sheer number of weapons capable of being stored in Lilith's spatial bracelet. Spatial equipment with a slightly larger storage space had a price that numbered in the hundred-thousands, which was distressing even for Xiao Lin.

"Uncle, do you understand spatial equipment at all?" Ibeiya curled her lips and explained patiently, "Equipment like these are very difficult to manufacture because they use starmetal. The materials are scarce and the manufacturing costs are high. Moreover, creating an independent space is inherently very difficult to do."

Xiao Lin was a little disappointed. Lilith's bracelet was clearly not of ordinary value, but Ibeiya's words also made him raise his eyebrows unexpectedly, "Did you just say starmetal?"

Chapter 365 - Mixed-Race

Chapter 365: Mixed-Race

An important material for spatial equipment was starmetal, and that was also the main reason for the high value of such equipment. However, Xiao Lin happened to have starmetal with him, so if the material costs were ignored, the actual workmanship might not be that expensive.

Ibeiya's words gave Xiao Lin a couple of ideas. He did not necessarily have to buy a finished ring, but finding someone who could actually make spatial equipment was difficult as it was very different from ordinary forging. Those who were able to do that must possess extensive skill, and since Xiao Lin was worried about wasting the material at hand, he felt that it was unwise to seek out a complete stranger.

"I can introduce someone to you, Uncle!" Ibeiya blinked her eyes and patted her slightly raised chest. She assured him, "I guarantee the quality will be good!"

“You know someone reliable?”

“Of course!”

“But didn’t you say that you haven’t been to Gold City for many years?”

Xiao Lin had casually asked her about it when they first entered the city. Although Ibeiya mentioned going there a few times during her early years of being a nomad, she said that it was a very long time ago. She claimed not to remember a lot of things as she was still young then.

Ibeiya’s tone froze up and she stomped her feet coquettishly. She pouted angrily and said, “Uncle, you did this on purpose!”

Xiao Lin’s only response was to sigh. He could not distinguish between truth and fiction when it came to Ibeiya. In fact, the past two days had shown him that Ibeiya was actually quite familiar with Gold City, as the hotel they lived in was on her recommendation too. Evidently, it was impossible that she had not been there for years and years as she claimed.

“Okay, okay.” Xiao Lin waved his hand. He was too lazy to get to the bottom of it, but he did not immediately agree to it. Instead, he said, “Bring me to meet with that spatial equipment maker you mentioned.”

In the afternoon, Xiao Lin followed Ibeiya along with a piece of starmetal that was only the size of a fingernail. In fact, he did not put his hopes high because his own piece was too small. He was also worried that the materials were not enough. If things did not work out, he would simply decide on it after going back to Dawn City.

Along the way, Ibeiya enthusiastically introduced him to the accessory maker. Planet Norma’s craft professions had long formed an extensive and rather fixed system in the span of thousands of years, such as blacksmiths, potion makers, and the like. The ranks of equipment manufacturers were also divided into ranks three, six, and nine, respectively. However, the rank division was not as obvious as strength ranks.

That accessory-maker had a very strange name: Hammerhead. When Ibeiya finished explaining, Xiao Lin cocked a brow in surprise and exclaimed, “An orc!”

Xiao Lin was no longer inexperienced, for the third monthly exam had given him a preliminary understanding of the orcs. It was all but certain that a Norman with such a distinctive name was an orc.

Ibeiya remarked in some surprise, “The orcs’ territory borders with yours, which means it’s also close to Silver Province. Uncle, you ought to know that there are a lot of orcs there, and since the trade between orcs is underdeveloped, they frequently have to obtain the necessary supplies from here.”

The war between the orcs and Dawn Academy a century ago sparked a hostile relationship between the two sides ever since. Although there were a considerable number of orcs who did business in Dawn City, the vast majority of them were unwilling to deal with anyone from Dawn Academy. At that point, they could only exchange goods in Silver Province to obtain their daily supplies.

The two of them walked for most of their journey, gradually deviating from the bustling city center and approaching the suburbs. The houses there were obviously much worse than in the city center, as they looked rather simple and crude. Their utterly asymmetrical shapes were often unsettling and they happened to be a typical characteristic of the orcs. They lacked skilled builders and their aesthetic preferences were clearly very different from Earthlings and even the local Normans.

“There aren’t many rich individuals among the orcs, so they can’t afford to live in city center houses,” Ibeiya explained.

“How do you know Hammerhead? Although I’ve never interacted much with the orcs, I don’t think they’re an easy race to get along with.” Xiao Lin was doubly curious and puzzled.

“I hate orcs too!” Ibeiya nodded in agreement and made no secret of her disgusted expression that appeared between her beautiful brows.” All that violent race knows is honor and war. Who would like them!”

She then stopped talking for a moment and flashed a grin. “But Hammerhead is different. He saved me once. He’s an orc with a gentle personality and he’s a mixed-race too.”

“Mixed-race? That’s really strange. Who would want to do that with the orcs?” Xiao Lin questioned in amazement. He had seen orcs before and their appearances were downright unflattering. He could not wrap his head around why men and women of other races would choose to be with orcs. A person like that was either mentally-ill or a complete lunatic.

Ibeiya herself was also a mixed-race, with equal parts vampire and Norman. However, she inherited not only the fine traditions of the Rosa Kingdom’s royal family, but also the vampire’s near heaven-defying talent. She could be considered a successful mixed-race individual and there was nothing too strange about it.

“Take a guess, Uncle.” Ibeiya kept him in suspense.

“It has to be one of those few races. Normans? Elves? Dwarves? Please don’t tell me it’s a dragon?” Xiao Lin guessed a few races in a row but Ibeiya denied them one by one.

The mischievous look in her eyes elicited a frown from Xiao Lin. He had a sudden thought and widened his eyes incredulously. “It can’t be one of us!”

“Bingo! You’re right!”

Xiao Lin was momentarily speechless. The corners of his lips twitched and the answer really did come as a shock to him.

Had it been a local Norman, Xiao Lin would have found it understandable if not a little surprised, since the aesthetic preferences of locals might be different. However, it was difficult to understand that an Earthling would do that with an orc, and—of all places—was from Dawn Academy.

Two scenes popped up out of nowhere in Xiao Lin’s mind: a hideous, fang-toothed male orc with an absolutely beautiful woman, or an insanely muscular female orc with a thin-bodied otaku Earthling.

Such visualizations were absolutely terrifying, and Xiao Lin could not help but feel a chill up his spine. He proceeded to desperately delete those images from his mind.

“Are you feeling cold, Uncle?” Ibeiya asked strangely.

“Ahem, a bit. Actually, a lot!” Xiao Lin laughed dryly before asking, “About Hammerhead’s parents, who’s the orc and who’s the human?”

“The father is human of course! The mother is the orc.” Ibeiya chuckled. “As I have mentioned when we first met, many of your people seem to have special fetishes.”

Her remark drew an angry response, “Don’t lump me in the same category as those people!”

Xiao Lin was reminded of Chen Dao, who wanted to have fun with beautiful women of different races all day long. The story might serve as encouragement for him once Xiao Lin went back and recounted told him about it.

Chapter 366 - Hammerhead

Chapter 366: Hammerhead

Xiao Lin himself was curious about the mysterious mixed-race individual and looked forward to the upcoming meeting. He arrived at Hammerhead’s residence soon enough and it turned out to be an unusually simple wooden double-storey house. Few people came in and out, but those who walked through the gate were dressed quite luxuriantly.

“The people who come here are all rich. That’s Gold City for you. Wealthy people can be found in any corner,” Ibeiya spoke in a somewhat disdainful manner.

According to Ibeiya, Hammerhead was one of the few people who could make high-level spatial equipment. More importantly, he charged a reasonable sum and was well-received by many. His popularity in the city gradually began increasing, contrary to the usual unwelcome treatment accorded to orcs in many places.

Hammerhead was different, and the other half of his bloodline was what made his status very special. Gold City might look like a place with law and order, but the truth was that anyone who had enough strength or power could still do as they pleased there. However, no locals dared to provoke Hammerhead, because none of them knew when his mysterious father might show up.

Xiao Lin pushed the door open and entered, only to see that the furnishings inside the house were simpler than expected. He got a little curious: if Hammerhead really was as skilled as Ibeiya claimed, it was unlikely that he would be that poor. Of course, it was also possible that Hammerhead was a very hardworking and thrifty person.

The reception room was on the first floor and there were only a few faded leather benches there. About four or five people were standing nearby and chattering in Normese. One of them who blocked the stairs leading to the second floor was a 14-year-old teen boy. He was smiling and apologizing profusely while bowing to the crowd.

Xiao Lin had a rough idea of their conversation. The boy was likely an apprentice accepted by Hammerhead and his master was currently serving a certain client, which made it temporarily inconvenient for them to see other people again.

“What a joke! I came all the way here and he’s ignoring me? He knows who I am! ”

“I’ve been waiting for about two or three days in a row now. I’m curious who that customer is!”

“Damn orc! Do you think you can look down on us just because you have that bit of skill?”

“Dirty blood is still flowing in your bones!”

...

These four or five people seemed to come from rather important backgrounds and they had been waiting here for a long time. There was impatience, irritability, and even anger in their tone, while repugnant adjectives began to pepper their sentences.

The poor apprentice boy could only do his best to apologize for everything, but as the scolding gradually increased, it was inevitable that two strong men decided to take action and tried forcefully breaking into the second floor.

The apprentice did not have enough power to resist, as he had little strength. He struggled to no avail, and his innocent yet flustered gaze scanned throughout the room, only to be met with indifference and ridicule. Finally, his gaze landed on Xiao Lin and Ibeiya, who had just entered the door.

Xiao Lin observed for a moment and roughly figured out the cause of the matter. He could not help but frown secretly. If he fought there, his spatial equipment would be busted in no time, so he cleared his throat and spoke Normese to Ibeiya next to him, “Speaking of which, I just came from Dawn City and heard something really interesting from a friend of mine. He told me he had an orc son that lived in Gold City. Do you think he’s kidding?”

The noise in the room disappeared instantly and the man who grabbed the apprentice’s collar was startled. He loosened his grip and sized Xiao Lin up with an unfriendly gaze before saying blankly, “Excuse me, who are you?”

“My identity isn’t something that the likes of you are able to find out!” Xiao Lin snickered a few times before switching right back to fluent Chinese.

The group of people immediately had a surprised look on their face. Colonizers were privileged and untouchable to the natives, and that has proven to be the consensus in that city. Even though they could not confirm Xiao Lin’s identity and barely understood his Chinese, they hesitated to do anything because Xiao Lin’s Chinese had too high a standard and was impossible for the locals to replicate.

Once they calmed themselves down some more, they remembered that Hammerhead was also half-colonist. An ugly expression appeared briefly on their faces and they decided not to take any more risks for fear of provoking a potential powerful enemy. They murmured a couple of incomprehensible sentences and proceeded to leave.

“Thank you!” The apprentice boy bowed again. On that occasion, he actually spoke in Chinese, but his Chinese pronunciation was far worse than Ibeiya’s. After all, not everyone possessed the foreign language talent of Rosa Kingdom.

“I’m here to look for Hammerhead and make an order for spatial equipment, but he seems to be busy? ” Xiao Lin hesitated.

“I’ll help you talk to him.” His impression of Xiao Lin had soared after the latter came to his aid, and he trotted right up to the second floor. A low voice came from upstairs, and he went back down again. He smiled and said, “Master invited you up.”

The second floor was divided into three areas. A tall man was sitting next to the stove in the largest room. After seeing Xiao Lin and Ibeiya coming, he merely nodded to them and pointed to the thick leather chair next to him, motioning them to sit down temporarily.

Aside from them, there was another stranger in the room, who was probably the guest mentioned by the apprentice earlier. Xiao Lin actually felt a little embarrassed because Hammerhead seemed busy, but since the other party said nothing, Xiao Lin decided to wait for a while with Ibeiya. In his curiosity, he began to scrutinize that mixed-race individual.

Hammerhead’s figure was much taller than that of ordinary Earthlings. Although his entire body was covered in clothing, his swollen muscles were still clearly visible. That strong body was no doubt inherited from the orcs, but his appearance was that of a typical Oriental-earthling character with dark black pupils, though his skin was dark brown.

His looks were fairly modest, which prompted Xiao Lin to feel that that human-orc offspring was not as horrible looking as he thought, at least in terms of their genetic appearance.

Hammerhead glanced briefly at Xiao Lin for a while before withdrawing it, as if he was not interested in them. However, Xiao Lin soon sensed another gaze that seemed to have been absent before then.

It came from another stranger sitting next to Hammerhead. It was a man covered completely in a gray robe. Even his ears and hair were wrapped in it, revealing only an unusually handsome and fair face. Xiao Lin could not help but think that the gray-robed man’s face fitted the description of a gigolo to a tee.

Xiao Lin did not mind it that much at first, but he soon had a slight frown after a couple of minutes. The man in gray glanced casually at him when he came in, but the other party’s gaze seemed to be watching him even more intently.

The handsome face was expressionless, but his gaze was so sharp that it made Xiao Lin feel uncomfortable. He suddenly understood that such a look was similar to the gaze of a predator locking in on its prey. Did the man have any intentions of hunting him?

Chapter 367 - Making Spatial Equipment (1)

Chapter 367: Making Spatial Equipment (1)

“Do you know each other?” Hammerhead noticed something off between the two and asked suspiciously.

“No. I just suddenly thought of a friend,” the man in gray retracted his gaze and replied perfunctorily. He had a mellifluous and deep voice.

“It seems you have more guests to entertain, so I won’t bother you much today. I just hope you’ll give due consideration to my proposal earlier.” With the presence of an outsider like Xiao Lin, the gray-robed man did not intend to talk any further, so he got up and took his leave.

Hammerhead did not insist for the man to stay and did not even get up. All he did was nod slightly and let the apprentice see the man off. Once the gray-robed man left, he turned his head and stared blankly at Xiao Lin and Ibeiya. His gaze lingered on Ibeiya’s body for a second or two before starting at Xiao Lin.

“You’re from there?”

Planet Norma’s locals had different ways of referring to Earthlings and Xiao Lin was used to it. He understood what Hammerhead meant and nodded at once, as he felt that there was no need to hide anything.

Hammerhead spoke in rather fluent Chinese, but did not show any sense of cordiality with Xiao Lin despite that. Instead, there was a hint of irony on his face and he sneered, “So you know him then?”

“Him?”

“My apprentice just told me that your friend has an orc son.”

“Oh, my apologies, I was just saying that to help your apprentice out of a troublesome situation. I hope you don’t mind. The truth is, I don’t know your father,” Xiao Lin apologized hurriedly.

Hammerhead’s expression turned rather seemed. He seemed to be both relieved and disgusted, but in the end, he just shook his head blankly. “I don’t like this kind of joke.”

Ibeiya could not help but mutter, “We’re your guests. Is this your way of showing hospitality? No wonder your business is so terrible!”

Hammerhead glanced at the cute girl and did not bat an eye at all. “I don’t know where you heard about me, but don’t you know that I have a rule here? I never do business with the likes of you!”

Xiao Lin frowned. “Do you hate us? Even though we had a war with the orcs a hundred years ago, don’t forget that our blood is also flowing in your own body!”

“Do you know who my father is?”

“I don’t.”

“Neither do I.”

Xiao Lin suddenly had a realization.

“My father abandoned me when I was very young, and my mother raised me until I was six before she left too. Fortunately, the orc blood in my bones helped me to depend on myself from the age of six.” Hammerhead seemed to be laughing self-deprecatingly. “Give me a reason to agree with you?”

Xiao Lin felt choked. Hammerhead seemed to be an orphan who was abandoned by his father and lost his mother when he was still young. Irrespective of his scumbag father’s reason for leaving, Xiao Lin secretly loathed the man.

“So please go back,” Hammer’s tone was firm and he was not joking.

Xiao Lin grinned bitterly and immediately found himself in a tight spot. He originally thought that the other party’s mixed-race status was a convenience, but it unexpectedly became a hindrance. Moreover, it seemed that the other party had inherited the orc’s stubbornness, so much so that money was unlikely to tempt him.

Ibeiya immediately switched to a pitiful look, then pursed her lips and sobbed. “You’re an orphan too? Sob, sob, that’s so pitiful. I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have lost control of my emotions. I just...couldn’t help but be reminded of myself when I was a kid...”

Although Hammerhead did not have a special liking for cute girls, Ibeiya’s words clearly resonated with him and he could not resist asking, “What happened to you when you were a kid?”

What followed was an exchange to compare who was worse off than the other. Xiao Lin heard Ibeiya’s childhood story before, and although he doubted its authenticity, he had to admit that any listener would be moved to tears after hearing it from Ibeiya’s mouth, especially when accompanied by her top-class acting.

To a certain extent, Ibeiya and Hammerhead were indeed similar. They were both mixed-race children who were orphaned when they were young and suffered lots of humiliation because of their blood.

Hammerhead remained expressionless, but Xiao Lin keenly noticed his slightly trembling hands and deduced that Hammerhead’s heart was not as calm as his expression suggested.

More than half an hour later, Ibeiya—who was about to finish—wiped her slightly red eyes and shifted the topic to Xiao Lin. “This uncle saved me when I was helpless. He’s a good man, and one good turn deserves another, don’t you think so?”

Hammerhead looked at Xiao Lin again in a similarly cold gaze, but he appeared much calmer and less hostile than before. He reminded Ibeiya tactfully, “He only has ulterior motives for you.”

The corners of Xiao Lin’s mouth twitched and he secretly lamented Hammerhead’s naïveté. To think that he actually believed Ibeiya’s words!

“No, I’m actually the one who’s seeking help from you. Please, please could you help me make spatial equipment?” Ibeiya’s acting had both young and old eating it all up.

“It’s fine if it’s for you.”

Hammerhead relented after a moment's silence, but Xiao Lin felt that he was just looking for an excuse. It did not matter though, because for him, being able to obtain spatial equipment was the most satisfactory result. He quickly took out the starmetal, and after handing it over, could not help but remark worriedly, "I wonder if it'll be enough."

Hammerhead looked at the starmetal that was only the size of a nail. He made a surprising comment, "It's not too small. I just need to appraise it to determine the quality of the ore itself."

Xiao Lin wanted to tell him that the ore was 100% pure, but Hammerhead trusted his own judgment more. He immediately brought the starmetal into the inner room and asked them to wait.

Their wait lasted more than an hour, during which the apprentice came up to serve them tea and water. Ibeiya was getting a little impatient, but the apprentice quickly apologized and firmly prevented them from going in.

The tea there was very fragrant. After tasting a few sips, Xiao Lin recognized that it originated from their colony. Someone had brought tea plants from Earth to cultivate in Planet Norma, with the result being a tea that was more fragrant when harvested. He could not help but smile to himself, as Hammerhead was using the colony's products despite showing disdain for Earthlings.

The inner room did not allow them to enter, but Xiao Lin closed his eyes for a while and could feel the magic fluctuations surging from within. It took another half an hour for Hammerhead to come out again, and there was a fatigued look in his brows.

"This is a hundred percent pure starmetal!" Hammerhead had a surprised and somewhat bewildered tone. All in all, his face looked at those his worldviews had been completely upended and he had seen a ghost.

"This is impossible! How can pure starmetal possibly exist!"

Xiao Lin stretched out his hand and said with a smile, "I wanted to ask you that too."

"Where did you get this?"

"Ahem, I don't think this should be any of your concern."

Chapter 368 - Making Spatial Equipment (2)

Chapter 368: Making Spatial Equipment (2)

"Tell me whether this starmetal is enough to create spatial storage equipment, and I'm not referring to the ordinary ones on the market which can only barely store a few weapons."

Hammerhead pondered for a moment, then shook his head. Xiao Lin was shocked, but then heard Hammerhead explaining with a wry smile, “No! It’s too exorbitant! It’s like building a house using cash as building material. This is just overwhelming!”

“How large of a storage space can this piece of starmetal create for a spatial storage ring? ”

“Huge.”

“How huge?”

“Unimaginably huge.”

Xiao Lin’s eyelids twitched a few times. The mixed-race orc was clearly keeping them in suspense and Ibeiya could not help but yell, “Just say it, Big Brother Hammerhead. If you’re not sure, you can use something as reference.”

Xiao Lin was speechless and wanted to ask why Hammerhead was a big brother to Ibeiya while he was an uncle.

However, her way of addressing him had obviously reduced their unfamiliarity with each other. He thought for a moment, then opened his hands and gestured. Ibeiya’s eyes brightened up. “It’s as big as this house? My goodness, can a storage space be expanded to that extent?”

“No.” Hammerhead took a deep breath, then looked at Xiao Lin and said, “I’m talking about the size of this city!”

Xiao Lin was so startled that he began rubbing his ears vigorously. “Could you say that again?”

“If the entirety of this pure starmetal is used as for spatial equipment, it could create a space equivalent to the size of this city!”

Hammerhead calmed down a bit, then sat down again and explained, “The development of an independent space is a very profound subject. It’s a field where the first beings who set foot in were the gods. Countless people have been studying it for thousands of years, and progress was only made after starmetal was discovered. Yes, the purity of the starmetal is a key factor, but unfortunately it is very scarce. Otherwise, I’d even be able to make storage equipment the size of this world.”

“Storage equipment that can hold the world?” Xiao Lin found it unbelievable, but he suddenly thought of The Final Land, the space attached to the sword, and the space where the black dragon Onyxia was located. He had a sudden realization and asked thoughtfully, “But then it’s no longer called storage equipment and should instead be called an independent space or domain, is that right?”

Hammerhead glanced at him and nodded. At the same time, he returned the fingernail-sized starmetal with both hands and asked, “Would you still insist on letting me make such a precious thing?”

“Yes, I insist. As long as you can make the best storage equipment, you don’t have to worry about the price.” Xiao Lin’s principle was to save money, but after hearing Hammerhead’s explanation,

he understood that the value of that soon-to-be-produced spatial equipment was something that was unobtainable at any cost.

“The price naturally won’t be cheap, but since the material is yours, it won’t be that expensive. If you’re from there, then you’d be paying for it with New Dollars, yes? Ten thousand New Dollars. Any issue with that?”

“None.” The price was much lower than Xiao Lin had imagined.

The usual condition was for half the deposit to be paid first, but considering the high value of the materials Xiao Lin gave, Hammerhead waived the deposit.

“It will take three days to make. You can stay here, and I’ll send away any guests during these few days.”

Xiao Lin agreed without hesitation. Although he waived the deposit, the piece of starmetal was undoubtedly more valuable compared to that little sum of money. Xiao Lin would not be at ease if he left it here for three days, but he could not possibly make such a remark. Fortunately, Hammerhead was not an idiot, and allowing them to stay there was a way of giving them some peace of mind. As a result, Xiao Lin had a good impression of Hammerhead and believed him to be a sincere person.

Hammerhead then called the apprentice and had him prepare rooms for Xiao Lin and Ibeiya. Other rooms on the second floor had probably been left vacant specifically for such a situation.

“Oh, by the way, who was the man in the gray robe earlier?” Xiao Lin asked casually. Although he had never met the man in gray before, his scrutinizing gaze left Xiao Lin feeling both concerned and unsettled.

“A guest.”

“I see. Well then, I shall not bother you these few days.” Xiao Lin did not force the issue after seeing Hammerhead’s reluctance to say any further.

After arriving in the room that had been prepared, Ibeiya pursed her lips and remarked sharply, “He’s lying!”

“Oh? Did you notice anything?”

“The gray-robed man is from a dark race!”

Ibeiya had a very certain tone. She had a keen intuition for the dark races, and Xiao Lin believed her in matters like that. Although he was a little surprised at that, it was not at all unexpected that a dark race would appear. Based on Hammerhead’s reputation, it should not have been surprising that people would seek him to create equipment.

Ibeiya rolled her eyeballs and suddenly whispered in his ear. Her faint fragrance, along with the moist wind, made Xiao Lin’s ear feel slightly tingly. For the most part, he was red with embarrassment, and even though he wanted to distance himself a little, the little girl’s next words shocked him completely.

“If I guessed correctly, that person should be a dark elf.”

The basic courses taught by Dawn Academy were not too bad and Xiao Lin heard about the dark elves too. They belonged to a different branch of the elves. Their specific history went a long way back and Xiao Lin did not know much, but in short, certain elves accepted the power of darkness a very long time ago in the past and became dark elves.

They were a relatively special race. They possess both the elves’ natural power and the dark side’s death energy, but at the same time, they could prevent the two forces from coming into conflict with each other.

“The dark elves’ living conditions are terrible. They were driven out of their northern homeland by the elves and wandered around, but few countries are willing to take them in. They’re very scarce in number and it’s difficult to meet them on Planet Norma. As far as I know, their nearest settlement is thousands of miles away from here, so how is it possible that they appeared here?” Ibeiya knew quite a lot about the dark races and it was not something which ordinary people could easily understand.

Xiao Lin frowned and tried to recall carefully. He had never met any ordinary elves ever since he entered the academy, so it was even more unlikely that he would offend a dark elf.

With that line of thinking, he finally set his mind at ease. Perhaps it was nothing more than the unique alertness of the dark elf, but even then, he was still unsettled by the way that gray-robed elf looked at him.

The next three days were a boring wait, but passed in the blink of an eye. Xiao Lin wanted to ask Silverlight about Atlantis, but it was not convenient to do so in the place they stayed. After all, he did not want outsiders to know too much about Silverlight’s existence, so all he could do was set that matter aside for the time being. However, the one thing that puzzled him was the strange vibration that came from the Holy Soul Sword from time to time.

Chapter 369 - The Return Journey

Chapter 369: The Return Journey

In the past three days, Hammerhead practically shut himself behind the closed door while the apprentice was fully responsible for handling Xiao Lin and Ibeiya. Xiao Lin took that opportunity to ask the apprentice a lot of things, and the young apprentice had an overwhelmingly good impression of Xiao Lin, perhaps because he was an Earthling or because he had previously helped the apprentice out of the situation. The apprentice answered Xiao Lin’s questions earnestly and did not hide anything.

Xiao Lin also learned more about Hammerhead. For example, he did not stay in a fixed place during his early years. Although his identity as a mixed-race made his bullies somewhat apprehensive, he was regarded as a bastard among the orcs and was looked down upon. As a result, Hammerhead left the orcs early on and did not identify with them.

Due to his father's abandonment, Hammerhead did not have the slightest affection for Earthlings either. The conflicted feeling had long been the cause of Hammerhead's loneliness. Although there were many visiting guests, he did not have any friends.

In addition, Hammerhead was seriously ill, which puzzled Xiao Lin as Hammerhead looked physically strong and mentally healthy when they met a few days ago. Xiao Lin could not see any trace of sickness at all. However, the apprentice's words were conclusive and he was sad to inform them that his master had few years left to live. That was why he accepted an apprentice to try and pass down his knowledge.

Hammerhead seemed even more pitiful than Ibeiya, and the little girl had reddened eyes after listening to everything. If Hammerhead had not repeatedly told them not to disturb him during that period, Ibeiya might just go over to him at once.

Three days passed quickly, and Hammerhead appeared rather sluggish when he reappeared before Xiao Lin. Hammerhead might not have slept for three days, but his eyes shone and he cupped his hands to offer a shining silver ring.

"Is this the spatial storage ring?" Xiao Lin could not wait for it to be handed over. The ring was still warm as it had just been completed. He looked at it carefully, and the ring itself appeared rather ordinary, without any decoration, pattern, or text.

"Because of the relatively short time, I wasn't able to incorporate too many details," Hammerhead explained.

"That's not important." Xiao Lin did not care about external decorations, only quality. He had known how to use that kind of spatial storage ring a long time ago from Lilith.

He closed his eyes slightly and channeled his mental power into the ring. A huge, empty, and strange space suddenly appeared in his mind. Of course, he could not actually see it, as the information he received was that which had been fed from his consciousness.

The space was still in a completely chaotic state, like a wasteland that has not yet been developed, but the most intuitive feeling for Xiao Lin was its unimaginably huge size. He was previously skeptical of Hammerhead's words but had now believed it completely. Indeed, the space was like a huge city, except that there was nothing there at all.

Xiao Lin also felt exhausted after his consciousness exited the ring. Hammerhead reminded him that it was an inevitable result of using the spatial ring. To be precise, it could no longer be regarded as a storage ring, but shared more similarities to an independent domain spatial ring. Hammerhead could not elucidate any purpose other than storage, so Xiao Lin could only treat it as a storage ring for the time being.

After making payment and getting ready to say goodbye, Xiao Lin made a point to show a bit of concern over Hammerhead's body before leaving. He received confirmation from Hammerhead that the latter had not much time left, but Hammerhead did not seem to care at all and refused Xiao Lin's gesture.

“If you need anything, you can come to Dawn City and contact me at any time.” Although Xiao Lin consoled him with an assurance, the other party simply smiled as he knew that such a possibility was very slim.

Upon leaving Hammerhead’s residence, Xiao Lin immediately began planning to return to Dawn City. Going through the original route was not possible and the situation in Wildfire Town was still unclear. He hated the fact that Planet Norma’s communication system was underdeveloped, and there was no such thing as the Internet or media outlets there. Under the painstaking official concealment, it would be hard to find out anything even in Wildfire Town, which was not too far away.

“Are sure you want to go back with me?” Going back was not too difficult, but Xiao Lin had the baggage of a little girl, which left him with a severe headache.

Ibeiya nodded hard, and Xiao Lin could only sigh and agree. Even if he did not, the girl might go by herself, so it was better to bring her along with her.

...

“Is that the boy?”

“Yes. I’ve been searching for him for a long time and you managed to run into him.”

“Perhaps the God of Fortune is looking kindly upon us.”

“It’s a pity that the other woman who was walking with him has disappeared. ”

“The girl is still with him, isn’t he?”

“Hmph, that’s not the same one! But that girl you’re referring to is very special too.”

“I don’t understand why you’re so fixated to him. I observed him when I met him earlier and I think he’s just a very ordinary person with really measly strength.”

“I need him. If our plan is to succeed, the final key lies in him, as well as the little girl from Judge Academy. ”

“I hope you are not joking and that you’re aware of our limited patience.”

“You’re wasting our time if you continue talking nonsense.”

“Hmph, fine then. Where’s that orc?”

“I’ll take care of that stubborn orc.”

When Xiao Lin left, he did not notice that two pairs of eyes were constantly following him from the shadows nearby.

On the way back to the city center, the people from the Public Security Alliance interrogated and asked to show the certificate issued when he entered the city. Of course, Xiao Lin did not have it when he sneaked in, but he made no compromise on that occasion and directly spoke in fluent Chinese. After shouting loudly, the interrogators were immediately scared away. As Ibeiya mentioned, the identity of Earthlings was indeed very useful in the city.

After buying back the map and studying carefully with Ibeiya for a long time, Xiao Lin decided to bypass Wildfire Town from the southeast and directly enter Dawn Academy's colony. It would be riskier to do so however, because one-third of the time spent during the journey would be the orcs territory.

Orcs hated Earthlings and the hatred did not dissipate even though their war happened over a century ago. Dawn Academy might have established certain fronts at the border and pushed deep into orc territory, those areas were still subject to intrusion from time to time.

The only advantage was that those places were guaranteed to be within range of the resurrection tower, while the resurrection tower in Wildfire Town had long been destroyed by Xiao Lin after it had been defiled. In comparison, a detour through the orc territory was the safest choice, because he would only lose 20 years of his life if he died.

Chapter 370 - Ambush

Chapter 370: Ambush

News were spreading far and wide in Gold City. Although Xiao Lin had relied on his own identity to bluff a lot of locals, several groups of people have entered the city one after another in recent days. They were clearly dressed like the Chinese, and it signaled that the officials from Dawn Academy were beginning to interfere. Due to the arrest warrant. Xiao Lin felt that it was inconvenient for him to stay too long and set off with Ibeiya that very day.

A few days later, they leave Silver Province and entered orc territory. The place was very barren and there was sand as far as the eye could see, though a couple of exposed oases did exist. The orcs living environment had always been terrible, which is one of the reasons why they were more aggressive.

Dawn Academy had always kept their guard up against the orcs, so towns have been established in the surrounding areas, with some locals migrating there along with orcs who were willing to take refuge. However, the scale of those towns was extremely small, and the size was equivalent to Earth's small villages at most.

Xiao Lin also learned a lot during that journey. He bought himself a suit of armor and prepared one for Ibeiya too. There were no normal roads outside of Silver Province, and few people along their journey.

Because of that, Silverlight—who had not appeared for several days—showed up once more and floated with them. Xiao Lin knew that the woman was actually very lonely, but after a few days without seeing Silverlight, Xiao Lin noticed a rare look of energy on her face and could not help but ask curiously.

“Your black knight is very interesting.”

Xiao Lin remembered that woman mentioning something about borrowing his black knight to play with. He could not help but frown and asked vigilantly, “What did you guys play?”

“That sword is too small,” Silverlight said without answering the question.

“Huh?”

“It’s too small. It’s not enough for two people to stay inside.”

Xiao Lin rubbed his ears and grinned a little bit. Silverlight originally lived with the black knight in the Holy Soul Sword, which had a special space attached to it. That was a characteristic that he understood when he had the sword made, but he never considered the actual size of that space. In any case, the original undead swordsman would not be able to complain to him anyway.

However, Silverlight was a ghost with her own consciousness. It was obvious that she was dissatisfied with her living environment and expressed strong protest.

Xiao Lin frowned. He was no longer a rookie. He knew that the price of a weapon has a lot to do with its own attributes, and as long as the attributes are related to spatial systems, the value would be very high. A sword that fulfilled Silverlight’s request would be so expensive that Xiao Lin could never even dream of affording.

Seeing Xiao Lin’s hesitation and inclination to reject, she looked down and pointed at his silver ring. “I just need to stay here with your black knight.”

Xiao Lin stared blankly at the storage ring he had just received. His purpose of putting in that much effort to create the ring was not to give Silverlight a new place to stay.

“If you agree, I’ll tell you something.”

Xiao Lin’s spirit was shaken a little and he thought it was about Atlantis again. “What is it? Is it valuable?”

Silverlight continued to play it hard to get. “I don’t know if it’s valuable, but I think it’s very important for you right now.”

Xiao Lin thought about it for less than a few seconds and nodded in agreement. It was not that he did not believe in Silverlight’s words, but rather, he trusted what Onyxia told him in the past. Silverlight was not a vicious woman by nature, and if she said that, perhaps there really was something that he could not ignore.

Silverlight commented gently, “Well, I advise you not to move forward, otherwise you’ll become like me.”

“Become like you?” Xiao Lin murmured a few words, and felt a chill all over his body. Becoming like Silverlight would mean that he would become like a ghost!

He would die!

“Who! Who is it!” Xiao Lin asked quickly.

“I haven’t the faintest clue, but the point is, someone set up a trap in front and is waiting for you. Alright then, you can handle the rest by yourself.”

Seeing Silverlight leaving, Xiao Lin could not help but ask, “Where’s the black knight? Didn’t you say you were moving house with him earlier?”

“He’s right here,” Silverlight spread out her palm, and in it was a glowing jet-black flame. The flame seemed to have its own thoughts and it shook visibly when he saw Xiao Lin.

Silverlight tsk-ed and looked at Xiao Lin before saying, “This is amazing. He actually recognizes you when he couldn’t even remember the memories in his life. I won’t bother you then.”

After Silverlight finished speaking, her figure gradually faded and she turned into a white light before entering Xiao Lin’s ring. Xiao Lin shook his head begrudgingly and turned his attention to the front.

In addition to the open desert gravel and withered trees, no other thing was in sight. The temperature here was not that high, but the wind was strong. According to the markings on the map, they had to rush forward until evening came before they could reach the small town that Dawn Academy set up there.

Ibeiya approached Xiao Lin slightly and asked nervously in a low voice. “Is someone ambushing us?”

Xiao Lin was silent and he could not tell. If Silverlight had not deceived them, it could only mean that the person in ambush was stronger than him. That was far from good news. He lowered his head and quietly whispered in Ibeiya’s ear, saying, “Don’t say anything. We’ll retreat.”

Xiao Lin was not sure who he had offended, but he felt that he ought not to stay there.

He remained calm and turned before speeding up his pace with Ibeiya. In any case, they would have to head back to Gold City before deciding further. Barely a few steps later, the wind and sand around him suddenly became violent and his visibility quickly decreased. Xiao Lin decisively took out the Holy Soul Sword and shielded Ibeiya behind him.

“Come out! I see you!” Xiao Lin suddenly roared.

A few minutes later, a man in a gray robe walked out slowly, just as Xiao Lin was getting overly suspicious. The wind and sand around him seemed to have no effect on him. When they were close enough to see each other’s appearance, both Xiao Lin and Ibeiya opened their mouths wide in surprise.

The person was none other than the mysterious man they saw in Hammerhead’s residence, the one who stared at Xiao Lin with a hunter’s eyes and left a deep impression on Xiao Lin. According to Ibeiya, that person might be a dark elf.

How could it be him!

Xiao Lin was alert yet had plenty of doubts, but the other party had a strange expression as well and looked even more shocked than Xiao Lin.

“This is impossible!” The other party spoke in Normese and asked sharply, “How did you even sense me! With your ability, it’s impossible that you’re able to locate me!

“Ah, forget it. It doesn’t matter. I wanted to bring you away, but it looks like things will probably be a little more troublesome now. I advise you to come back willingly with me,” the dark elf quickly added in an indifferent tone.

Chapter 371 - Ibeiya’s Blood

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The appearance of dark elves was not at all inferior to normal elves. Distinguishing them from normal elves was different if one relied on their appearance alone, but the strong death energy around them could be sensed as long as one concentrated.

“Do we have beef with each other?” Xiao Lin felt that he did not know the other party.

Rather than answering, the dark elf immediately took out two short blades from behind. Poison seemed to be laced on the edge of the light blue blade. The blade’s glow shone in a captivating manner, and he sneered slightly before saying, “Why do you need to ask that much? You’ll understand when you go back with me.”

Xiao Lin frowned in thought before asking in suspiciously, “Asabanor?”

“You’re not stupid, I’ll give you that.”

“Damn it! That damned freak still isn’t letting me go!” Xiao Lin was shocked and angry.

“It’s too late to regret now. You’re no match for me, so are you coming along or shall I kidnap you myself?”

“What does Asabanor want me to do?”

“Who knows.”

“Heh! His purpose is nothing more than to drive us humans out of this world. Do you think I’ll help him? ”

The dark elf chuckled softly as he fiddled with a short blade in his hand. He was not in a hurry to make a move, which only showed that he was confident in bringing Xiao Lin away. In fact, he did not seem to mind chatting with Xiao Lin for a bit, because it was obvious that he was equally as

curious about Xiao Lin too. “Asabanor said that you’re a man of God’s gift. Show me how different you really are!”

A strange light flashed in Ibeiya’s pupils when she heard those words. She turned her head to look at Xiao Lin, and as soon as her lips squirmed slightly as if she was about to say something, the dark elf no longer gave her any opportunity to utter a single word.

The dark elf’s speed was extremely fast and he had rushed before Xiao Lin in the blink of an eye. However, Xiao Lin’s guard had been up for some time already, and the Holy Soul Sword was already raring to go right from the outset. He hacked down unhesitatingly, but the dark elf’s movements were much quicker than he had expected. The trajectory of the it’s attack changed mid-air, like a snake.

The short blade lightly slashed across Xiao Lin’s body, carving out a line of blood that bled out at once, staining the yellow sand. The dark elf stepped back slightly and easily avoided Xiao Lin’s blade, moving with exceptional agility throughout the entire process.

Xiao Lin’s body trembled violently and he staggered back a couple of steps. He was wearing a Bronze-rank chain armor that he spent more than a thousand New Dollars on in Gold City, but it was as thin as paper against the dark elf’s attack. The defensive power of chain armor was not as good as heavy armor, but few people wore heavy plate armor unless it was for military combat.

The wound was not deep, and since Xiao Lin had his own self-healing ability, a cut of that level was unlikely to affect his movements. However, the dim blue glow on the opponent’s blade was still rather worrying.

Sure enough, the dark elf did not continue to attack after landing a successful blow. He simply said coldly, “This short blade of mine is named Dark Night. The toxins that are smeared on the blade are collected from my hometown. You don’t need to look at me like that. It’s your lucky day today, because Asabanor wants you alive, so I temporarily replaced the toxin with a paralytic agent. Although it’s not fatal, you won’t be able to wake up in the next two days.”

Xiao Lin was immediately taken aback. He discovered that his vision was starting to blur, while his whole body became weak and even his strength to grip the hilt was quickly receding.

With his blurry vision, he saw the dark elf walking toward him step by step, as if wanting to take him away.

“Uncle! You can’t faint!” Ibeiya was aware of worsening situation and quickly supported the ditzzy Xiao Lin. She desperately pinched his face, but to no avail. She turned angry before asking, “What did you do to him!”

“It’s useless. Humans are unable to dispel the effects of our clan’s poison. Asabanor said that you’re different too. In that case, you can come back with us too.”

Ibeiya snorted coldly, and the expression between her eyebrows changed several times. All of a sudden, she seemed to have made up her mind. She opened her small mouth and bit down on her fair wrist. The force of the bite was so great that the little girl’s face suddenly had a look of intense pain. Tears even began to well up in her eyes, but instead of letting go, she bit down even tighter.

A few seconds later, Ibeiya suddenly let go. The corners of her mouth and wrists were covered with scarlet blood, which trickled down her arms. She quickly shoved the hideous wound to Xiao Lin's mouth and whispered, "Uncle! Hurry up and drink it! Hurry up! "

The dark elf had a look of disdain, but the scene took him by surprise. He stopped and waited quietly.

Xiao Lin's consciousness was still hazy. He had to admit that the elves were incredibly proficient with those kinds of paralytic medications. He had seen it during the monthly exam, and could only blame himself for not being prepared. The paralysis stemmed from his nerves and they directly cut off his facial features from the outside world.

Amidst his blurry state however, he suddenly felt that there was some kind of cold liquid pouring into his mouth. It slowly trickled down his throat, into his lungs, as if being washed by a cold spring. The restlessness in his body gradually subsided too.

It felt so comfortable that Xiao Lin began sucking even more fervently. The cold liquid had a certain smell to it, but there was also a light fragrance and taste imparted in it. It tasted quite good, surprisingly.

Gradually, Xiao Lin felt that his five senses were gradually recovering and his sight was once again restored. Then, he saw a pair of fair wrists, with strikingly obvious scarlet wounds. The gurgling blood made him understand what the strange liquid was.

Ibeiya's eyes were still a little red, but once Xiao Lin was awake, she wiped her tears and said with joy, "Uncle! You're all right!"

"Your hand! Your blood?" Xiao Lin understood what happened but was slightly confused at the same time.

"How interesting! The blood of the true ancestor, tsk tsk, this is really interesting! Asabanor was right, I really have to take both of you away!"

The dark elf did not give Xiao Lin and Ibeiya a chance to chat. He tiptoed and immediately sped up again. Xiao Lin also pushed Ibeiya away too, then activated his Miracle state at once. He used the Phantom Steps to avoid the dark elf's full-speed attack and he did not dare to let the short blade touch him again.

"Your speed is fast! But it's foolish to compare speed with us elves!"

The dark elf suddenly changed course midway through the attack. Compared to Xiao Lin, the dark elf's speed not only heightened, but his body was more flexible than first imagined. He twisted his body quickly in mid-air, as if he were performing gymnastics. His blade technique was simple, but its angle was quite tricky, so much so that it would be difficult to dodge even if his Phantom Steps were pushed to its limit.

Chapter 372 - Fighting the Dark Elf

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Ruin!

Xiao Lin's gaze intensified. He had become more proficient with the Ruin state after using it several times. The prerequisite to enter the Ruin state was the Miracle state, after which he would have to put himself in a very angry mood.

Upon returning to Gold City, Xiao Lin actually tried it several times by himself. It was actually difficult to keep himself angry at any time and any place. After several attempts, he discovered that it was not just anger that could initiate Ruin, but any abnormal fluctuation of emotion was sufficient.

Anger, sadness, excitement, were all possible.

That way, it would not be as difficult as it was in the beginning. After coming back from the edge of death, Xiao Lin's fear was much stronger in his heart. He knew very well that he would have been taken away by the opponent if Ibeiya had not helped him dispel the paralyzed state, and if that happened, it would not be easy for him to return.

That post-fear feeling easily allowed him to enter the Ruin state. Pairing the explosive speed with the Phantom Step, he left a bunch of afterimages with almost every step he took. His body was as light as a feather, and the Holy Soul Sword felt weightless in his hand, allowing him to wield it as he pleased.

The dark elf was a little surprised, but was not afraid to take the initiative to attack. The short blade was not as powerful as the Holy Soul Sword, but he used a clever way to dodge most of Xiao Lin's attacks. If it were not for the Ruin state, his short blade would have poked countless holes in Xiao Lin's body.

The opponent was not that high a rank and was probably around Bronze, but his actual combat experience is very high. That was a chance that the opponent gave to Xiao Lin. Although Xiao Lin was no longer a rookie, his all-round experience was far inferior to his opponents. Furthermore, he felt that the dark elf was clearly not using his real strength to fight if Asabanor had indicated that Xiao Lin must be captured alive.

Death was not something that Xiao Lin feared. He was actually within the coverage of the resurrection tower, and Xiao Lin could resurrect there. However, Ibeiya could not, and the dark elf's interest in her had clearly been aroused earlier. As suspicious as Ibeiya's identity was, Xiao Lin could not just leave her alone for the simple fact that she saved his life earlier.

He had to win!

Xiao Lin did not hesitate to activate Replicate. Although the dark elf used only the simplest of attacks thus far and lacked powerful skills, it was not the active skills that Xiao Lin wanted to copy.

[Subject to replicate: Dark Elf. Scanning initiated, skills to replicate: Footprint Mirage. Evaluation: E+. Replication: successful!]

Sure enough, this dark elf had a better body technique than the Phantom Step, called the Footprint Mirage. Xiao Lin had never seen that skill in Dawn Academy's curriculum, which indicated that it might only exist among the elves.

The Ruin state could not be maintained for long and Xiao Lin estimated it to only be around five minutes. In addition to the duration of the Replicate skill, it did not give him a lot of time.

The sudden change in Xiao Lin's footwork was quickly spotted by the dark elf. A look of disbelief flashed in his handsome eyes, which then became rather gloomy.

The Footprint Mirage was much higher than the Phantom Step, and if the Phantom Step was nothing more than a combination of dozens of footwork, then the Footprint Mirage was a combination of hundreds of footwork, whereby its changes were much more than the Phantom Step. The Footprint Mirage included changes in various parts of the body, such as the angle of attack, and it served both as an attack and a defense.

The battle situation became even in an instant, but it only lasted less than a minute before the balance of power was broken again. The dark elf's blade speed accelerated again, and his face seemed particularly angry. Xiao Lin understood that his opponent was beginning to use real power, and the most obvious change was the short blade, which had since been imbued with shiny jet-black aura. It was the lingering death energy.

Dark elves could use the natural energy and death energy at the same time. Even though Xiao Lin was on the same level as him, the opponent's strength was far better and Xiao Lin clearly sensed the difficulty in resisting.

He was still in the Ruin state, but only a few minutes were remaining. Once the Ruin state was undone, his ability to strike back would be even more diminished.

Ibeiya was unable to do anything to help and could only stare anxiously beside him. Xiao Lin was anxious and glanced at the space ring he was carrying. He knew that the last hope was Silverlight, but he received no response despite trying to enter it using his spirit from earlier on.

Surely, the woman was not denying her debt to him at such a critical moment!

Xiao Lin could not help but shout in anger, "If you still aren't going to come out, don't blame me for not taking you back to see your hometown!"

Suspicion flashed in the dark elf's eyes. After looking around and confirming that there was no other ambush, he sneered again and again. "Tricks like these are useless against me. Your power is beyond what I expected, and the man with God's gift really is extraordinary."

Silverlight still did not give any response, so Xiao Lin swung the Flame Wave Sword again. In the Ruin state, the Flame Wave Sword set off flames in the sky, with a momentum that was akin to a huge rolling wave. The dark elf did not evade, but simply raised his hand with its back to him and sliced out with that short blade. To Xiao Lin's surprise, the elf's motion had actually parted a huge gap in the middle of the flames.

Xiao Lin's heart ran cold for a moment. The power of the Flame Wave Sword in the Ruin state had increased even by more than one or two grades, yet the opponent was incredibly relaxed. It could only be chalked up to the fact that the opponent's strength was probably around Silver-tier.

At the very last minute, Xiao Lin tried his best to protect himself in the Ruin state, but once it disappeared, he could only let himself be trampled upon.

Damn it! Silverlight did not give any signal even until then, and the woman even brought the black knight away, which effectively meant that Xiao Lin could not even summon him.

Nevertheless, there was time to regret all that. Xiao Lin racked his brains and thought of a way to turn defeat into victory at that point in time, but none of the skills he mastered could turn the situation around.

Wait!

Xiao Lin was briefly dazed. It was true that there was nothing he could do using the skills and courses he learned from Dawn Academy, but he nearly forgot that he had replicated the black dragon's breath.

According to his understanding of replicating skills countless times, the residual memory of those skills still existed in his mind after each copying. As long as he still had strength, he could use it just as easily.

The black dragon Onyxia said that dragon breath must be used by the dragon clan. Xiao Lin was not sure whether he could use it again, but it was already his last resort. He had to give it a try and take advantage of the Ruin state's final moments, where his various attributes had been raised substantially.

He used the Footprint Mirage to quickly distance himself from the dark elf. Although it was a little difficult to withstand the opponent's attack, he was barely able to cope with the opponent's strength as of right then.

Xiao Lin then slowly raised the Holy Soul Sword. It was difficult for him to remember the specific use of the Dragon Breath Sword at that time, but he trusted that his body would remember the technique's feeling after using Replicate. What Xiao Lin did was none other than follow that feeling.

Chapter 373 - A Sword's Power

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There were still a dozen or so seconds left before the Ruin state ended. Although his various attributes have reached their peak, Xiao Lin was vaguely able to feel the rapid post-peak exhaustion. It was his last chance.

The huge dragon breath began to condense quickly on the surface of the holy soul sword. The dragon race itself had many branches, such as golden dragons, black dragons, red dragons, and so

on. The breaths produced by different dragon races were different, although Xiao Lin's dragon breath was copied from the black dragon Onyxia, what showed up at that moment was a colorful and lustrous one that did not seem to belong to any kind of dragon race.

The arrogant look on the dark elf's handsome face gradually disappeared and was replaced by horror. He then had a solemn look as he reached out and unbuttoned the gray robe on his body. After taking it off, he finally revealed his true face. Those pointed ears were the most prominent feature of the elves and he was wearing the elves' signature armor.

Circular gray ripples fluctuated rapidly all around his body, and Xiao Lin understood that his opponent was finally getting serious. However, it was too little too late, as the power of the Dragon Breath Sword was stronger than he had imagined. Although he was following the memory and feeling of his body's skills to instinctively execute each movement, the truth was that such powerful dragon breath shocked him to the core.

The feeling was akin to a person lost in the rough seas. All that person would feel was their own insignificance. Dragon breath gave people the same feeling, and even Xiao Lin was trembling slightly when he held the hilt of his sword. Rather than feeling fear or dread, it was purely the instinctive reaction of the body when facing the dragon's might.

The Dragon Breath Sword was created by modeling dragon breath after sword aura and executing it using a weapon. Compared with the might of true dragon breath, the Dragon Breath Sword had greater flexibility and higher actual combat value.

Xiao Lin just gently slashed the blade in the direction of the dark elf, without using any fancy sword skills. He did not even aim or look, and it was just a very simple swing of the sword. The weapon became extremely heavy due to the dragon breath attached to the sword, and his swinging movement became extremely slow.

There was a trace of contempt on the dark elf's face, but when the majestic dragon breath fell down like a huge wave, he realized that the slash could not be avoided at all and could only be defended from the front.

Rumble!

The dragon breath was amplified in an instant after it had been released, fanning outward in a jet-like manner and leaving no room for the dark elf to avoid once they reached it. The multicolored dragon breath completely engulfed him in an instant, and the light in front of them suddenly reached peak brightness, as if watching an exploding star at close range.

Both Ibeiya and Xiao Lin could not help but close their eyes. The continuous sound of a huge explosion continued to ring in their ears and their eardrums were buzzing. Meanwhile, the invisible dragon power prevented their bodies from moving in a short amount of time.

When the light gradually dimmed, the buzzing in their eardrums gradually subsided. Xiao Lin opened his eyes and his pupils shrank sharply. In front of him was a huge fan-shaped crater. The rest of the waves stretched for at least a few miles, covering almost the entire area. Not a single blade of grass remained, and the power was so strong that Xiao Lin was nearly traumatized by it.

As for the dark elf, his figure was nowhere to be seen. Ibeiya had the guts to rush forward and quickly retrieved a few pieces of armor-like fragments. She was absolutely stunned to see that those fragments were the only thing left by that elf in the face of the Dragon Breath Sword.

Xiao Lin wanted to take a look at it, but he felt his entire body's strength disappear the moment he stretched his legs. His legs were powerless to support his body, and his whole person became very weakened. Ibeiya's eyes and hands were quick and she hurriedly went over to let Xiao Lin fall on her body.

Xiao Lin raised his hand and discovered that he did not even have the strength to hold the sword. With a bang, the Holy Soul Sword fell to the ground and shattered to pieces, leaving him absolutely stunned. It was only the realization when Ibeiya picked up one of the sword's fragments and gave it to him that he saw something which left him absolutely speechless.

The sword's blade was densely covered with web-like cracks. That Bronze-rank sword had been with Xiao Lin and experienced numerous battles. Its quality was good too, so it came as a surprise that it would break all of a sudden.

Xiao Lin fell silent. He understood that it was due to the Dragon Breath Sword earlier. The power of that sword could not even be withstood by the weapon itself, and he knew very well that his own body would not have been able to withstand it if his attributes were not explosively increased by the Ruin state.

Even then, Xiao Lin's physical strength was completely exhausted after swinging that sword. With the Ruin state lifted and the after-effects coming all at once, his condition could be said to have reached a severe overdraft, although the effect was actually rather common for Xiao Lin. Whether it was the Ruin state or the Miracle state, the price of repeated use was an overdraft on his body.

However, the intensity of his exhaustion at that moment was truly unprecedented, and that feeling was nearly the same as dying. Ibeiya wanted to say something, but Xiao Lin waved his hand, indicating that he did not want to speak at all. His only thought was to have a good sleep.

After closing his eyes, Xiao Lin—who struggled to keep his eyelids open—fell into a coma after a few seconds. Ibeiya shook Xiao Lin's body vigorously, but soon came to realize that Xiao Lin could not possibly wake up even if the sky fell.

Ibeiya pursed her lips. She was feeling a little angry and helpless. Although the dark elf had been killed, Asabanor still knew their whereabouts and they were not completely safe yet. It was as yet unknown if anyone else was waiting for them again.

After a moment's hesitation, Ibeiya finally sighed and carried Xiao Lin by his arm. She staggered a couple of steps and felt that it was very inconvenient, so she simply carried Xiao Lin over her back and walked strenuously across the depths of the desert. According to their original plan, they were supposed to reach the town and enter Dawn Academy's sphere of influence.

"You're too heavy, Uncle!"

Amidst her constant complaining and muttering, their silhouettes slowly faded from view. After ten or so minutes, a gray figure appeared there and looked silently at the huge fan-shaped pit remaining on the ground. He then squatted to pick up a few pieces of armor. After a while, he

grinned to reveal an ugly smile. The dark elf's death did not make him feel any horror or sadness. Instead, he was somehow reveling in the dark elf's demise and his expressions suggested that he expected the outcome. His cold and deep voice then echoed, "Hmph! How interesting! This is really interesting! Now then, will the dark elves stay out of the way now? I'm going to see how Dawn Academy deals with it!

"You demons. Sooner or later, I'll drive all of you out of this world!"

Chapter 374 - Waking Up and Going Back

Chapter 374: Waking Up and Going Back

Ibeiya carried Xiao Lin and walked forward with a stagger in the desert. Her pace was not that quick, but her vampire bloodline gave her a decent enough physique that would not tire her. At her current speed, she would surely be unable to reach the destination before dark. Ibeiya looked worriedly at Xiao Lin, who was sleeping like a dead pig.

She knew very well that the territory was regarded as belonging to the orcs even though Dawn Academy had established a town there. It had only been ceded to Dawn Academy after the war, which meant that it would still be subject to sporadic harassment from time to time.

Upon hearing some dense hoofbeats clapping on the ground, Ibeiya was nervous at first, but soon breathed a sigh of relief when she saw the cavalry's figure amidst all that sand. It was a scout cavalry from Dawn Academy, and it was likely that Xiao Lin's Dragon Breath Sword was so powerful that it attracted the attention of people around. However, since those people were from Dawn Academy, it also meant that Ibeiya and Xiao Lin were safe.

...

Xiao Lin slept deeply, but it was not until the next day that Ibeiya realized that Xiao Lin's exhaustion was not as simple as it looked. It was not something that he could recover from just by sleeping, especially when the local healers came to Xiao Lin and fed him several mouthfuls of high-level medication, all to no avail. Ibeiya was told that Xiao Lin's coma was not a trauma.

In fact, even though Xiao Lin suffered minor injuries during the battle with the dark elf, the dragon blood's influence allowed him to heal automatically after such a long time.

What really kept Xiao Lin from waking up all day was his lack of spirit. It occurred only under very severe overdrafts, and it did not necessarily occur even in a life and death situation. The therapists were very confused and asked repeatedly, but Ibeiya's words were vague and half-hearted. Even if those people belonged to the Dawn Academy, she was smart enough to know when to say something and when to keep her mouth shut.

Xiao Lin's coma lasted for two days, and many of the healers experimented using various methods. Once there was nothing else that they could do, they were prepared to bring Xiao Lin back to the capital of Dawn City for inspection by more powerful healers.

When the third day came and everyone was ready to set off early that morning, Xiao Lin woke up suddenly. Since it happened without warning, those who had been preparing for the journey looked as though they had seen a ghost. They then hurriedly called the rest of the people.

Xiao Lin felt that his spirit was in good condition. His body was filled with energy and he felt better than ever. Ibeiya, who was crying tears of joy, flew directly into his arms and kept rubbing her fair and tender face on his shoulders.

Of course, the reason Xiao Lin felt good was not because of what Ibeiya was doing. Even though Xiao Lin was quite embarrassed due to the enviable eyes all around him, he did feel that he was very physically very strong. He even felt light when he walked. He remembered that using the Dragon Breath Sword in the Ruin state brought a tremendous load to his body, causing him to pass out. After waking up again however, the exhaustion was completely wiped out.

Based on the clothes and words of the people nearby, Xiao Lin could easily determine that they were his comrades. After pushing away Ibeiya, he managed to elicit the details of his situation.

The town he was at was located in the border area between Dawn Academy and the orcs, but rather than calling it a town, it was much better to consider it a large-scale outpost. Although there were civilians inhabiting it, they were mostly relatives of soldiers and the town's main purpose was for the military.

With towering city walls and forested defensive towers, the place lacked the dazzling array of small merchants and vendors that were present in town. Instead, a larger number were blacksmiths selling various different kinds of weapons.

"I slept for two days?" Xiao Lin was obviously shocked after hearing Ibeiya's words. The aftereffects of using the Dragon Breath Sword were so tremendous that it took him two days of sleep to completely replenish his overdrawn body.

"Have you met anyone else on the road?" Xiao Lin originally wanted to say the name Asabanor, but he closed his mouth and changed it to something less obvious. He trusted that Ibeiya would understand what he was talking about.

"No, but I met a Big Sis on the way and she brought us back."

"Big Sis?" Xiao Lin was feeling somewhat speechless about Ibeiya's penchant of acknowledging people as her sister. He just had to be the one who was always referred to as uncle.

"Huh? You actually woke up?"

"Uncle, it's her! She said she's your superior."

Ibeiya suddenly clapped her hands and called out. Xiao Lin looked in the direction of the speaker and it turned out to be the heavily-armed Yu Mei striding over to him. Xiao Lin was not too surprised, as he had a rough idea of who it was when Ibeiya mentioned the person being his superior.

The only person whom he could rightly refer to as his superior was the Sixth Regiment's Major, Yu Mei.

Yu Mei walked closer and scanned Xiao Lin's body for a long time. She then patted him on the shoulder, then nodded and said, "Well, it looks like you're alright, but we can't stay here for too long."

"Wait, don't you think you should give me an explanation first?" Xiao Lin quickly stopped Yu Mei after seeing her about to walk away.

"Explanation? What explanation do you want?"

Xiao Lin opened his mouth and looked at the soldiers around him again.

Yu Mei waved her hand. "Don't worry. They're all the dean's people."

Xiao Lin understood and was no longer worried. He then asked bluntly, "What's up with that arrest warrant?"

"Oh, so you do know about that. Well, I'm here to arrest you and bring you to justice!"

"What!"

"Haha! Major Yu, don't scare him!" Someone joked next to him.

Yu Mei curled her lips. "Just kidding. Okay, I'll spare you the jokes. Don't worry, we're here to escort you back to Dawn City safely. The people in the military department wouldn't dare to take you."

"Does the dean know?"

"Yes, and that's why I came here. But it was really hard to find you. I went from Wildfire Town to Gold City and practically flipped Silver Province upside down these few days. But it looks like my prediction was right. You did choose this path to return."

When Yu Mei said that, she glanced at Ibeiya and raised her brows before saying with a smile, "I was worried about you, you know. But you seem to have been enjoying yourself during this period. Tsk, tsk. You even hooked up with a little Lolita. Where did this girl come from? You abducted her, didn't you?"

"No! Uncle is a good person!"

"Oh, I see. A good person."

Xiao Lin looked helplessly at Yu Mei's suggestive smile. He felt that there must have been some misunderstanding.

Their brief chat did not last too long, and soon the team of more than ten people continued to set off. However, the carriage originally prepared for Xiao Lin was no longer needed after he woke up. In addition to Yu Mei, there were several other people joining them on the road. Xiao Lin did not know who they were, but he chose to trust them since they were the dean's people.

Yu Mei's plan obviously did not include Ibeiya, but it was not safe to leave that girl near the outpost as she might be harassed by the orcs at any time. As a result, she was brought along, and three people were specifically assigned to Ibeiya for the purpose of protecting that delicate-looking girl at all times.

Meanwhile, Xiao Lin and Yu Mei were in the forefront, making it abundantly clear that Yu Mei did not want certain conversations to be heard by any strangers.

Chapter 375 - Conflict Between The Dean And The Military

Chapter 375: Conflict Between The Dean And The Military

Even though Xiao Lin was sure that he was safe for the moment, he was still full of misgivings that needed to be resolved. Yu Mei was obviously using the most suitable pieces of news at that moment to give him an explanation, and when Xiao Lin pressed for more, Yu Mei interrupted him, her voice low and her tone suppressing the fire of anger.

“The dean is injured.”

Xiao Lin widened his eyes, almost exclaiming in shock, but he quickly suppressed the urge. He felt like he was making a big deal out of nothing. To those of them from Earth, injuries were really not a big deal. Even if they did not have perfect medical capabilities, when faced with injuries that were hard to cure, they could just revive themselves by dying. Xiao Lin believed the dean's lifespan would not miss a mere twenty years.

However, Yu Mei's face told him the situation was not that simple. She had a deeply worried look. “Things aren't so simple. The dean's injury was dealt to his soul. You should understand how the resurrection towers work. You can revive yourself after you're dead, but nothing can be done about the soul.”

“Is it similar to what happened to Song Junlang?” Yu Mei's words lead to Xiao Lin recalling a good example. Department Head Song had once been a Gold-ranked expert, but right now, he had been relegated to just Bronze. It was obvious that the problem could not be solved by resurrecting.

Yu Mei gaped before nodding. “That's right. I forgot you had a good relationship with Department Head Song. Indeed, even if we can resurrect, resurrection isn't omnipotent.”

“Who did it? Is it the military?”

“No, they're not that brave. The current assailant is still unclear. Even internally, our opinions differ.” Yu Mei sighed. “The arguments are getting quite heated right now. Some say it was done by the orcs, and others say it was done by Judge Academy.”

Pausing for a moment, Yu Mei's expression turned cold. "However, even if the military didn't do it, they can't escape all responsibility either. Dawn City's security had always been handled by them. It's impossible for an agent of that caliber to sneak inside without their help!"

"What about my arrest warrant?"

Yu Mei smiled. "You'd have to thank the dean. Originally, the upper ranks of the military were very stubborn and forceful with how they planned on dealing with you, but after this happened, the military was probably feeling guilty. They took a step back with this. The arrest warrant has already been cancelled before I left Dawn City, so you can relax."

Determining that the dean did not issue that warrant assured Xiao Lin, but he still had something on his mind as he asked, "Who made the decision regarding Wildfire Town?"

Yu Mei fell silent for a moment, smiling bitterly as she said, "It was the military as well. You should understand how valuable Lilith is to Judge Academy. In their eyes, exchanging your life for Lilith's was a very good deal."

It really was as Xiao Lin expected, but that did nothing to assuage his anger. The only person he knew in the military was the captain of the sixth regiment, Yu Mei. He had never even met the rest of them, let alone had the chance to offend them. Yet, that group of schemers set him up with countless obstacles as attempts to kill him.

"Don't be too angry. You are actually just a fish that was accidentally caught up in the net. The conflict between the military and the dean isn't something recent, and you just happened to get caught in the crossfire. The more the dean looks kindly upon you, the more they would want to suppress you. You weren't supposed to know any of this right now, so this can be counted as a failure on our part!"

"I feel like I need to understand more. At the very least, I should know who I'm up against." Xiao Lin suddenly felt a headache, suddenly understanding why the dean did not even pay any attention to an impossibly rare SS-rank talent like his during the opening ceremony in the academy. The dean had probably already what kind of consequences special attention would bring. It was just that the dean could not help but change his plans due to certain circumstances later on.

After that, Yu Mei gave him a simple explanation of the conflict between the military and the dean. To be more accurate, she gave him an overview of Dawn Academy's internal conflicts in the recent decades.

The current dean was appointed by his predecessor during the war against the orcs. It was also due to his impressive performances during the war that led to the dean's power having an effect on the entire academy, even after the war.

In the beginning, there were no large issues since the entire academy had to work together to rebuild after the war, but Judge Academy went through a meteoric rise during that period, using their peaceful surroundings to expand rapidly. The relationships between the academies had never been completely friendly. They had plenty of hidden fights among them, and Judge Academy had obviously posed the largest threat to Dawn Academy's position.

The conflict started to build during that time, centered around the future direction of Dawn Academy. At the time, the internal conflicts were massive, and were primarily split into two factions.

The dean's faction wanted to pressure the orcs even more. Even though the orcs lost the war, the dean felt like a second war against them was inevitable if they were allowed to recover.

That suggestion faced a lot of objection from the military at the time. Thanks to them recruiting a large amount of new students into the war effort, the casualties were immense. The military felt like it was pointless to continue that kind of war. Instead, they felt like the rapid development of the other academies, including Judge Academy, posed a greater threat to their territories.

The military suggested giving aid to the orcs and even the elves, building up Dawn Academy's political power in various places in order to use the natives to go against the other academies. From there, they could slowly expand Dawn Academy's territories.

In truth, both factions had the growth of Dawn Academy in their hearts, but with the passing of time, wars on Planet Norma began to stop, yet their differing opinions only caused a widening gap between themselves. It slowly even turned into a power struggle, and was now at a point of no return.

Some felt like the dean had too much power and was aiming to be a dictator, while those on the dean's side felt like the military were trying to control too much, and might be aiming for a military government. Everyone was civilized, and naturally understood that, no matter in what world, a dictatorship or a military government were not good options. This sort of internal conflict had already turned into a regular matter at Dawn Academy, and to this day, the dean had maintained the advantage.

"So you're also part of the dean's faction, aiming to pressure the orcs?" Xiao Lin said half-jokingly.

Yu Mei glared at him. "Of course! I only believe in one thing: the only good orc is a dead orc!"

Xiao Lin recalled that Yu Mei's grandfather had been imprisoned by the orcs during the war, his status unclear to this day. Yu Mei's grudge was quite understandable. Xiao Lin also understood that he was definitely being treated as one of the dean's people right now, even if he found it hard to say which side had the better plan from a purely objective standpoint.

Chapter 376 - The Evening News

Chapter 376: The Evening News

"What happened this time is even more troublesome. Lilith's matter caused a lot of anger with Judge Academy. Asabanor was already enough to cause Judge Academy some headache; with these things added into the mix, our diplomatic department is going crazy."

"What does the dean think about Asabanor's matter?"

“He obviously wants to quell it quickly. Working together with Judge Academy was also only possible thanks to the dean.” Yu Mei’s face slowly turned dark. “It’s a pity those stubborn old coots stirred up this mess!”

There was no way to know if the military’s resistance was due to having good intentions toward Asabanor or just purely to oppose the dean, but no matter what, Judge Academy and Dawn Academy had lost most of their trust in each other after Wildfire Town.

Talking as she walked, Yu Mei’s expression was solemn throughout. Probably noticing that Xiao Lin’s eyebrows were furrowed the whole way, she relaxed herself, saying softly, “You don’t have to think too much. You still don’t have to be concerned about all this. You’ll be fine as long as the dean is around. The dean will probably do something after what’s happened too.”

Yu Mei laughed coldly, but did not expose what they would be doing, only asking Xiao Lin to hurry back to the academy after he returned. At the very least, the military did not have any power within the academy, so Xiao Lin would be absolutely safe there.

Yu Mei had some questions for Xiao Lin as well, which he chose to answer only a portion of, such as the native talent holder in Silverlight Lake and the mixed-blood orc Hammerhead.

As for Silverlight’s status as a descendant of Atlantis, as well as the shard given to him by Onyxia, he said nothing. It was not that he did not trust Yu Mei, but the information was too sensitive, so it was not the place to say.

He could not hide Ibeiya either, even though he had his doubts about the status of that girl. Xiao Lin clearly remembered during their fight with the dark elf that the elf said, “Blood of the true ancestors,” but Ibeiya had helped them a lot in their journey. Whatever the ‘blood of the true ancestors’ was, it had saved Xiao Lin’s life, so he made sure to give her a few good words when he brought up that girl to Yu Mei.

“If it’s possible, let her stay in Dawn City,” Xiao Lin said tactfully.

“Oh, I didn’t know you had that kind of a hobby.” Yu Mei rolled her eyes, not waiting for Xiao Lin to explain before continuing, “This won’t be easy to do. Dawn City is our capital. Even though there are a lot of people coming and going everyday, you’d need to grow through a strict investigation in order to stay there for the long term, especially after what happened with Asabanor. The checks will be even more strict. It’ll be impossible to stay in the city for those without a clear background.”

“Then are you saying we should chase her away?” Xiao Lin obviously could not accept that result.

“There’s another option, which is to hand her to me,” Yu Mei said.

“Hand her to you?” Xiao Lin’s mind was obviously wandering as he measured Yu Mei with a suspicious look. He turned around to look at Ibeiya, and the girl immediately waved at him excitedly. That cute girl was absolutely capable of slaying both men and women.

“What are you thinking about!” Yu Mei glared at him angrily. “I mean let her join the sixth regiment. Our regiment needs people anyway. Anyone we can recruit is good!”

“Is that appropriate?” Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows.

“If she really is someone from the Rosa Kingdom, then you don’t have to worry. Just leave it to me.” Yu Mei seemed to already have a plan, but she did not want to reveal everything at that moment.

The way back to Dawn City was quite smooth, even though they went through orc territories. Everything was within the jurisdiction of Dawn Academy, and thanks to Yu Mei’s captain status, they immediately got the help of the local guards when they got closer to the city.

After six days, they finally reached Dawn City. There seemed to be added security outside the city walls. Patrols could be seen roaming the streets, but they were not around because of Asabanor. Instead it was due to the dean’s injury. The dean was attacked in the outskirts of the city, but the fact that an attacker could infiltrate their territory so deeply was already cause for clamor.

Xiao Lin’s return was very low key. Yu Mei did not even bring him back to the army camp. She immediately led Xiao Lin back to the spatial carriage the moment they went into the city.

“Planet Norma is currently a troublesome place, and your strength is still not at a good enough level. Go back and study properly!” Those were Yu Mei’s final words to Xiao Lin. She did not even give him the chance to privately say goodbye to Ibeiya before hurrying him back to the academy.

After half an hour in the golden Timesand, he opened the carriage. Looking at the blue skies in the academy, Xiao Lin paused for a good moment. He did not feel it before, but after spending so much time on Planet Norma, he felt unused to being back.

His return did not cause any effects at all. Even the student union president did not make a move. It was half a month since he left the academy. He would occasionally meet someone familiar on the road and greet them. Xiao Lin did not head straight back to the dormitories. Instead, he went to the lounge and picked up a copy of the Dawn Academy Evening News to read.

Since he rushed back, there were a lot of things he did not have the time to properly understand before being forced into the spatial carriage by Yu Mei. Even if the happenings on Planet Norma did not affect the academy that much, a lot could still appear on the evening news. Just as he expected, the headline was about the attempt on the dean. They even used some shocking red words, basically covering the entire page. The incident was described very simply, basically the same as how Yu Mei explained it to him.

The second page offered some views on the assassination attempt. The words within caused Xiao Lin to furrow his eyebrows more and more. The paper had used very straightforward words, accusing several academies of planning this attempt, including the Royal British Academy and Judge Academy.

While it was a reasonable conclusion, since looking at it from an unbiased point of view, it was not a stretch that Judge Academy would retaliate in anger and humiliation after what happened with Lilith.

However, after the speculation, the news very subtly pointed out that the reason the Royal Academy and Judge Academy would dare to move so openly in Dawn Academy’s own territory was due to the wrong decisions in governance within the academy in the last few decades. They accused

the academy of spending too much manpower and resources on keeping the orcs in check, completely neglecting the threat of the other academies.

Even though they did not name anyone outright, it was obvious to anyone with an understanding of the inner workings of the academy. The news report was on the dean's side, denouncing the assailant on the surface, but in reality, saying that the attempt on the dean was entirely his own doing!

Without a doubt, the one who wrote that piece was from the army. Xiao Lin clenched his teeth as he read it. Even though he was not very close to the dean, some people were worth trusting even after meeting them just once. Xiao Lin absolutely trusted the dean with this matter.

In contrast, the military had not only used Xiao Lin to get at the dean, they even tried to use him to kill Lilith. Just those things alone were enough to incur Xiao Lin's disdain.

Chapter 377 - Preparing For The Tests

Chapter 377: Preparing For The Tests

Xiao Lin's mood was obviously bad after reading the news. He even had an urge to go confront the dean for information. However, he quickly composed himself. The dean was in the New World. Whether he would meet Xiao Lin or if he even could was something Xiao Lin did not know.

Just like what Yu Mei had said to Xiao Lin, with Xiao Lin's current level, stepping into the conflict between the upper levels of the academy was still too early. He did not have the strength to do so.

Yu Mei sending him back like that was to protect him. Xiao Lin finally sighed, composing himself as he continued to read the news.

The Dawn Academy Evening News was always split into two sections: the New World section and the Academy section. The New World was undoubtedly filled with news about the attempt on the dean, while the internal academy section's biggest topic behind the dean was the Inter-academy Tournament.

Xiao Lin was familiar with that. He had already heard about the tournament held by all the academies from An Fumin and Song Junlang; it was considered a clash of power between all the academies.

The Inter-academy Tournament was only half a year away, so Dawn Academy had naturally already started their selection process. The selection process was different in every academy, and Dawn Academy used voluntary sign-ups, nominations by teachers, and achievements in battle as the three primary selection criteria.

There would be six representatives chosen from the first years. Even though monitors were normally considered stronger than other students, they would still have to eliminate half of the twelve monitors. The academy also hoped that everyone would get an equal opportunity, which was why they also put voluntary sign-ups and achievements in battle into consideration.

Xiao Lin looked at the deadline for signing up and realized that the deadline was in three days. He was shocked, and silently thankful that he returned right on time. If he had any doubts about it when Song Junlang and An Fumin brought it up, he was currently certain that he needed to sign up for the tournament now.

Returning to his room and switching on his computer, he filled up his information for the sign-ups, but the moment he tried to submit it the system told him he had already been nominated and therefore did not need to register. Xiao Lin was shocked. He now understood what it meant by nominations by teachers. He had not been in the academy recently, and the academy obviously did not wish for their overall strength to drop just because he failed to register.

In truth, all twelve of the class monitors were automatically nominated, and none of them could reject it. The academy took a firm stance with that, signifying how important the Inter-academy Tournament was.

After resolving it, he then used his privilege as a monitor to look at his class information. The first thing he did was look at Gu Xiaoyue. Just as he expected, the girl had also reached Black Iron-rank. She was also nominated for the Inter-academy Tournament, making her the only one who was nominated that was not a class monitor.

Even though he missed the last monthly examination, Xiao Lin still checked everyone else's results. From the forth examination onward, the monthly examinations were usually on a moderate difficulty—not too difficult, but not too easy. The fourth examination saw Class Seven's results in the middle of the pack. Other than Gu Xiaoyue, Zhou Feng and a few others obtaining A-grades, most of them maintained Bs or Cs.

Glancing over the forum discussions about the monthly examination was sparse. Everyone had already turned their attention to the Inter-academy tournament. It was obvious that almost everyone was very interested in it. Other than the monitors, those who wanted to participate all registered themselves, even though a lot of them knew their chances were miniscule.

The Inter-academy Tournament was an honor in the academy. The rewards were naturally never skimmed on. Although the academies had yet to announce the prizes, it was without a doubt that it would be generous. It would also be extremely beneficial to have such a tournament within their personal profiles in the future. That was what everyone was going for.

Xiao Lin then looked through the current course schedules. It was already the fifth month since they stepped into the academy. All basic courses had already been concluded. There would be tests for various subjects at the end of the month, and the tests would be used to calculate their credits. Those who failed would not be able to gain any credits, and those without sufficient credits would not be able to advance their years.

Basically every year had students that were held back, and the numbers were not small, especially among the first years. Even if the school had quite relaxed criterias for advancing grades, there would still be a group held back every year. Those that were held back would not be treated as regular students.

They would not need to attend classes on the same schedule as regular classes, so they could be said to have a great degree of freedom, which was why Xiao Lin rarely met any of them. However, they also faced a lot of pressure, since those who were held back needed to pay certain fees in

compensation. If they still could not pass after a period of time, they would possibly be expelled back to Earth or be assigned to the branches on Earth, never able to head to the New World.

What surprised Xiao Lin was that there were even repeat students who registered for the Inter-academy tournaments. Even though they had low potential, they still had an extra year of study under their belts, giving them more combat experience. To a certain degree, it showed that the twelve monitors were not a shoe-in to be selected.

“It looks like I’ll need to make sure I pass my tests first.” Since graduating from university, tests had been a foreign concept to him. Xiao Lin had never been very good at tests either. He was originally not too worried, but thinking about it, he might be absolutely confident in anything to do with combat. Things like Normese history, the Normese language and Normese geography all needed to be tested on paper, which were still a problem for Xiao Lin.

Thinking about it, Xiao Lin immediately gave Gu Xiaoyue a call. He believed that the girl who diligently took down notes every class would be able to help him. Regretfully, his call was hung up on before it even went through. He called a few more times in disbelief, but was hung up on every time.

After a few minutes, Xiao Lin received a message. ‘I’m studying in a classroom. It’s not convenient for me to answer the phone.’

The corner of Xiao Lin’s mouth twitched. It was the weekend, so there were no classes. A good student like Gu Xiaoyue would naturally not waste any time and study by herself. He understood that much, but the girl could absolutely have gone out of the classroom to answer the phone. She obviously just did not want to answer his call.

Xiao Lin was speechless for a moment before replying her message with ‘Which classroom are you in? I’ll look for you.’

‘...’ Gu Xiaoyue replied with some ellipses.

Xiao Lin continued to reply. ‘Hurry and tell me! Otherwise, I’ll look for you in every classroom!’

‘...’ She replied with ellipses once again.

After a few minutes, Gu Xiaoyue finally replied with a few words. ‘Classroom Four, Area A.’

Xiao Lin replied with a smiley face, but Gu Xiaoyue ignored him.

Chapter 378 - Revision

Chapter 378: Revision

Dawn Academy’s classroom areas were basically designated based on years. Area A mostly belonged to the first years. Xiao Lin took over half an hour to get to Classroom Four since he had

stopped to take a shower and change his clothes before that. He had been constantly on the move since getting back to Dawn City, and had not had the time to rest since then.

Using his student ID to open the classroom door, he saw that Classroom Four was a very large lecture theater, capable of fitting almost two hundred people. In the classroom, a heat-regulating formation ensured that the environment was always at a comfortable temperature. The floor was also made with a special soft material to reduce the sounds created when walking, so the classroom was very quiet.

The classroom was almost full of students. Even though they could just study in their own rooms, it was quite useful to study in such an environment. With an environment like that, even the laziest person would not be able to hold back from reading.

Occasionally someone would look up and notice Xiao Lin, and all of them would have a shocked look on their face, opening their mouths as if they wanted to say something. However, they would consider their current environment and bury themselves back in their books. Xiao Lin did not know that many people, but most of the first years knew who Xiao Lin was. On top of that, he routinely went to the New World, and each trip he made would last at ten days to half a month, painting him as quite a mysterious figure that many gossiped about.

What Xiao Lin did not know was that even a lot of the students in the upper years knew who he was. Of course, most of them just knew who he was out of curiosity.

Gu Xiaoyue had noticed him from the moment he opened the door. She pursed her lips and hesitated before finally getting up, giving him a glare as she walked past Xiao Lin, then headed out of the classroom with Xiao Lin in tow.

“I would have shouted for you if you didn’t come out,” Xiao Lin said amusedly.

“Speak, what do you want?”

After so many days of not seeing each other, Gu Xiaoyue’s personality was as obstinate as ever. Xiao Lin said in annoyance, “I haven’t been around for so long, why aren’t you asking me where I went? Or even asking what happened?”

“Oh, do you have anything you need from me?”

“Forget it...” The corner of Xiao Lin’s lips twitched before he went straight to the point. He was there to borrow her notes, but even though that was what he said, Xiao Lin could not admit to himself that it was the whole reason. It was possible he just wanted a reason to talk to Gu Xiaoyue.

His reason did lead to some disbelief from Gu Xiaoyue. After deliberating for a bit, she said, “The notes are with me, and I can give them to you, but do you think you have enough time?”

“What?”

“The written tests are starting tomorrow, don’t you know?”

“I just got back,” Xiao Lin said in frustration.

Following Gu Xiaoyue back to the classroom and accepting a few thick notebooks, Xiao Lin was shocked at the neat handwriting. Gu Xiaoyue really was very earnest and comprehensive. Even though there was a lot of content, Gu Xiaoyue managed to arrange them to make a lot of sense in her own way.

That day would be fully utilized for revision, even if Xiao Lin himself had some doubts if he would succeed in cramming so much at the last minute. However, once he started, he completely forgot his doubts, focusing entirely on the notes. The atmosphere around the classroom had likely influenced him.

Once it got to the evening and closer to dinner time, students started to leave the classroom. Gu Xiaoyue was also feeling tired after revising for the whole day. When the classroom was beginning to get empty, she got up and prepared to leave as well, but she noticed that Xiao Lin, who was next to her, did not make any movements. She furrowed her eyebrows in thought before sitting back down, her notes were all with Xiao Lin, so Gu Xiaoyue could only stay behind if he did not move.

Another half an hour passed just like that, and the sky outside had turned dark. The automatic magical lights around the classroom began to light up. Basically everyone had already left. Only Xiao Lin and Gu Xiaoyue were left.

Gu Xiaoyue was quite patient, not saying anything herself, nor did she remind or disturb Xiao Lin. At the start, she just continued flipping through her notes without any expressions on her face. She occasionally glanced over at Xiao Lin, and slowly the coldness in her eyes turned into curiosity.

Xiao Lin was flipping through the pages way too quickly. At the start, he still needed a few minutes for each page, but now he only needed a little over ten seconds per page. It would not be an exaggeration to say that he went through ten lines with just one glance.

Common Language of Planet Norma, History of Planet Norma, and Geography of Planet Norma were three compulsory courses. After four months, each course's contents would be equal to a thick notebook. However, Gu Xiaoyue's notes on the subjects took up at least ten to twenty notebooks.

Originally, Gu Xiaoyue did not think anything about Xiao Lin wanting to look at her notes, so she did not even tell him which notebooks were more important. That was because even she did not think Xiao Lin would be able to memorize everything in just one short day.

However, the books piled in front of Xiao Lin were getting less and less by the minute. Gu Xiaoyue finally could not hold back, and her low voice broke the silence of the room. "Are you really reading?"

Gu Xiaoyue's suspicions were only met with silence, but she quickly noticed that Xiao Lin was not intentionally ignoring her. He was just so engrossed in the notes that he was ignoring everything around him.

Gu Xiaoyue did not get angry. Instead a wry smile appeared on the corner of her mouth as she used one hand to support her jaw, quietly looking at Xiao Lin for a moment before finally averting her gaze, moving back to her own notes.

Xiao Lin did not notice anything that Gu Xiaoyue had done. He was completely submerged in the sea of knowledge. Xiao Lin hated memorization work in the past, but when he applied that knowledge to Planet Norma, vibrant scenes formed in his head and seeped into his brain. The dry information slowly became more and more interesting.

As the day got later, as engrossed Xiao Lin was, his body still started to feel pangs of hunger. The rumbling of his stomach finally caused Xiao Lin to snap out of his trance. He slowly stretched his body, raising his head only to see the lights around the classroom as well as the darkness outside. Gaping for a moment, he immediately took out his phone. It was already past eight o'clock.

That caused Xiao Lin a lot of surprise, but he looked at Gu Xiaoyue, whose expression was the same as usual. He suddenly realized something and hurried to say, "Sorry about that."

Gu Xiaoyue kept track of time very well. With the normal schedule of the first years, it was already past the time for the dormitories to be locked. Not everyone had the freedom to move around like Xiao Lin.

Gu Xiaoyue's cool expression caused Xiao Lin to be unable to read her mood. She asked, "Are you finished?"

"I still have a little left." There were still three notebooks by Xiao Lin's right hand. After that, he let out a shocked expression. More than ten books to his left were all already read by him.

"Are these what I've read?"

Xiao Lin's shock led Gu Xiaoyue to be speechless.

Chapter 379 - Free Food At The Logistics Department

Chapter 379: Free Food At The Logistics Department

Even Xiao Lin was shocked by his revision speed. When he tried to test it out, he was even more shocked to notice that he really did remember everything in the notebooks. A memory like that was absolutely astounding.

Xiao Lin thought about it, thinking about his Academic Genius skill. Ever since it was raised to LV2, he had gotten a lot of hidden benefits from it. That sort of studying ability might not mean much for now, but it was definitely useful for the long term.

"By the way, how do you have so many notes? I remember we only have three courses." Recalling the contents he memorized, Xiao Lin noticed Gu Xiaoyue's notes were a little excessive.

"Some of them are just my thoughts after reading some books from the library," Gu Xiaoyue said calmly.

“You’re the true academic genius!” Xiao Lin’s lips twitched. She was obviously unsatisfied with what the lecturers taught in class. He believed that Gu Xiaoyue was the only one who did that in the entire year.

It was already very late. Even if Xiao Lin had the freedom to move around the dormitory as he chose, he could not help but face an awkward question. The dormitory’s buffet dinner had already ended, and Dawn Academy did not have anywhere to buy some snacks from. Even if Gu Xiaoyue did not seem to mind starving for a night, Xiao Lin could not bear to let her do so, especially if the cause was himself.

“Let’s go to the Logistics Department!” Xiao Lin decided with a wave of his hand.

“Logistics Department?” Gu Xiaoyue blinked in confusion.

“It’s Department Head Song Junlang’s place. He has quite a bit of food there,” Xiao Lin introduced enthusiastically. Of course, he made the decision to be sure that Gu Xiaoyue would not eat any foods of dubious origins.

Song Junlang was quite isolated from the rest of the academy, so it was natural that Gu Xiaoyue did not know him, but she definitely heard of the man before, so she nodded in agreement.

As they walked to the Logistics Department, Song Junlang was fortunately there. Song Junlang was up to his usual antics, feeding his hybrid animals when they arrived. He was not surprised at Xiao Lin’s appearance, mentioning that he had already received news of Xiao Lin’s return yesterday, but he was surprised that Xiao Lin brought a girl over.

“Gu Xiaoyue? The youngest magic prodigy?” Song Junlang naturally had long since heard of the girl who had the highest ever base intelligence score. He measured her with his gaze.

Even the normally cold Gu Xiaoyue could not help but blush at Song Junlang’s praise, lowering her head as she said, “No, I’m still far from that!”

“Far? No, trust me, your future accomplishments will be immeasurable!” Song Junlang’s face was serious, but after that, he used an alluring term to say, “To tell you the truth, I have a lot of things that can help you raise your intelligence faster. How does that sound? Would you like to become a magical goddess? If you become my guinea pig, ah no, I meant as long as you become my partner, I’ll make sure you’re successful!”

Xiao Lin rubbed his head, letting out an exasperated sigh. Song Junlang was still up to his old tricks, actually trying to use his experiments on Gu Xiaoyue. That was not right, so he hurriedly tried to advise Gu Xiaoyue, but Xiao Lin saw a hint of sadness on her face.

“There’s no need. I don’t have a future.” The sadness disappeared as Gu Xiaoyue’s face turned back to normal. The girl always had a strong facade around outsiders, but Xiao Lin slowly understood that she might just be trying to protect her fragile heart. The girl did not have much time left, so discussing the future with her was an extremely cruel thing. Even if Gu Xiaoyue had the talent, if nothing changed, she would not be able to live that long.

“Department Head Song, do you have any normal food around here? We revised too late into the night and missed dinner.” Xiao Lin quickly avoided the awkward topic.

“Revision? That’s right, your tests are approaching. Speaking of which, are you sure you’re alright?” Song Junlang said as he motioned for them to sit down. He said he would cook them something as a welcoming dinner for Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin could not relax and followed him over. He understood Song Junlang’s habits, so was worried that Song Junlang would slip some sort of new hybrid inside.

“I’ve more or less read through everything I need to.”

“Are you sure you’re not just consoling yourself?” Song Junlang did not mind Xiao Lin following him, and he lowered his voice. “I actually have a way for you to quickly improve your memory. Would you like to try?”

“Hold it! Whatever method it is, I won’t try it!” Xiao Lin said, alert. The man really wanted to trick him again.

“Your position as the class monitor might be threatened if you don’t pass and end up being held back,” Song Junlang advised unhappily.

“I thought your hybrids only work on those that are lower than Black Iron-rank, I’m already at that. Would it really work on me now?”

“You’re underestimating me. My techniques are constantly changing. Even with your current rank, I have ways to increase your attributes!”

“Let’s forget it...”

That sort of conversation was quite normal between the two of them. Song Junlang quickly noticed that Xiao Lin seemed to have a heavy heart, so he smiled and asked, “What’s wrong? Are you still thinking about the New World?”

Xiao Lin shook his head. He had thought things through. Even though he was still concerned about the dean and Asabanor, the current him could not impact anything in the New World. He was still not at a high enough level. If he tried to right now, he would just trap himself.

After thinking for a moment, Xiao Lin asked with hesitation, “Department Head Song, have you ever drank the school’s Lifewater?”

“Of course, as long as you’re from Dawn Academy, no one would dare say they’ve never died. Even the dean would not be alive now if not for Lifewater.”

Xiao Lin looked around, making sure Gu Xiaoyue was not in the vicinity, but he still whispered with worry, “Then is the effect of Lifewater absolute?”

Song Junlang furrowed his eyebrows, asking in confusion, “What do you mean?”

“What I meant is, are there any special circumstances that would lead to your lifespan not increasing after drinking Lifewater.”

Song Junlang paused. Seeing Xiao Lin's serious expression, he turned serious as well, "So long as you drink Lifewater in the boundaries where it would be in effect, I'm very sure that kind of thing's not possible!"

Chapter 380 - Accident After Dinner

Chapter 380: Accident After Dinner

Basic Lifewater targeted those who had less than 100 years of lifespan. In that boundary, Song Junlang was extremely certain that it would work.

Xiao Lin did not relent and continued, "Could there be quality issues? Like fakes?"

Song Junlang rolled his eyes. "Lifewater's manufacturing process is a huge deal for every academy. Even though there are some who manufacture fake goods to scam the Normese for their money, Lifewater is something that involves life and death. No one would dare do so."

Song Junlang's words only made Xiao Lin even more suspicious. "If Lifewater really had no effect on someone, what could the reason be?"

Song Junlang half-jokingly said, "Are you trying to say your lifespan did not increase after drinking Lifewater?"

"It's not me."

"Are you really not joking?"

"Department Head Song!"

"Fine, when did Gu Xiaoyue drink Lifewater?"

"It was during... When did I mention Gu Xiaoyue?"

"Please, even an idiot can tell what you're thinking with that expression!"

Song Junlang stopped smiling, furrowing his eyebrows as he asked, "Lifewater never fails to work, that I'm certain of. If it really did not work like you said, why did Gu Xiaoyue not look for the student union? If it's a quality issue, the academy would definitely investigate and compensate her."

Xiao Lin actually could not understand that as well. Why did Gu Xiaoyue never mention it to anyone. He said impatiently, "That's why I said it's not Gu Xiaoyue... I'm not discussing the student union with you, I just want to know how that could happen."

Song Junlang did not bother addressing his denial. He rubbed his chin, walking around in thought, "Lifewater was created by Ivanovich, and went through many years of perfecting, so it's not possible for it to have any flaws."

“Could it be something wrong with the body? For instance, some special constitution or talent that causes Lifewater to not be effective?”

“That’s impossible. Even Ivanovich tested it back then. Could there be any talents more special than an SS-rank one? As long as it’s someone from Earth, no matter how bad their constitution or what their talent is, Lifewater will be effective!” Song Junlang’s tone was very certain, but at that moment both his and Xiao Lin’s expressions changed as they went silent.

“Is she from Earth?” Song Junlang’s expression was a little strange, as if he was joking, but there was a seriousness in his face as well.

“Of course! She’s definitely from Earth! I’m very certain!” Xiao Lin remembered Gu Xiaoyue’s sister on Earth. Both of them looked like Earth humans no matter how you looked at it. Logically speaking, no one had ever heard of Normese natives making it to Earth either.

“To be frank, it’s best you tell the academy about it. Some things might not be as simple as you think.” Song Junlang had lost all trace of his joking tone. It was obvious the possibility meant it had to be escalated to the academy.

“If you do that, I’ll never come back here!” Xiao Lin’s answer struck like a hammer.

Song Junlang felt helpless. He had to admit that Xiao Lin was a test subject that was second to none. He hesitated for a long time before agreeing with a sigh.

Xiao Lin hurriedly thanked him, but at the same time, he silently cursed. Song Junlang really did view him as an important test subject.

The topic stopped there. Xiao Lin wisely did not pursue the topic after not getting any results. He chose to believe in Gu Xiaoyue. No matter what, he did not believe that girl could be a Normese spy sent to disrupt the humans. That sort of thing only appeared in dramas.

Dinner was quite simple with only a few vegetable dishes. The logistics department might be full of food, but only very few had no harmful effects. Gu Xiaoyue did not seem to mind, and with Xiao Lin’s heavy thoughts, he did not have the appetite for anything anyway.

What caused Xiao Lin to be even more frustrated was Song Junlang using a carefree tone to ask about Gu Xiaoyue’s family life on Earth. He knew that Song Junlang had basically guessed that he was referring to Gu Xiaoyue. Thankfully, Song Junlang was someone who could be trusted, despite his other character flaws. Since he promised Xiao Lin, he would definitely not report it to the academy.

There was not much to say about her family. It was just her and her sister since they were young. As for her parents, even she was not clear who they were.

Song Junlang seemed unconcerned at failing to get the answer he expected. After the dinner, Gu Xiaoyue got up and motioned to help them tidy things up. Gu Xiaoyue had a basic sense of respect for the department head in front of her. Since she ate there, she made sure to not owe anyone anything.

“Don’t, just leave it. Since Xiao Lin brought you over, you’re a guest. How could I let my guest help me tidy up!”

Song Junlang’s generous tone led to a strange look on Xiao Lin’s face. When he came over to eat, he had to do everything himself from cooking to washing the dishes. He had never seen Song Junlang be so sincere.

“Let me do it.”

“No no, you just sit down!”

Song Junlang was playing the part too far, and Gu Xiaoyue was obviously not willing to let a department head help her wash her dishes. In their struggle, Song Junlang’s plates shattered on the ground. Gu Xiaoyue apologized and immediately knelt down to pick it up, Song Junlang then hurriedly stopped her, picking up the shards himself.

The two of them frantically busied themselves. Once the broken plates were thrown in the rubbish, Gu Xiaoyue raised her hand, revealing a wound on her finger; it had come from the plates just now.

Even though Gu Xiaoyue was already at the Black Iron-rank, most of the girl’s attributes were centered around her intelligence, so her body was on the weaker side, and a cut like that was enough for her to bleed.

Xiao Lin glared at Song Junlang and got up to look for something to bandage Gu Xiaoyue. The girl did not have his recovery speed after all. However, before he could even make a move, he suddenly saw the trace of a smile on Song Junlang’s face. Looking at the shattered dishes in the rubbish bin, his eyebrows twitched.

There were a few drops of blood there. Xiao Lin thought of something. He opened his mouth to speak and just sighed instead. He probably needed some answers himself.

Gu Xiaoyue’s finger was quickly bandaged, and Song Junlang apologized before sending the two out. Xiao Lin and Song Junlang exchanged a glance when Xiao Lin left, seeming to understand something, yet also seeming to understand nothing.

Chapter 381 - Before The Tests

Chapter 381: Before The Tests

Xiao Lin did not hurry to rest after he got back to the dormitory. He had borrowed the few notes that he did not finish reading on the way back, and Gu Xiaoyue agreed immediately.

“Have you already finished reading all of it?” Xiao Lin could not help but ask.

“Unlike you, I don’t cram everything at the last minute. I started studying half a month ago. Actually, a lot of the contents might not be tested, so you didn’t have to read everything.”

“It’s fine. The knowledge will be useful on Planet Norma eventually.” Xiao Lin did not mind. After being to the New World twice, Xiao Lin noticed that he lacked a lot of basic knowledge. Strength alone was not enough on that planet.

When they reached the entrance to the dormitory, Gu Xiaoyue hesitated before asking, “Planet Norma, is it that nice?”

Xiao Lin was stunned. He noticed a faint trace of longing on Gu Xiaoyue’s beautiful face. Xiao Lin could not stop himself from laughing.

Gu Xiaoyue said in anger, “Are you mocking me?”

“No, no.” Xiao Lin hurriedly waved, his face earnest. “I was just shocked to see that even you have things you long for. You know, you used to look like you wished for nothing.”

Gu Xiaoyue turned away, not saying a word.

She was actually getting angry.

Xiao Lin said exasperatedly, “Fine, let’s ignore that for now. Planet Norma really is quite a nice place. With your skill, you’ll get there eventually.

“I don’t have filthy thoughts like you men do.” Gu Xiaoyue knew why a lot of them went to Planet Norma.

Xiao Lin did not know whether to laugh or to cry. “There definitely are people like Chen Dao, but let’s ignore him. Even if you disregard that, the place is beautiful. The magical scenery there could probably only be found in movies or novels on Earth.”

A flash of hope could be seen on Gu Xiaoyue’s face before it reverted to her usual look. She nodded subtly before grunting in acknowledgement, not continuing the conversation.

Xiao Lin was a little unhappy. It was rare he got the chance to chat with her. He looked up to see the shrouded moonlight, smiling as he said, “The moon is quite nice today. Let’s just stay and chat.”

Gu Xiaoyue rolled her eyes. “There are tests tomorrow!”

“Didn’t you say you’ve already finished your revision? Were you lying to me?” Xiao Lin deliberately challenged her.

Gu Xiaoyue was a little angry, but eventually sighed as she nodded almost imperceptibly, basically agreeing.

The space the academy was in completely mimicked Planet Norma, so there were also two moons there. However, the moonlight did not make for much of a conversation topic. Xiao Lin understood that Gu Xiaoyue’s inner thoughts could not be as cold as she outwardly portrayed. She was also lonely, but she never wished for anything by herself. Gu Xiaoyue needed someone she could talk to as well, and Xiao Lin just happened to be the best choice.

Xiao Lin was not someone who was good at making conversation, but since Gu Xiaoyue mentioned Planet Norma, he decided to tell her about what he saw during his two trips to the New World. He was very attentive, and Gu Xiaoyue was quickly engrossed in his stories. She would occasionally throw a question or two out, but most of the time she just listened.

Time quickly went by, and Gu Xiaoyue's voice could be heard again. "It's late, we should go back."

Xiao Lin looked at the time; it was almost midnight. He had never slept so late in the academy before. Shocked at how fast time flew, he could not help but regretfully end the conversation.

Using his special student ID, he opened the dormitory gates. It was quiet during the night, and they were not worried about being seen. When they reached the where the male and female dormitories were divided, Xiao Lin suddenly softly exclaimed, "Gu Xiaoyue!"

"Yes?" Gu Xiaoyue turned her head.

"You'll live on! No matter what, I won't let you die in two years!"

Gu Xiaoyue was stunned. Xiao Lin turned around and left after saying that. He did not need to say anymore, but those words were of his own determination. No matter what, he would not let Gu Xiaoyue die in two years.

He could not do that by himself, but thankfully he had Song Junlang around. Thinking about the traces of blood in the logistic department's rubbish bin, Xiao Lin sighed. He hoped that Song Junlang would be able to unravel this mystery for him.

...

The next day was Monday, which was when the freshmen would take their first ever tests. The results would directly affect their credits. Based on Dawn Academy's rules, new students still had a chance to retake their tests for free if they failed the first time. If they failed again, they would be held back a year, which would require points as payment. If they failed twice after being held back, then the student would be sent back to Earth with their memories wiped, never to return.

That was why everyone who wanted to go to the New World worked as hard as they could for these tests. Even being held back meant they would not have the chance to go to the New World in two years, and they would also need to pay for the expensive school fees. It was impossible for a number of them.

When Xiao Lin walked into the cafeteria at seven, he saw a lot of students with breakfast in one hand and reading a book in the other. He had only seen a sight like that during his examinations on Earth. It was obvious they were all forced into that. Xiao Lin even saw Cheng Ming scratching his head nearby, his face looking like he had consumed poison as he studied. His pained expression caused Xiao Lin to walk over.

Even though Cheng Ming was considered very strong as the monitor for Class One, even considered one of the top students of their year, the man who was close to thirty was not very good at studying. He had openly said so before, and it seemed like it did not improve much in the few months here.

Cheng Ming did not even notice when Xiao Lin sat in front of him; it took Xiao Lin knocking on the table lightly for Cheng Ming to look up and exclaim.

Cheng Ming's expression was as if he had seen a ghost, causing Xiao Lin to momentarily regret coming over. Cheng Ming's shout caused half the cafeteria to look over, stirring up a wave of discussion. The cafeteria that was originally silent suddenly roared.

Xiao Lin was considered quite a legendary figure among the first years. Of course, it did not refer to his skill, even if the third monthly examination had left quite the impression on a lot of them. New students naturally grew the fastest. Even though Xiao Lin was the first to reach Black Iron-rank, Chen Dao, Cheng Ming, Gu Xiaoyue and some others quickly followed.

There was only one reason everyone cared so much about Xiao Lin, which was that he had been to the New World twice.

Chapter 382 - Combined Test

Chapter 382: Combined Test

Everyone worked their hardest in training and attending class, and every month, they had to go through an intense monthly examination. All that was for the purpose of going into the New World. Just like what the dean had said during the opening ceremony, countless treasures were awaiting then. However, there was already someone who could go to the New World as easily as having lunch, so it was hard to avoid their jealousy.

Xiao Lin disappeared for half a month, missing the monthly examination again because he was summoned to duty in the New World. That was no longer a secret among the first years, and now he appeared in front of them like nothing had happened.

A lot of students took the initiative to greet Xiao Lin, since anyone could see that Xiao Lin definitely had some sort of background, so building a good relationship with him was not a bad thing. Even a few monitors came over to greet him, but if everyone were to talk to him, then he might not even make it to the tests later.

That was why he left hastily with his breakfast after talking to Chen Dao, leaving behind a dumbfounded Cheng Ming, who did not even manage to talk to Xiao Lin at all.

The test was held in a large hall that was near the classrooms. They actually went there for the opening ceremonies as well. It was the only place that could fit in the entire cohort.

The large hall still had plenty of space left, even after the whole year sat inside. Before they went in, the student union members who were in charge gave them some instructions. As the academies that colonized the New World, their testing system had some differences from that of Earth.

In front of every seat in the hall was a small miniature computer. The students only needed to swipe their cards there to validate their IDs and the testing would start. The test was scheduled for eight in the morning. Quite a few students were discussing among themselves in low voices a few

minutes before the test. Their books had all already been confiscated and there was a meter's distance between everyone.

The hall was bright inside. Other than the sunlight that pierced through the transparent ceiling, Xiao Lin also noticed some robotic sparrows flying around at fixed distances, drawing quite a few curious gazes. A lot of discussion could be heard about the strange things.

The student union had already announced the basic information about the test on the forums, so everyone knew that the sparrows were some kind of refined object that was used to catch cheating, but it still attracted everyone's curiosity and interest.

However, a forceful voice suddenly resounded across the entire hall. "Silence! Everyone quiet! The tests will be starting soon. Anyone who speaks will be punished strictly!"

The one who spoke was Professor Dai who taught Normese history. He used a voice projection spell to send his voice to every corner of the hall. The man, who looked quite young, was actually a strict professor. Xiao Lin might not have attended many of Professor Dai's classes, but he knew that no one dared talk during Professor Dai's classes. Those who dared were always shut up with silencing magic.

Not long after Professor Dai spoke, there were still some students who wanted to challenge him. A faint sound could be heard, and several streaks of green lights danced in the air. After that, the few who were talking suddenly found themselves unable to make any sound. Those who had attended Professor Dai's classes all smiled at themselves, none of them daring to challenge Professor Dai at the time.

There were over ten teachers invigilating the test, and the one in charge was Professor Dai, who had the most experience. After the few silencing spells landed, the hall was completely silent. Once eight o'clock hit, the test proceeded to start.

Since they used computers for the test, none of them had prepared any pencils. The test would only show the next question after the current one was answered, and questions that had already been gone through could not be edited. Even if you noticed a mistake after submitting the answer, you could only curse yourself for being unlucky. That rule caused quite a number of students to curse.

However, the academy had their own thoughts behind it. They felt like every decision made in the New World needed to be done with the utmost deliberation. Changing decisions after putting the plan into motion would definitely cause unnecessary losses, which was why they wanted to cultivate the habit into the new students.

The three basic courses for the new students were history, geography and language. All three courses would be tested at the same time, which meant that this paper would cover the contents of all three courses. If a student failed the test, they would need to retake all three courses.

The test was quite organized, starting with multiple choice questions which were not that difficult, merely testing some basic knowledge. Xiao Lin had no trouble with those, but the number of questions were quite staggering. There were over a hundred multiple choice questions, arranged in the order of difficulty. Thanks to it being multiple choice, some of them would just rely on guessing.

However, the academy would obviously not let them off so easily. The multiple choice questions were not displayed in any Earth language, but rather, in Normese. The entirety of the multiple choice questions were in Normese. Those that were not that proficient in Normese could only stare in disbelief.

After that was an even more horrifying array of two hundred questions. The questions were quite simple, and were written in Normese as well. The answers were usually just a phrase or two, or maybe one or two sentences. This time, there were no answers to guess with, and bitter sounds of misery could be heard in the hall. Finally, someone could not hold it back and tried to look around, but a sparrow started to emit an alarm on top over his head very quickly. A teacher immediately walked over, coldly shutting down that unlucky person's computer. The teacher ignored the student's pleading and brought him out of the hall.

He would definitely need to retake the test, and it also served to warn the others against doing it. After that, not one even dared to raise their head, only focusing their attention on the monitor in front of them.

To Xiao Lin, the questions were not difficult at all. He had his doubts before, but it only took him a whole day of revision to deal with it. Academic Genius really was not a talent that was just for show. All of the information he gained from yesterday's revision was still in his head. More and more, he could feel how strong his talent was.

Of course, what caused Xiao Lin to be surprised and happy was that Gu Xiaoyue's notes were quite comprehensive. In truth, only the first hundred questions were things that were taught in the classrooms. After that, the questions started to go past the scope of their lectures, and the answers were all in books that could be found in the library.

It was obvious that the academy wanted to encourage the students to look beyond their classes for knowledge, but Xiao Lin knew that a lot of them were definitely cursing the academy in their hearts. Fortunately, Gu Xiaoyue's notes also greatly exceeded the scope of what was taught in the classes.

Chapter 383 - Written Tests Done

Chapter 383: Written Tests Done

The questions went from easy to hard the same way, but the difficulty was not just from the questions. Since the questions were all written in Normese, the answers needed to be in the same language as well. As a foreign language, being able to read it did not mean one could write it, and even if one could write it, it did not mean the grammar was correct.

A lot of students faced the awkward problem of knowing the answer but not knowing how to convey it. As for those questions that exceeded what was taught in class, the words used were often hard to understand phrases, leading to quite a few who could not even understand the questions and just giving up on them.

Xiao Lin still maintained a relatively fast speed of answering. Even though he missed a lot of classes, thanks to him being on Planet Norma for quite some time, his Normese was not bad, and

probably better than most of the students in his year. The best way to learn a language was to spend some time overseas where the language was native. That concept applied to Normese as well.

The last question was an essay question. There was only one question, which was very little compared to the hundreds of questions before that. However, after looking at the question, Xiao Lin could only smile bitterly.

The topic: 'Based on Planet Norma's history and current climate, what measures of governance should be taken to solidify and elevate the academy's position, as well as expand the academy's territories.'

Xiao Lin licked his lips; that question was quite a bomb. The governance of Dawn Academy was something only someone at the rank of the dean could consider. Even the student union would probably grasp at straws, let alone them being first years.

However, it was precisely because they were new students that they could speak without any influence. It could even be because they understood very little, and still lacked understanding of the situation on Planet Norma. Some might even say the students were naive, but it was also possible they could give ideas that no one else thought of.

Xiao Lin saw through the point of the question. It was obviously the result of the military's struggle with the dean. New students represented the future of the academy; they might want to know what train of thought was more commonly accepted among the new students.

Xiao Lin could not make any headway even after thinking for a while, so he bitterly smiled and shook his head, continuing to place his attention on the question itself. The question was actually easy to answer, but answering it well was hard. Even graduates might not be able to answer it.

Xiao Lin definitely had an advantage for this question. He had been to New Washington and Dawn City. Though he might not have seen the whole world yet, compared to the other students—who could only learn from books and teachers—he definitely had the advantage. However, he did not rush to start, since it was impossible to change his answer after he started.

Xiao Lin closed his eyes and thought, remembering everything he experienced on Planet Norma. After over ten minutes, he opened his eyes and took a deep breath, picking up the specialized pen before he started to write quickly on the screen. Since they were writing in Normese, he was not very fast, but if someone looked at his opening sentences, they would be so shocked their jaws would drop.

'I believe that there will definitely be a large-scale war in the future on Planet Norma. This war would not only involve every race and native on the New World and every academy, it could even pull our homeland Earth into the mix...'

After writing a few sentences, Xiao Lin paused for a moment with a bitter smile. He could already imagine what sort of reaction the person marking his answer would have. He would definitely be called an alarmist, which was why Xiao Lin had always only dared to think about it, but never share his opinions. Another way of looking at it was that Xiao Lin had no evidence to back his speculation. After all, he had only enrolled over four months ago.

However, since this question was open-ended, Xiao Lin let go of any reservations. He believed his answers in the earlier sections were almost perfect, if not completely perfect, so even if this section had a very high score, it was unlikely it would cause him to fail.

The entire combined test started at eight o'clock, and ended at noon, lasting a long four hours. It was definitely intense for a lot of them who had left school a long time ago. Xiao Lin's speed of answering the initial questions was quite fast, but since he answered every question while the rest of them chose to give up on quite a few of the questions, coupled with the fact that Xiao Lin had given a lot of thought to the final question, everyone's pacing was pretty much even.

The computer immediately shut down when the clock hit noon. Those who did not finish answering were not allowed to continue. A wave of anguish could be heard in the hall, but more students walked out calmly. Groups of students gathered outside the hall, and just like on Earth, a lot of them would gather together to discuss the answers and the test in general after the matter.

Since Xiao Lin sat toward the end, he left the hall later, but he was immediately surrounded by a group of people and was greeted warmly.

"Xiao Lin, I didn't get the chance to talk to you in the cafeteria just now. How do you think you did?"

"I heard you were on Planet Norma for over half a month. You probably missed a lot of classes."

"You don't have to worry, I think the student union will definitely put your special circumstances into consideration."

"Speaking of that, did you bring anything fun back from the New World this time?"

...

There were very few new students who did not recognize Xiao Lin now, but what they envied was the fact that Xiao Lin had already been to the New World twice. They tried to get some news about the New World from Xiao Lin. He had entertained a few questions at the start, but he started to get too tired to respond.

There were also some students who talked about the earlier examination with him on the way back to the dormitory, but they were mostly the other monitors. The freshman year leader had actually not been picked, so the competition between the monitors was still not at an end. They might warmly talk to each other on the surface, but they were actually gaining information about their rivals.

He finally got back to his room, and the unending questions finally stopped. After the test ended in the morning, the academy took their fatigue into consideration and allowed them to rest in the afternoon. However, the tests for the basic combat courses started tomorrow. Those who were not confident in their skills could not help but make full use of the free afternoon to train.

Xiao Lin was completely not worried about the basic combat courses. After the written test, he had already thoroughly relaxed. He believed that it was impossible for him to be held back by mere basic combat courses.

Chapter 384 - Swordsmanship Test (1)

Chapter 384: Swordsmanship Test (1)

The results of the written test would be announced in a week, and Xiao Lin planned on relaxing during the afternoon. After all, he had only returned from the New World yesterday, and was immediately thrust into a full day of revision followed by a whole morning of testing, so his mind was quite fatigued.

He took the chance to log onto the forums. Most of the topics were discussing the test from that morning. The multiple choice and simple questions were nothing to talk about; everyone's attention was on the final essay question. There was even someone who used his connections to the upper years to obtain the answer.

That was right, the question was definitely not only formed that year. There were a few earlier batches who also had similar questions, but in truth, the state of Planet Norma was constantly changing, so old answers might not be useful. A lot of them understood that, but they were still interested in seeing what the answers were for the past years.

Xiao Lin opened up the thread; it was from the most recent batch who had that question, which was eight years ago. The thread said it was the answer of the student who scored the highest in that year.

Xiao Lin skimmed over the contents, but could not help but twitch his eyebrows. The answer was quite aggressive. The student claimed that the resources on Planet Norma were limited. With the continued expansion of the colonist population, the conflicts between the academies would grow by the day until an internal war someday explodes. That was why Dawn Academy needed to prepare itself, even possibly making the first move, to seize the advantage.

Of course, that was an opinion that was from eight years ago. Xiao Lin felt like that student had definitely long since graduated. Who knew where they were assigned. No one knew how many people would have that thought process in the current Dawn Academy.

Xiao Lin sighed, closing the forums before giving Song Junlang a call. He wanted to know if there were any new developments with Gu Xiaoyue's blood that he obtained yesterday. However, he did not get any answers as Song Junlang played dumb, as if nothing had happened. He kept the topics fixed on Xiao Lin's tests.

Xiao Lin was exasperated, but he raised the last essay question, playfully saying, "Department Head Song, how would you answer that question?"

"Oh, interesting, they really did throw that question to you new recruits. Did you know? The fourth year graduates also got the same question today."

This caused Xiao Lin some surprise, replying, "Does it have something to do with the military and the dean?"

Song Junlang fell silent for a moment before smiling. “That has nothing to do with you. How did you answer it? Forget it, I don’t have to ask you. I can just get your test paper from the student union later.”

To someone with a backer like Department Head Song, getting the answer sheets of new students was not something hard. Song Junlang then gave some advice, telling Xiao Lin to make sure he would do well in the combat tests. However, Song Junlang more or less knew that Xiao Lin’s current skill would not face any troubles during the second day’s tests.

The only thing that led Xiao Lin to be a little worried was that he probably had the most tests to take after this.

According to the school regulations, each student needed to test for every combat course that they enrolled for. What Xiao Lin picked before was Basic Swordsmanship, Basic Body Technique, Basic Endurance, Basic Meditation, and Basic Perception, so he needed to take five tests.

The rest of the students did not have nearly as many tests as him. Most of them only had two or three courses. Of course, Xiao Lin would also obtain more credits because of that.

This time, Xiao Lin woke up early as usual. The first test of the day was Basic Swordsmanship. After arriving at the training hall that the test was scheduled to be in, he was surprised to find that the examiner was not the professor woman who taught them, but a grizzled-looking man. They were also a few strangers behind him that Xiao Lin was sure were not lecturers.

“I heard they’re from the army,” Cheng Ming said, suddenly appearing next to Xiao Lin.

“Military? Since when could they interfere with academy business?!” Xiao Lin expressed his shock. He looked at the men in front of him before suppressing his voice.

“I heard from sophomore year leader Chen Yu that the military seems to view our batch very highly, which is why they sent their own instructors to test us. This is a good thing. The stricter the test is, the more we can show our skill!” Cheng Ming obviously did not see through what was actually happening, so his fighting spirit was ignited.

Xiao Lin’s lips twitched, sighing as he refrained from explaining. The trip to the New World this time had revealed a lot to him, such as how the academy and the colonial territories did not share a governing body. The academy could be said to be the dean’s territory, so the military could not easily interfere, but now had they sent people in so easily, Xiao Lin could not help but be worried for the dean’s injury after the assassination attempt.

As for the test itself, Xiao Lin remained calm. He was quite confident in his own skills.

Since there were quite a number of students in Basic Swordsmanship, the school had arranged for a few training halls to be used to disperse the numbers and have things move faster. Every student would have to draw out a card which would state which training hall they would test in. The rest of the students who were not involved could only wait outside. The test itself was not allowed to be viewed by the public.

Xiao Lin and Cheng Ming chatted away and moved forward, getting ready to draw their card. However, his hand was in midair when it was caught in a death grip, the strength behind it causing

him to gasp. Raising his head, he realized it was the man who was in charge of the test. His face was expressionless as he asked, “You’re Xiao Lin?”

“I’m not...” Xiao Lin immediately denied it.

“Huh, aren’t you class monitor Xiao Lin?” He was betrayed by those around him.

“Are you him or not?!”

“Fine, I am.” Xiao Lin glared at the innocent bystanders who sold him out.

“Yes, you don’t have to draw your number. We’ve already heard about your skill, so you just need to walk in to be tested,” the man said with a cold look. It seemed like he was praising Xiao Lin and giving Xiao Lin special treatment to the others. Chen Dao of Class Twelve even voiced his displeasure at that, since he believed that he was not weak, so he demanded special treatment as well. He was ignored, however.

“Can I reject?” Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows.

“Of course, everyone has the chance to forfeit their test, as long as you’re willing to retake the course.”

Xiao Lin’s face turned cold. Now he was definitely sure that this group of examiners were here to cause him trouble.

Chapter 385 - Swordsmanship Test (2)

Chapter 385: Swordsmanship Test (2)

The military had plenty of reasons to make Xiao Lin’s life hard, such as the fact that Xiao Lin was someone who the dean looked favorably upon, or even the fact that Xiao Lin had foiled the military’s plot to kill Lilith just recently. Basically, no matter how one looked at it, the military currently had a lot of bones to pick with Xiao Lin. Even if they knew his skill meant the tests would not be an issue, they probably wanted to make it so he would not have it that easy.

Everyone else cast curious gazes over; some of them had realized the officials did not seem to have good intentions, but the other party’s status meant they could not interfere as new students. A few of them who had a decent relationship could not help but feel some worry, and there were also some who just wanted to watch the show, of course.

“It’s fine.” Xiao Lin greeted Cheng Ming and a few others with a smile as he followed the officials into the training hall. Since they did not allow spectators, they closed the door behind them.

The training hall was empty, and there were six officials including the male from outside, split into five men and one woman. Even though they were wearing casual clothes, the aura they exuded was hard to cover up. It was the sort of aura that only appeared after tremendous amounts of experience in battle.

Even just sitting there with their observant gazes intended to make Xiao Lin feel more comfortable radiated the feeling that the officials could spring into battle at any moment. It was an innate trait that could only be cultivated through bitter battles.

Despite the fact that the military was trying to make his life hard, the ones present in front of him were not people he could underestimate. Xiao Lin immediately got serious, but even so, he still maintained utmost confidence in himself.

“You are Xiao Lin?” The question repeated itself, but it served to show that the ones in front of him did not know who Xiao Lin was at all.

Xiao Lin nodded.

The officials exchanged glances, their hands grasping thick books. What was on the books should be the basic information on every examinee. Of course, vital information such as their talents were definitely out of their clearance.

“The information states that you are already at Black Iron-rank.”

“That’s right.”

“Normally in the academy, for those at the Black Iron-rank, the basic tests are just a formality; it would not even be unusual to exempt you...” The man from outside was the one who spoke; he was the only one not in casual clothing, but instead in black leather armor.

Xiao Lin raised his eyebrow, interrupting the man’s words rudely. “There are still a lot of examinee’s behind me, so you should just start with your ‘however’ and save everyone’s time.”

“However...” The man seemed to say the word at the exact same time as Xiao Lin’s mockery, which caused an awkward pause in his words.

The two of them looked at each other, but the man quickly composed himself, saying, “However, we’re at an abnormal time in Dawn Academy, and we have much higher expectations for the new students, especially those who are class monitors...”

Pausing for a moment, he stared at Xiao Lin’s mocking gaze. No matter how shameless the man was, he could not help but avert his gaze. Coughing dryly, he decided to get straight to the point. “Basically, from our research two days ago, we think that class monitors will need to go through higher requirements to pass their tests.”

“We believe that after four months of study, your Basic Swordsmanship should at least have advanced to Elementary Swordsmanship LV1, and based on the information we have, your current swordsmanship skill is at Basic Swordsmanship LV9. Am I correct?” the woman said.

Xiao Lin gaped. His Basic Swordsmanship was at LV8 before he left for the New World, but the Holy Soul Sword allowed him to reach LV9. However, his Holy Soul Sword had already been broken by dragon breath, so he quickly realized something in excitement. His swordsmanship had actually reached LV9, which was the maximum rank for the basic level. Of course, that was thanks to the battles he fought in the New World, which definitely helped enhance his swordsmanship.

However, the woman said that the target was Elementary LV1, which might not be that far away from Basic Swordsmanship MAX, but it was still an entire rank apart. With how fast he was improving, Xiao Lin felt like he could get to that level in no time.

However, the test was that very day, at that very moment!

Xiao Lin finally understood how his opponents planned to make things harder for him. They were intentionally raising the difficulty of the tests to delay his advancement. It looked like they were just making him retake the test, but looking at it deeper, if he did not pass the test, the military would have enough reason to stop him from entering the Inter-academy Tournament, which was coming up soon, and they could even temporarily remove him from being a class monitor.

Xiao Lin managed to think of a few despicable schemes in such a short time. He trusted that the military would definitely not have missed it.

After the examiner made the announcement, Xiao Lin fell silent as he predicted, but he still kept his calm. The man nodded in approval. No matter what, that young student was very composed, even if it would not help him at that moment.

“Do you understand now that you can’t possibly pass this test.” The man maintained a neutral expression. “Go back, come retake the test after you raise your swordsmanship to Elementary LV1. As a new student, you should study earnestly. Your lecturers are all seniors with a lot of experience. Don’t keep overextending yourself. We’ve looked into your information, and your attendance is really bad!”

The last words had quite a heavy tone. It was hard to refute that point, because Xiao Lin really did not attend many classes usually. He had the freedom to choose his own classes, but that was something the dean had given him, not the military!

“What if I insist on taking the test?”

“Since you understand, just go back. It’s not that we’re making things hard for you...” The man nodded as he continued talking before realizing something was off. He raised his head, looking at Xiao Lin with a strange expression. “What did you say just now?”

“I said, what if I insist on taking the test? I doubt you’d judge me to have failed just with some data? Are you telling me that when our military goes to war, we just determine our victories with a few statistics?” Xiao Lin’s tone got more and more imperious.

“Young man! You best understand who you’re talking to! No matter how powerful your backers are, the military isn’t something you can play around with. I remember you’re an officer as well!” Another examiner said coldly, his words full of ridicule, obviously taunting Xiao Lin for having to rely on the dean to gain his position.

“You wanna try?”

“That’s right!”

“Do you know what our standards are?”

“I’m willing to hear it out.”

This time, Xiao Lin stood in front of the man, locking gazes with him without a care. Even if the other party unleashed a bit of his aura, Xiao Lin refused to back down.

After a few minutes, the man looked away, saying without much feeling, “Fine, if that’s what you want. I’m curious if you’re actually confident or just being cocky!”

Chapter 386 - Swordsmanship Test (3)

Chapter 386: Swordsmanship Test (3)

“Will the test be done on the virtual battle simulator?” Xiao Lin asked curiously.

“A simulated battle?” The officers looked at each other, and the man who took the lead made his first smile, but it was an exaggerated and mocking smile.

“Quit joking! Simulated battles? Those are just children’s playthings! Our academy is cultivating soldiers that can go to war in the future!”

Saying that, the man walked over to a corner, and Xiao Lin noticed three large wooden cabinets that seemingly appeared out of nowhere in the corner of the training hall. He did not know what was inside, but the man produced a key and unlocked the three cabinets.

The moment the cabinets opened up, Xiao Lin squinted his eyes to make out some bronze statues inside, but he knew that those were definitely not ordinary statues. He had seen something similar before in the dean’s office, and even knew what the thing was called: an alchemical being. Some academies also called them constructs.

From a certain perspective, they were basically robots, but made using magic. Ever since the colonists came to Planet Norma, they had constantly learned the various magics and skills the natives possessed. After many years, they also worked hard in combining Earth’s science and Planet Norma’s magics.

Just like how dwarven gunpowder was a product of science mixed with magic, the alchemical beings were considered the pinnacle of such endeavors; they were one of the proudest achievements of the academies.

Xiao Lin would not have been surprised if he saw those things on the battlefield, but now they appeared in front of him, all in the name of administering a test for a new student.

Xiao Lin looked at the man, his gaze calm, not revealing any anger. Even if his fury was surging inside, he never revealed it.

He knew that since these people had made their way here, there would be no way to change this arrangement. Even if he were to notify the student union, he would probably be advised to give up on the test and wait for the retake.

The man looked back at him, but did not see the rage or confusion that was expected. The man had formed a sense of curiosity about Xiao Lin, but it was like Xiao Lin thought, there was no way to change what was about to happen.

“Alchemical beings really are quite strong compared to you new students, but these ones in front of you are just half-completed ones, or rather defects that have been tossed away. That’s why you don’t have to worry about sustaining any heavy injuries. We’ve also already adjusted the settings in the training hall, so any healing you might require will be free.”

“What about weapons?” Xiao Lin asked.

The man paused before pointing at the weapons rack next to him. “Since it’s an assessment, you’ll definitely not be allowed to use your own weapons. Please take off any armor you might have on as well, or you’ll be considered to be cheating. You’re allowed to pick any weapon around here.”

The weapons rack was what they usually used in class; on it was all sorts of swords and blades. Xiao Lin’s Holy Soul Sword had already been broken, but according to the man, he would not have been able to use it anyway.

Since he had already known about the test requirements before coming, he had naturally not brought any armor or equipment along. He took out a longsword that had the appropriate weight and length before walking toward the center of the training hall. The officer then checked his person for any equipment.

Even though those checks were usually done by specialized equipment, the officer was more confident in his eyes that had been trained on the battlefield. His gaze shifted to the ring on Xiao Lin’s finger, pausing his gaze before saying, “A storage ring? How rich.”

“So what if it’s a storage ring. He’s not breaking any rules as long as he doesn’t retrieve anything from it. Just start already,” an officer said by the side, probably feeling like they had wasted too much time on just one test.

The rest of them stopped pursuing the matter at that, and the test started.

The alchemical being started to slowly walk toward the center of the training hall after being activated with a thick and heavy-looking sword in hand. The tip of the sword scraped against the ground, creating a heavy metallic sound, shocking Xiao Lin at the weight of that sword.

“The alchemical being has been set to not attack by itself, so you will need to be the one launching the attacks for the test. The time limit is set at five minutes, and as long as you can defeat it, you’ll pass the test! However, I need to remind you, if your swordsmanship is not at the elementary rank, you’ll never manage it!”

“Thanks for the reminder!”

After saying that, Xiao Lin activated Miracle, but did not rush to activate Ruin. The sword in his hand might not be as familiar as his Holy Soul Sword, but he still had his LV9 Basic Swordsmanship at the very least, and was able to use it without issue.

The alchemical being was entirely bronze, and was about as tall as a regular person. The metal on its body had already lost its luster, and there were obvious traces of damage throughout. It was already nearing the end of its usefulness. Xiao Lin had already noticed it as it was moving toward the field, but the alchemical being was extremely slow, so he immediately changed all his attributes to Strength.

He naturally needed more strength to defeat such a large and heavy being. Xiao Lin stopped as he got to within a meter of the being. The alchemical being really did not attack on its own accord; it merely stood there unmovingly, which was why Xiao Lin raised his sword into the air brazenly.

“Slashing?” The officer immediately recognized the skill. “How clueless. He wants to defeat the alchemical being with just that?”

Xiao Lin naturally was not planning on relying on just slashing. The spark of flames on the tip of the blade indicated that he had used his Flame Sword Aura, but he did not use his Wave yet, which indicated that he was just testing out how strong the being was.

Xiao Lin managed to condense his strength to the fullest without any interruption, and slashed his blade down. The sharpness of the blade was enhanced with sword aura, and Xiao Lin unleashed the strike with all his Black Iron-rank might. The speed was quite fast, but the alchemical being remained unmoving.

Xiao Lin smiled, but the smile quickly vanished. As the sword aura closed in, the alchemical being slightly raised its sword. The heavy sword was easily lifted up into the air before it came slashing down.

Boom!

His sword aura disappeared in the air!

It was not blocked, nor was it dodged; it just disappeared before his eyes!

Xiao Lin widened his eyes in disbelief, and tried the same thing again. There was no mistake; his Flaming Sword Aura that he unleashed with all his might disappeared the moment it closed in to that large sword!

The problem was definitely that weapon!

Chapter 387 - Silverlight's Help

Chapter 387: Silverlight's Help

Based on just appearance, it was just a regular sword. It was not adorned by anything special like gems or anything of the sort. Furthermore, if it was an assessment, how could an assessment for new students involve awesome weapons; that would just be cheating.

However, he could just keep those words to himself, since there was no way to stop the test once it started unless Xiao Lin gave up, which would be exactly what they wanted.

He could not give up!

Xiao Lin temporarily stopped his assault and thought to himself. The alchemical being would not attack by itself, but at the same time, he still only had five minutes. Since that was the case, he decided to try using Ruin.

Xiao Lin breathed in and once again activated Miracle, his gaze turning abnormally cold, causing the officials looking on to widen their eyes, reevaluating Xiao Lin.

‘Flame Wave Sword!’

That time, Xiao Lin no longer held anything back, unleashing his full force under the Ruin state. The flames suddenly enveloped half the training hall, going as high as several dozen meters, as if a dragon was lunging at the alchemical being.

The examiners were all shocked, and a few of them even retrieved their own weapons as several waves of light could be seen, all of them preparing their defenses.

The oppressive explosion reverberated within the training hall as the waves caused by the sword aura raised the temperature by quite a bit. Xiao Lin let out a few breaths; the move had cost him quite a lot of energy, but what shocked him was that the examiners by the side did not seem to have been affected.

Of course, Xiao Lin did not really consider the rest of them when he used the skill, but they had still only used their own weapons to completely block his sword aura.

The steam quickly dispersed, and the bronze alchemical being still stood there, unmoving. Its surface had some obvious burn marks, causing it to look even more worn down, but the large heavy sword was in front of its chest, and it seems relatively unharmed.

‘What sort of joke is this!’

Even if that level of an attack was ineffective, then Xiao Lin only had the Dragon Breath Sword left, but that skill cost even more energy, and Xiao Lin’s current state might not be able to handle it. Even if he really managed to destroy the statue, he would definitely collapse from the exertion, and the examiners would definitely consider him to have failed.

Xiao Lin’s gaze darkened, and the examiners by the side composed themselves after the initial shock, loudly proclaiming, “There are only two minutes left!”

“Don’t force yourself! Even if you fail this time, that doesn’t mean you’ll be held back a grade. As new students, you all have a chance to retake your tests, and you’ll be able to get to the second year just the same. Your monitor position will not be affected either,” the man once again said, his tone still sly, but it was much more composed than last time.

Xiao Lin obviously did not notice the change in the examiners attitude at the time, but even if it was just retaking the test instead of being held back a grade, Xiao Lin still could not accept it.

“It’s useless to just rely on sword aura; that sword is made from a very special material.” A cold voice could suddenly be heard next to Xiao Lin’s ear, as if it were right next to him. Xiao Lin almost jumped in surprise, but he forced his surprise down when he saw the white-robed Silverlight appear.

Silverlight had not come out of the storage ring since he went back to Dawn Academy, and Xiao Lin had put the matter aside due to being busy preparing for the tests. He did not expect Silverlight to suddenly appear at such a time.

Xiao Lin’s gaze was strange as he looked at Silverlight, then looked again at the officials not far away. He opened his mouth to ask a question, but Silverlight once again spoke. “There’s no need to look! Unless I will it, with their standards, they will not be able to see me.”

Xiao Lin then recalled that she was a ghost. Strictly speaking, Planet Norma’s ghosts were not completely invisible, but they still needed to be seen with skills or certain special magical items. It was obvious that the examiners would not expect a ghost to be there, let alone such a powerful one.

“What should I do? If Sword Aura is useless, then should I use magic?” Xiao Lin whispered.

“Idiot! There will be no effect as long as it’s an attack consisting of pure energy. That toy is basically immune to energy.” Silverlight’s tone was a bit strange, but Xiao Lin could not make it out at that moment. Xiao Lin was shocked that the military actually brought something like that out just to mess with him.

Even if Xiao Lin was just a new student, he still understood that energy immunity was something only high-grade weapons could have. It could even be considered Legend rank.

‘The military really thinks highly of me!’ Xiao Lin thought mockingly to himself.

“Listen to me! This type of material actually has its faults. Energy immunity comes at a very big cost; the material itself is actually very weak, so it can’t defend well against physical attacks.”

Xiao Lin understood. It meant that long-ranged attacks were useless, and he would have to engage in melee combat. He muttered a word of thanks before rushing in with his sword. His speed was shocking under Ruin, but the statue’s reaction was not slow, and it almost immediately blocked him.

Xiao Lin immediately raised his blade, trying to pierce through its defenses, but the moment he clashed against the heavy sword, his wrist suddenly felt numb. The tip of his sword had been cut through by the massive force, and he immediately retreated.

After moving back a few steps, he asked, “Didn’t you say physical attacks would work?”

“It’s useless if you’re just relying on your dull techniques! Defeating a defense of this level requires more proficient sword techniques.” Silverlight seemed to understand sword techniques very well.

Xiao Lin paused, suddenly recalling that the examiner had said that he would not be able to pass without elementary swordsmanship. Now he understood that those were not empty words. They were actually a reminder to him.

“What are you doing talking to yourself?” the examiner once again said. “You’re left with one minute.

Xiao Lin was only a beginner when it came to the sword. Even if he already had quite some battle experience, his skills still were not up to par. He was very clear on the fact that he had always relied on Miracle and Ruin’s explosive strength to defeat his foes, but there was actually no technique behind them.

Basic Swordsmanship actually mostly emphasized just the foundations of sword movements, such as piercing, slashing, pulling, raising, pressing, flicking, and thrusting. From LV 1 to LV9, it was just getting the body used to those moves. Currently, Xiao Lin had already mastered the basic movements, but he still could not call them real sword techniques.

Chapter 388 - Passing

Chapter 388: Passing

The jump from Basic Swordsmanship to Elementary Swordsmanship was where true mastery of sword techniques really began, but even Xiao Lin did not dare say that he could raise his swordsmanship skill in just one minute. Xiao Lin looked at Silverlight and asked, “Are you very good with the sword?”

Silverlight looked at him, not acknowledging it, but not denying it either.

Xiao Lin was impatient since time was running out; he said, “I’ll take that as a yes; could you then show me a technique that’s at Elementary Swordsmanship LV1?”

Silverlight’s gaze was still fixed on him. Just as Xiao Lin thought that she would not answer, she suddenly furrowed her eyebrows and asked, “Elementary LV1? What’s that?”

Xiao Lin slapped his forehead; she naturally did not know what rankings were. He thought for a bit and used the simplest way to explain, “That’s the simplest sword technique that can defeat that alchemical statue!”

“That’s easy, but why would I help you?”

Xiao Lin felt like cursing; did she not just help him with her advice?

However, he humbled himself and said, “It’ll count as me owing you a favor. If there’s anything you need my help with in the future...”

“No need for the future!” Silverlight’s expression was strange, and Xiao Lin noticed it this time, but it was not the time for idle chatter. Silverlight pointed over at the statue and said, “I want that sword.”

Xiao Lin gaped. That was not something he could make the decision on, but after a brief thought, he nodded and agreed.

“I’ll only demonstrate it once, so it’s your problem if you fail to replicate it!” Silverlight more or less guessed Xiao Lin’s thoughts, but did not say anything. She slightly raised her hand and a light green blade appeared, but looking at it in detail, one could notice it was just a bamboo-like object.

“I’m starting.”

Silverlight said softly, and her elegant body began to dance. The starting few moves were just basic forms from Basic Swordsmanship, but the technique quickly changed. Her seemingly formless bamboo started to quicken its speed. Even if she was just in her spiritual form, Xiao Lin could still feel an intense sword aura.

It was not just him that felt it; even the examiners started to furrow their eyebrows, as if feeling something, but they did not think much about it. Taking advantage of their alertness, Xiao Lin immediately activated his Replication skill targeting Silverlight.

Xiao Lin actually did not have complete confidence since, compared to when he used the skill before, this time was quite a unique circumstance, and could be counted as his first try. Silverlight’s skill was very high, to the degree that Xiao Lin did not know how skilled she was, but Xiao Lin was still sure that she far outstripped himself. It was obvious that Xiao Lin would not be able to replicate any of Silverlight’s sword techniques.

However, what if Silverlight could suppress her skills to the boundaries that he could attempt. Would he be able to replicate it then?

Xiao Lin quickly had his answer, but it was still unexpected. He did not suddenly receive high-level information in his head like usual. Instead, he seemed to come to a form of understanding. The feeling was very strange; it was as if Silverlight was transmitting all her experience to him as she performed. The difference between his prior replications was that he was gaining experience within his own body as opposed to the sword technique itself. It was not a complete replication.

However, it was enough for Xiao Lin. He once again raised his sword. Even if he was wielding an ordinary training sword, Elementary Swordsmanship was independent from the blade itself.

“Only thirty seconds left!”

Xiao Lin seemed to have entered a state of ignorance, not even hearing what the examiner said. In his eyes, there was just the blade in front of him, and he used all his might to replicate the movements that he saw. His body seemingly started to move on its own. Silverlight’s sword technique was agile and graceful, but the movements were not quick. The movements seemed ordinary, but there was an immense amount of subtleties.

“Twenty seconds left!”

Xiao Lin already had a basic understanding of the technique; it was obviously not all of it since it was just some forms that Silverlight had shown him, and not a complete replication. However, thanks to how fast he could learn, he still managed to have his body acclimatize itself to it in just a short time, and he used the last moments of Ruin to rush right at the statue.

“Fifteen seconds left!”

Clank!

Xiao Lin's blade once again clashed against the statue's heavy sword, and just like last time, the immense strength could be felt, but Xiao Lin chose to slightly shift his wrist, allowing his blade to suddenly shift away from the sword. He then moved his body with all his speed, settling into a half-squat before piercing forward at a tricky angle.

The entire move only took a breath's time, and the statue tried to react, but the statue could not use its full force to pull its blade back after slashing outward. The two blades once again clashed, and after a clear sound, the statue's body started to sway before finally collapsing on the ground.

"Time's up!"

The examiner's voice could be heard again. Silverlight had already disappeared back into the ring. The examiner walked over with a stern expression, his eyes wide as if looking for something, but he found nothing.

Xiao Lin released his Ruin state and his entire body felt weak. The move he used earlier was quite amazing; it looked like it did not use that much force, but it was actually borrowing the statue's power to strike. It relied on sword technique to negate the statue's power and break its defense before converting the power to his own strike.

Silverlight... It seemed like the mysterious woman was unfathomably powerful.

"Will this do?" Xiao Lin had more important things to do at that moment.

However, the examiner did not have an ugly look on his face like he expected; instead, it was a complicated look, composed of shock and possibly a bit of respect?

"Not bad." The examiner breathed in, bitterly smiling. "That last sword technique was very good. Based on what I know, it's not something you could have learned in Dawn Academy.

His words caused Xiao Lin to pause, but Xiao Lin could only press on. "So, did I pass or not?"

"Your swordsmanship still is not at the elementary level. We could see that from the earliest exchanges. Elementary Swordsmanship differs from Basic Swordsmanship whereby Elementary Swordsmanship has already added a myriad of changes to the basic movements." Pausing for a moment, the examiner seemed to be struggling with something, and he then seemed to make a decision. He breathed out, continuing to say, "However, without a doubt, your sword technique at the end was beautiful. At the very least, that technique had the standards of Elementary Swordsmanship, which is why you passed."

"Old Wang!"

"You've gone mad!"

The rest of the examiners cried out in shock, as if wanting to remind him of something, but they all kept their mouths shut when they saw that Xiao Lin was still there.

Xiao Lin was quite surprised. The results were better than he expected, but he still had something else to do. He pointed at the large sword, saying, “Can you give me that sword?”

“What?”

“Name your price. As long as it’s reasonable, I don’t mind paying.”

The examiners exchanged looks between themselves.

Chapter 389 - Origin of The Wormhole

Chapter 389: Origin of The Wormhole

The examiners originally had other things to say, but no one expected that Xiao Lin would bring up buying the weapon. Everyone suddenly had a strange look on their faces, which led Xiao Lin to think they were not willing. Of course, that was to be expected, but since Silverlight asked, Xiao Lin still had to at least try.

“Everyone knows what’s happening in this test. Let me ask you, how many new students could pass this test. Could you all have passed it during your first year?”

Xiao Lin felt like being nice was not working, so he could only try things forcefully. After all, he had already defeated the alchemical being, so his confidence was high. “However, now I’ve already done it. Do you all think it’s just as simple as letting me pass? Shouldn’t I get some compensation? Or do you all feel like you’ll be fine if this matter gets known to the public?”

The few examiners had difficult looks on their faces. Since they had come over to do such a thing, they had obviously considered the consequences. Of course, the consequences had hinged upon Xiao Lin being unable to pass the test, since the losers were often ignored. However, Xiao Lin had passed, and they could not understand how Xiao Lin grasped that level of swordsmanship in such a short time.

Since Xiao Lin had succeeded, and was standing on the winning side, he would have enough reason to voice his dissatisfaction, and the military could very well suffer because of it.

“Are you threatening us?” A man stood up from his desk, narrowing his eyes as he measured Xiao Lin, a formless aura seeping out of him.

The leader waved his hand, quieting the rest of them. Only he seemed composed as he asked, “What do you want?”

“I want that sword.”

The man was speechless.

The two of them stared at each other, and Xiao Lin could not contain his anger. “Do all of you really think this matter will be resolved so easily?”

“I know you have a backer; there’s no need to make a fuss.”

It was the first time Xiao Lin was treated as the one with a backer, and he was rendered speechless. However, it was not necessarily a bad thing, and the man rubbed his forehead, asking in frustration, “You really want that sword?”

“That’s right.”

“Everything that happened today will end here if you get the sword?”

“That’s right. No one else will know.”

“Deal!”

After thinking for a while, the man seemingly determined that Xiao Lin was not joking before making a quick decision. That surprised Xiao Lin, since he did not hold up much hope for it initially, but why did the few of them look like they had made a profit?

Xiao Lin was still full of questions, but it was not the time for that. He walked over and lugged the huge sword over before leaving the training hall. When he went out, everyone looked at the large sword with a mixture of shock and curiosity. Were they being given weapons if they passed?

Xiao Lin chatted around for a bit before returning to the dormitory. The sword was much heavier than he thought. With Miracle not active, he felt the strain, even just standing around with it.

After returning to the dormitory and placing the sword on the floor, Xiao Lin was full of sweat, feeling like the strength he had exerted heading back was more or less the same as the strength he exerted during the test. God knew what sort of material the sword was made of.

Silverlight quickly reappeared from the ring, her white dress beautiful, but thanks to being a spirit, she floated everytime she appeared. Thankfully, it was during the day, or she would be a bit of a horrifying sight.

“I’ll put the sword into the ring, you can do whatever you want with it.” Xiao Lin decided to not ask too much about it, even though he was quite curious about the sword, especially since the ability to render energy useless was quite a terrifying ability. However, after testing out the weight, he understood that he could basically forget about using it.

Silverlight nodded, touching the surface of the sword with a complicated look. Xiao Lin noticed her strange expression as well, and could not help but ask curiously, “You know this sword? Is it some godlike weapon passed on from ancient times?”

Silverlight shook her head, her clear voice saying, “I don’t know this sword, but I recognize the material it’s made from.”

Xiao Lin was immediately interested. “So it must be a valuable material.”

“I don’t know.”

“What?”

“I did not know that someone actually used this material to make a sword. It’s actually just a piece of a meteorite, but gained the ability to negate energy thanks to certain reasons. However, it has already been weakened immensely after travelling through time and space, so the metal’s energy negation has been drastically weakened. If your sword aura had been three or four times stronger, you would have been able to win.”

Xiao Lin finally understood; no wonder those examiners did not mind giving it to him. It was not nearly as strong as he had thought, but Silverlight’s words caused him to react in shock. “You mean this sword...no, this meteorite...was brought over by you?”

“That’s right. Back then, I only managed to reach this world at the last moment thanks to it. This world never had any material like it, and it is actually not suitable to make weapons with. No matter; it’s basically trash at this point. I’ll just keep it for the memories.”

In the end, it was a free gift, so Xiao Lin did not care how it was handled. However, he curiously listened to Silverlight talk about how she got to Planet Norma initially.

There was a wormhole that looked like it was made of gold that existed between Planet Norma and Earth, which was how the colonists managed to exist on the New World, but that wormhole was obviously not natural. Song Junlang had also told Xiao Lin before that there were those who had tried to look for wormholes to other worlds a long time ago to no success.

That wormhole was unique, which was strange. The universe was so huge; how could only Earth and Planet Norma have such a special wormhole?

Xiao Lin speculated that it could have something to do with Atlantis, and Silverlight did not bother hiding anything. She raised her eyebrows, as if thinking about her past, before speaking, “I know what you’re thinking, but the passage that connected the two worlds existed long ago, even I don’t know when it was formed. I had seen whispers of it in the royal archives before, which was why I tested it out, but I did not expect to actually succeed in breaking the seal.”

“Seal?”

“Yes. Written in the archives was that the passage had been sealed since ancient times. As for who sealed it and how it was sealed, that’s a mystery.”

Chapter 390 - The Anger Of Students

Chapter 390: The Anger Of Students

To Xiao Lin, that was something he had never known. That meant that the origin of the wormhole was of an even more distant past. As for whether humans existed on Earth during that period, or even some other lifeforms, even Silverlight could not say.

It was rare for Silverlight to come out; the woman lived like a hermit usually. She seemed intent on making the spatial ring her permanent residence. Unless she was willing, even Xiao Lin found it

hard to call her out. That was why he took the chance to talk to her while she was out, since Xiao Lin was quite interested in Atlantis, and wanted to know about Earth and the cultures during that era.

Even though it was a long time ago, Silverlight still remembered everything clearly. Xiao Lin managed to tell from her words that her status was not one to be taken lightly. She mentioned the royal archives earlier; that was definitely not something ordinary folk had access to.

It was a pity that Silverlight only spared him a few words, and she quickly made to head back into the ring. Xiao Lin took the chance to ask her what happened to his black knight. The Holy Soul Sword had regretfully been destroyed, but thankfully the black knight was still around. Even if it was not useful within the academy, it was still a good trump card to have.

Silverlight's reply was strange; she said that she was changing the black knight. As for how or what she was changing it to, she did not reveal a thing, and Xiao Lin could only let her go in frustration.

The Basic Swordsmanship tests had lasted the whole day. Xiao Lin was the first one to complete it, and it took till the afternoon before he saw the others beginning to return. Xiao Lin saw a lot of students with dejected looks on their faces when he was in the cafeteria, discussing the fact that the tests seem to be too demanding that year. Xiao Lin looked around before spotting someone familiar as he sat down with his food.

"Class Monitor Xiao!" It was the bald Zhou Feng; he was one of the group leaders that Xiao Lin had appointed. He had an astonished look when he saw Xiao Lin before quickly calming down, putting his utensils down as he said, "I'll report on what happened in the class when I head back later."

Xiao Lin stared for a moment. He had indeed asked Zhou Feng and Gu Xiaoyue to look after the daily needs of the class as group leaders before he left. Thanks to Gu Xiaoyue's personality, most of the matters had definitely fallen on Zhou Feng. He had rushed back, and then faced the tests right after, so he never had the chance to look for Zhou Feng.

Xiao Lin waved it off, smiling. "There's no rush. Tell me, how did your tests go?"

Zhou Feng mulled over Xiao Lin's words, saying, "It was hard, but I managed to pass."

He described how the test went. Just like Xiao Lin expected, the rest of them went up against alchemical beings as well. However, the constructs they faced were obviously not at the same level as the one Xiao Lin faced, nor were they given such a high hurdle to pass.

However, the standards were already very difficult, and there were a large number of students cursing away on the forums, some of them even prepared to make a complaint to the student union. Some students had relationships with the upperclassmen, and definitely knew about the tests from prior years. The tests in the past never had crazy toys like alchemical beings. At the most, they used virtual battles or even just had to show that their sword technique was at a good-enough level.

Xiao Lin could not help but smile bitterly when he heard that, but he believed that complaining was useless. The student union had no power over the military, and the dean, who was the only one who could do anything, remained silent, so they could only let this go.

He sighed, saying, “We can’t control the other classes, but make sure that Class Seven’s students don’t join in to cause a scene. It won’t do anything, and they could end up causing some trouble that will make things harder later on.”

“Then I’ll tell everyone on the forums later, but some students might not log on to the forums, so I’d suggest advising them in person. You’re much more persuasive than I am.”

“That’s a good idea.”

The moment one became a class monitor, the academy would start investigating that student. Every monitor’s leadership skills would be recorded in a document, and Xiao Lin did not want his document to appear unremarkable.

As Class Seven’s class monitor, Xiao Lin could not really be considered completely qualified, especially since he missed so much by being in the New World. Even now, he found it hard to recognize everyone in class. Of course, not everyone in class was completely loyal to him as well, but it was fine; he just needed to make sure that the two group leaders, Gu Xiaoyue and Zhou Feng, listened to him.

Zhou Feng was quite efficient. Not long after lunch, Xiao Lin could already see Zhou Feng’s comments on the forum. He had also made sure to use his phone or other methods to make sure everyone was online.

“The monitor is back!”

“Are you from Mars? I already saw the monitor yesterday.”

“Did the monitor bring anything back from the New World?”

“Are there any photos?”

...

The class group was extremely rowdy. Xiao Lin had been worried that he would become a stranger after leaving for so long, but in truth, even he did not realize that his skill and mysterious background had turned him into someone everyone respected and admired to some degree.

After joking around, Xiao Lin quickly got to the point, asking everyone how their tests went. In truth, he could just check everyone’s skill himself, and figure out if they had passed or not from there.

The class had sixty students, and a total of 40 passed with 20 of them failing. That rate was already considered high among the first-years, but there were naturally a lot of complaints; some even wanted to go to the student union.

Xiao Lin tried to console them, emphasizing the point that the military was separate from the academy. He knew that he could not cool their anger, so he just shifted the target.

If it was not for his trip to the New World and all the information he got from Captain Yu Mei about the upper management of Dawn Academy, Xiao Lin would naturally not have known about the conflict between the dean and the military.

His move was quite brilliant, and everyone's cursing quickly shifted to the military, which naturally removed their urge to find trouble with the student union.

During the evening on that day itself, a red notification popped up in the forums. It stated that some students had actually gone to the student union due to not passing the tests. After they found out that there was no way to change the results, they had done some stupid things, which caused the student union to decide that all of them would have their points or credits taken away.

Xiao Lin took note of it and breathed a sigh of relief when no one from Class Seven was involved. As a party stuck in the middle, Xiao Lin could more or less understand the student union's position. The union could not interfere with the military's decisions, but as the body that dealt with academy matters, they needed to protect their own power and image. Anyone who dared cause trouble at this time was just looking for their own deaths.

Chapter 391 - Endurance and Body Test

Chapter 391: Endurance and Body Test

The student union managed to establish their power right there. The moment the name list for students to be punished came out, no one dared to cause trouble any longer. Those who luckily managed to pass the test still had tests the next two days, so causing trouble at that point was not going to be a good thing.

Since the military had started to cause trouble, Xiao Lin was also on alert for the next day's tests. Just as he expected, Xiao Lin's Basic Physique test was also taken up by the military. It was even an old friend, as the middle-aged man from the last day nodded at Xiao Lin in acknowledgement.

Xiao Lin could not help but curse silently, 'Am I that familiar to you?'

The endurance tests of old were usually just basic exercises, and the students only needed to complete certain exercises within a set amount of time to pass. To most of the students, it was not a hard task. After four months of training, as long as they were not slacking off, everyone had physiques that rivalled athletes back on Earth.

The test this year had changed into a duel between the students and alchemical beings. Truly, it was once again the high-end product of the fusion between science and magic. However, since it was a test of endurance, the statues had been changed to models that had low power but high defense. The students were not allowed to use any sword aura, and needed to fight with just their bodies.

The examinees had no hope of defeating the constructs; the examiners had said straight up that the defensive abilities of the constructs were at Silver rank. First-years did not even need to think about it, but obviously they did not need to worry about being defeated either, because the attacking abilities of the constructs were more or less at the level of when they just entered the

academy. The examinees were allowed to wear armor as well, which of course helped to lower the chances of getting injured. Self defense was not the main point of the test.

Of course, the seemingly caring approach was not the military being kind. Everyone quickly realized it was just a slight reprieve from the military's derangement.

The Endurance test's real goal was to test how long the students could last in combat. It sounded quite simple, but every student who walked out of the training halls had very ugly looks on their faces. It was not just looks of anger; they also looked utterly exhausted.

Xiao Lin only understood the catch when it got to his turn. The statues might not have had high attack power, but they were fast and extremely hard to deal with. They seemed to constantly be attacking at high speeds and students needed to constantly dodge and counter attack. It did not just require endurance, it also required instantaneous explosiveness and smart usage of one's body.

It was not hard to dodge the construct's attacks, but dodging it for a hundred or even more than two hundred times made it hard for anyone to maintain the motion.

The military had set the minimum requirement of passing at fifteen minutes. Everyone needed to endure fifteen minutes under the constant assault of the constructs. It required everyone to intelligently manage their body. Otherwise, it was not easy to last till the end.

Xiao Lin did not get any special treatment this time. Compared to the day before, this test was actually relatively easy for him. He was able to temporarily lower his speed and strength in exchange for more physique points. He might not be a hardened veteran, but he definitely had more experience in combat than everyone else.

That was why, after 15 minutes, Xiao Lin only felt a slight tiredness from dispelling Miracle. The examiners were undoubtedly disappointed. Compared to everyone else, who were exhausted to the point of walking out swaying like dogs, Xiao Lin did not even have a lot of sweat on his head.

However, the one in charge of the test, which was the man from yesterday, praised Xiao Lin. Before Xiao Lin left, he suddenly said something, "What do you think? Are you interested in joining the first regiment?"

Xiao Lin paused for a long while, unable to grasp what the man was thinking, so he said, "My enrollment certificate was awarded by the sixth regiment."

The man smiled lightly, and did not say anything else, motioning for Xiao Lin to leave.

The Endurance test's passing rate was even lower than the weapon tests. Only about half the students had passed, and the forums were filled with complaints.

Since Xiao Lin picked more subjects than usual, he still needed to attend the Basic Body Technique test on that day. It was no longer that man who was in charge, but the passing requirements were as harsh as usual. The body technique test was administered by an actual person; the examiners would attack the students and the students were not allowed to fight back, only to constantly dodge. Of course, the examiners only used non-lethal wooden weapons to attack.

That test was one where Xiao Lin, once again, felt like he was being targeted. He was initially confident in passing the test, especially since he had long since mastered Phantom Steps. As long as he faced attacks that were lower than Black Iron rank, he would be able to dodge them easily. He might not be able to dodge every attack, but he was confident in dodging at least 80% of the strikes.

However, the examiner testing him was not that simple. Even though it seemed like the man's sword was only attacking Xiao Lin with Black Iron-rank strength each time, everytime Xiao Lin was about to dodge, he would feel his opponent's sword technique suddenly change at the last moment, and thus hit Xiao Lin.

The strikes from the wooden sword were not painful, but Xiao Lin started to understand after being hit a few times. That was definitely not Black Iron-rank swordsmanship, he understood it clearer after slowly grasping Elementary Swordsmanship. His opponent was definitely pulling some tricks.

However, Xiao Lin did not say anything. His foe was smart; the techniques he was using were definitely Black Iron-ranked, but his swordsmanship was terrifyingly strong. That was why he could always change his technique at the last minute. Only someone with at least that high of a swordsmanship rank could tell that, even if they did, they would likely not want to offend the military.

Xiao Lin did not want to use Ruin as that would affect his tests the next day. Replication was on cooldown as well. Thankfully, he had managed to grasp Footprint Mirage from the dark elf when he was ambushed before returning to Dawn City; he also took the time to learn about the skill from the library when he got back.

It was footwork that was widely used by the elves, but since Dawn Academy did not have a close relationship with the elves, the skill did not appear in Dawn Academy, but it was definitely a step above Phantom Steps.

The examiner had definitely done his homework and knew that Xiao Lin had mastered Phantom Steps, so regular attacks would not pose any threat. However, he definitely did not know about Footprint Steps. When he saw Xiao Lin slowly grasp the timing of his attacks, and even get to the point where Xiao Lin could converse in a half-mocking tone while dodging, the examiner understood that he had failed.

The Body Technique test was passed without an issue.

Chapter 392 - Deep Talks With Song Junlang

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Facing the targeting by the examiners, Xiao Lin still had no way of contacting the dean. However, he bore his anger and suspicions and looked for Song Junlang to voice his dissatisfaction. He did not know who was behind Song Junlang, but he felt that Song Junlang could definitely help him out a little.

Song Junlang had basically guessed why Xiao Lin had come, so he said straight away, “I’ve already heard of your matter before you even got back, but I never expected it to get to this extent. I can indeed help you, but I don’t want to do too much.”

Xiao Lin paused, not saying anything as he waited calmly. Song Junlang was trustworthy, and their relationship had been quite decent in the few months they had been interacting. They could be considered friends, and could also be considered a researcher and his guinea pig.

Song Junlang looked at him before retrieving a document from his desk, saying, “This is a report that is only circulated internally. Anyone below a certain rank isn’t allowed to look at it. Even the student union president doesn’t have the right to look at it.”

“So how did you get it? Ah, from the person backing you.” Xiao Lin took the document after realizing he was asking a stupid question, flipping through the document curiously.

To be accurate, it was an internal report from Judge Academy; it came from spies that Dawn Academy had placed within New Washington.

About half a month ago, Judge Academy sent a team out to approach the elves. The goal was to continue their non-aggression treaty, but the elven king had delayed the signing, reason being that he was ill. However, the elves still treated the American delegation very well, and a few of the elvish royalty had even been in charge of receiving the delegation. The elves were usually an organized race, so the Americans did not think too much about it.

Around a month ago, the Americans once again tried to seek an audience with the elvish king, but was rejected. The reasoning was that the elvish king was heading toward the north to handle the rebellion of the dark elves. The Americans did not return empty-handed, bringing back a large amount of gifts as a show of goodwill.

Judge Academy and the elves signed a non-aggression treaty that lasted a hundred years, and it was still about a year away from the expiration, which was why it was still not that urgent.

At around half a month ago, Judge Academy received reports that the elves were organizing their troops at a large scale, with the reasoning being to suppress the revolt in the north. The elves and the dark elves had already been in conflict for thousands of years, but the lazy elves had not amassed their troops because of it.

The news had been concealed by Judge Academy, but it was not hard for the other academies to receive that news. The rest of the reports were nothing of importance, such as the income of New Washington and the reduced business in certain towns.

Compiling everything in the report, the conclusion was something shocking.

“The elves want to go to war?” Xiao Lin said in shock.

Song Junlang could not deny it. “There still isn’t enough proof at the moment, so the news has been sealed off. The elves had never started a war by themselves in all of history, so no one can make a conclusion.”

“Does this have anything to do with my tests?” Xiao Lin did not sway from his original topic.

Song Junlang sighed, his expression heavy. “To be honest, this generation of students is rather unlucky. Back then during the war against the orcs, even the students in school were pulled into the war; the numbers would not have been enough otherwise. Even though we’ve expanded since then, no one can predict what Planet Norma will look like in the future. Xiao Lin, do you have any plans for the future?”

Xiao Lin was stunned. That question was not easy to answer because he had not really thought about it.

Song Junlang did not make it difficult for him. “Do you want to be someone ordinary or someone that stands at the top? I know the dean had already told you before; even though the colonists are considered nobles on Planet Norma, even nobles are separated into levels.”

“I understand that.”

“Yes, so the problem is here. If you want to be a regular person, finding a stable job in the New World before buying your own villa, spending your days idly with a few beautiful wives, then I’d advise you to stop what you’re doing. You should stop participating in a lot of things. With your current wealth and skill, you can easily be a normal person.”

Xiao Lin went quiet for a moment. “What if I pick the other route?”

Song Junlang had a complicated smile. “Then you’ll probably encounter the difficulties that come with it. The military is just getting started. You’re currently not much in their eyes. To phrase it in another way, you’re just an ant who is disturbing things at the moment, and they’re stepping on you because they’re uncomfortable. If you get stepped on, then you’ll never rise up again in the future, but some good will come out of it, and you’ll never have these problems anymore.”

Xiao Lin finally understood. “So you’re not helping me because you want me to make the choice?”

“That’s right. I can’t help you. Planet Norma isn’t like Earth. This place will always prioritize the strong/ Otherwise, why would I just be a department head even with a backer? Ah, I just want you to understand that if you don’t have the skill to step over everyone, then don’t place yourself in the fire, or you’ll just be roasted alive!”

Song Junlang wanted to wake Xiao Lin up. Thinking about it, in the few months since he had entered the academy, Xiao Lin had been attracting more and more attention.

Xiao Lin was special because he was someone with an SS-rank talent, which was why the dean looked after him. On top of that, he had made waves from visiting the New World, especially the incident with the blood moon in New Washington and what had recently happened in Wildfire Town.

A mere new student had constantly joined in boss-level affairs, as if he did not know his place.

It was natural that there would be those that had that kind of thought process within the large Dawn Academy, especially among the dean’s foes. Those in the military were obvious; regardless of it being due to unhappiness or admiration or jealousy, Xiao Lin had forced himself into everyone’s sights, and those people definitely had their own reactions.

The dean's reaction was support, doing everything to help Xiao Lin, and the military had naturally chosen to suppress him.

There would be disputes as long as there were benefits to be earned—that much was natural.

However, Xiao Lin suddenly realized that he had never thought about what he needed to this day. No matter the support or the suppression, it was all because of other people. What was it that he wanted for himself?

He was no longer a student who just entered the academy and who felt his blood boiling just thinking about making a name for himself in a foreign world. He now knew how hard the process would be, and what role he would need to play within.

Chapter 393 - Magic Tests (1)

Chapter 393: Magic Tests (1)

Song Junlang did not speak. He quietly looked at Xiao Lin as he waited for a reply.

After a long time, Xiao Lin looked up with a bitter look on his face. "I don't know."

Song Junlang was not surprised at the answer, nodding as he said, "That's normal. Every new student works themselves to the bone thanks to the picture the academy paints, but the nearer they get to that picture, the more they realize that there are some differences between the reality and their dreams."

"However, I'm already in the boat right now." It was hard to tell if Xiao Lin's tone was one of regret or dissatisfaction—even he himself did not know. He remembered the hot-blooded passion everyone felt when they heard about the colonists' goals during the entrance ceremony. No, even now, most of the students were relying on that passion as their pillar of support, constantly attending classes every day and examinations every month.

To them, the New World was a land of pure bliss that existed only in legends.

However, what if that land of pure bliss was about to face a war? Just like what Xiao Lin had written in his final answer in the written tests, if the situation turned into a global war, would anyone still want to go to the New World? Even if they had resurrection towers, Lifewater was still limited. They might be from Earth, but they were still at the lowest level. Would they have enough lifespan to spend?

Song Junlang had already mentioned that, during the war against the orcs, Dawn Academy had countless casualties, and those were real deaths after using up their lifespans.

The atmosphere in the room turned heavy, and Xiao Lin's thoughts were a mess. To him, who had just entered the academy for four months, it was too early to be exposed to these things, but he still appreciated Song Junlang. He knew that Song Junlang did it out of kindness; Xiao Lin's own special circumstances had led to him needing to think about these things earlier.

“Ah, you don’t have to worry though. If war really breaks out, it won’t have much to do with you new students.” Song Junlang’s expression suddenly turned warm, reverting to his usual jovial self. “Don’t underestimate us; the skill and resources that our academies have accumulated over this century can’t be easily shaken.

“You still have tests tomorrow right? I remember you picked a lot of courses to study. You really do enjoy torturing yourself. Just head back and prepare for your tests first, and don’t sweat the other stuff for now.” Song Junlang did not let that heavy atmosphere continue. He was just preparing Xiao Lin mentally for now; it was better than facing the question at the point of no return.

Xiao Lin composed himself. No matter what, everything that happened had already happened, so he needed to think about how to face it. Song Junlang not helping him during these tests was just so that he could measure his own skill.

The physical portion of the tests had all ended so, to a lot of students, the next few days were rest days that were hard to come by, but Xiao Lin still needed to wait for the magical portion of the tests.

They were different from the physical tests; the basic magic tests were hard to test for individually, so they tested a few courses in one go. That also meant that, as long as one did not pass the test, they would need to retake all the courses in one go. The students who picked magical courses once again complained in the forums, but naturally no one dared make a scene with the student union.

What caused Xiao Lin some surprise was that the magic tests were no longer administered by the military, but they were not done by the academy either. There were a few people who wore magical robes and adorned mage hats. Every accessory on their body exuded the power of magic. They claimed to be from the Mage’s Union, asked by the military to assist in the matter.

What they wore were an exact fit with the image of mages in everyone’s heads, but everyone who picked the magical courses was chasing this aesthetic anyway. The appearance of those people caused quite a stir, and compared to those examiners from the military, the mages were comparatively a lot more amicable. Before the tests, they even conversed with some of the students. Of course, the topics were all idle chit-chat.

“Who is Gu Xiaoyue?” A woman in blue mage robes suddenly asked.

Everyone looked at each other before pointing toward the cold-looking girl who was practicing wand movements in a corner by herself. In a few seconds, Gu Xiaoyue’s face widened when she realized she was the center of attention. She usually did not have many friends, so she was not used to the gazes.

Xiao Lin was next to her; he was basically the only person in the first year who talked to Gu Xiaoyue. When he noticed her awkwardness, he walked closer to Gu Xiaoyue before looking at the approaching woman.

“You are Gu Xiaoyue?”

“Yes.”

“The student who had the highest Intelligence score at the start?”

“That’s right.”

“Do you possess a talent?”

“I do not.”

“That’s really odd. Someone told me you had potential last month, but I don’t really believe it. I hope you don’t disappoint me today.”

“Okay.”

Her responses were completely robotic, so the woman furrowed her eyebrows in mild disappointment. Did Gu Xiaoyue not know she was the examiner in charge of the test? Why was she not trying to cozy up to her?

Xiao Lin was sweating a little; he knew that Gu Xiaoyue was not good and interacting, so he took over, “Hello, Teacher. Gu Xiaoyue means that while she might not have a talent, she works far harder than anyone. Her so-called potential is just a myth; she is just a regular student.”

With Xiao Lin’s understanding of Gu Xiaoyue, that girl did not want her name to be widely known, so being noticed by more people was definitely not a good thing.

The woman was unhappy with Xiao Lin’s interruption, and she coldly said, “Who are you?”

“I’m her friend.”

“I’m asking you what your name is.”

“Xiao Lin.”

The woman paused for a few seconds before asking curiously, “You are Xiao Lin? You’re enrolled in magic courses? I seem to recall that you tested for swordsmanship classes? I still remember talking about you yesterday...”

Xiao Lin was a bit frustrated. “That’s right, I enrolled in swordsmanship, but I also enrolled in magic.”

The woman understood. “Dual cultivation?”

“That’s right.”

“Ah, the passion of youth. Good luck.” The woman laughed, patting Xiao Lin’s shoulder before falling silent and returning.

The surrounding students cast admiring gazes toward Xiao Lin and Gu Xiaoyue. To them, the ones in the Mage’s Union were all big figures, so being noticed was definitely a sign of a brighter future.

Only Xiao Lin smiled bitterly to himself; that woman's final laugh was definitely not praise.

Chapter 394 - Magic Tests (2)

Chapter 394: Magic Tests (2)

The tests were arranged to be done individually within the magic training halls, but before they officially started, the Mage's Union representatives explained the rules of the tests to everyone. The one who spoke was the woman from earlier, but she never bothered to introduce herself. Even when anyone asked for her name or name card, they would be ignored. It was not clear if she did not bother to or if she just happened to miss them.

"I know a lot of you probably showed a lot of promise in magic within your short time in the academy, earning praise from those around you or even your lecturers. Maybe your skills are all at high levels, but that is not the point for today's tests!"

Compared to the warmth from earlier, the woman suddenly sounded thunderous, causing a lot of them to feel like something was wrong. Normally, the important points would come after words like that, and sure enough, the woman continued. "We are testing a lot today, and it's not something that can be explained in just a few words. I won't slowly explain it to you, but I believe that each of you will benefit for your entire lives after the test. Today's tests, to put things simply, will be combat training!"

A stir rose among the students, a lot of them actually breathing sighs of relief. They were anticipating something completely different during the tests today, but combat training was something they had gone through before in their regular classes.

According to the woman, the combat drills during the tests would have opponents from the Mage's Union. Of course, due to the difference in levels, the mages would hold their spells back, and the students would be allowed to wear anti-magic armor to prevent injuries.

In conclusion, it seemed very standard, at least on the surface. However, Xiao Lin noticed the woman had a faint smile on her lips. During his interaction with her earlier, he could see that the smile had absolutely no trace of kindness. It was just well-hidden mockery.

The tests would be held in several different training halls; every student who had their name called would walk in alone. The order was based on classes, so Xiao Lin could only wait there idly, trying to speak with Gu Xiaoyue.

The first person who went in only needed three minutes before coming back out. The speed shocked everyone. His body still looked well, nothing to indicate any mental exertion or even physical stress, but his expression was puzzling. His face looked like he did not know whether he should laugh or cry—it was basically a terrible expression.

Some students tried to get some information from him, but they were quickly stopped by those in charge of discipline during the test, and they were even warned. Based on the test regulations, revealing information about the test before leaving the area would result in having to retake the test.

There were not many of them who enrolled in magic courses. After all, many of them understood that not everyone was suited to learning magic after the initial assessments, so it only took a little over an hour to reach Xiao Lin's turn.

Walking toward the training hall, the woman in the blue robes was talking to some others in a low voice. When she saw Xiao Lin, she paused before pointing at him, telling the others, "He's Xiao Lin."

A few measuring gazes shot over. Xiao Lin did not like the feeling, and he hastened his steps, moving toward the center of the hall. Looking around, there were nothing like alchemical beings or virtual battle simulators around, only a few robes with magic runes on them were there.

"Put them on; they will guarantee you won't be injured by me."

Hearing that, Xiao Lin, who was putting on a robe, was stunned. He raised his head and saw the blue-robed woman walk over herself, which meant that she was the one testing Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin asked, "What are the rules? Do I need to hold on for some amount of time? Or do I need to defeat you?"

A few of the examiners could not hold back their jeering laughs, and a cold mocking tone could be heard, "You wish to defeat me? It's not April Fools' today; there's nothing like that on Planet Norma!"

"The rules are simple. Duel me and we'll give you an overall evaluation."

"What are the standards of evaluation?"

"I feel like I shouldn't need to explain that to you. Do you have any other questions?"

"Fine. There's nothing else."

"I can see from the information that the student union provided that you specialize in flame magic. Let me see how your attack power is."

The test started under a tense atmosphere. The mage's robes provided for the new students were very light. The quality was soft, yet solid. It was obvious that they were made with good materials. However, providing such good equipment was not a good thing. It only meant the test would be exceptionally hard.

The woman used a small golden wand and her casting speed was very quick. Light-blue energy bullets shot out as she raised her hands. It was the most basic beginner spell, so the attack power was not that high. Even if that woman, whose skill was currently unknown, used it, its power was still limited.

"Flame Bullet!" Even though they were not allowed to bring their own equipment, Xiao Lin's Flame Bullet was already at the point of perfection. His casting speed was definitely no slower than those energy bullets.

Scorching flame bullets shot out from Xiao Lin's finger, and accurately collided with the energy bullets in midair. After an explosion, the two spells cancelled each other out.

Xiao Lin understood that his casting speed and perception was being tested. Without accurate perception and accuracy, it was hard to cast a spell accurately in such a short time.

The woman stared in surprise, but quickly shot out more energy bullets. This time, she shot out four of them, and then shot them in four different directions. Even if they were low-level spells, controlling them to such a degree was incredibly difficult, so Xiao Lin developed some respect for that woman's skill.

The four bullets practically sealed off all his escape routes, and the woman had obviously upped the difficulty. The angle the bullets shot at were even trickier and they were even moving with uncertainty. With Xiao Lin's perception and meditation level, it was quite hard to shoot at them accurately. Xiao Lin only had a short one or two seconds to think as the energy bullets shot toward him. In a flash, Xiao Lin made the decision.

Since he could not accurately determine the line of attack, he just needed to shoot even more flame bullets into the air!

If one bullet was not enough, then four, or even eight!

Flame Bullet was an improvement from Flame Ball. The spell shortened the cast time in order to adapt to fast-paced combat, and the casting speed was dependent on the caster's overall skills. That was why Xiao Lin immediately activated Miracle, and with his stats all in Intelligence, he could cast around ten Flame Bullets in two seconds.

Ten Flame Bullets shot out from Xiao Lin like a machine gun. It was hard for Xiao Lin to aim them accurately in such a short time, but that was fine. There were enough Flame Bullets that he only needed an approximate location, firing two bullets at each direction.

A few explosions could be heard after that, and all the energy bullets were intercepted in midair.

Chapter 395 - Magic Tests (3)

Chapter 395: Magic Tests (3)

Xiao Lin had a sense of accomplishment. Compared with Basic Swordsmanship, his Basic Meditation and Basic Perception levels were actually a lot lower. Dealing with such a quick and multi-directional attack was still rather difficult, but he was fortunately able to use numbers to make up for the defensive shortcomings.

The woman did not continue on the offensive, but instead said in a calm but unpleasant tone, "If this is a real battle, you're already at a disadvantage after that earlier attack. If this is a life-threatening battle, you can consider yourself; half-dead!"

"Huh?"

Xiao Lin was a little dumbfounded. Could that woman be nuts? He had dodged all her energy bombs perfectly. It did not matter if she did not appreciate it, but she had to make sarcastic comments instead. Even if she was deliberately making things difficult on behalf of the military, her actions were still too obvious. He asked in a displeased tone, "Give me a reason. What's the reason for your comment? Didn't you see that I didn't get hit by your energy bomb? "

"Yes, but you paid the price of using more magic!"

Xiao Lin froze, but did not understand.

The woman continued, "A battle between mages isn't purely just to bombard spells. This isn't like the games you play on whim back on Earth! For a mage, every spell cast must be strictly calculated, because you have very limited mental power. Do you think the enemy will give you time to rest in a real battle?"

Xiao Lin understood what she was going to say.

Sure enough, the woman's brows gradually frowned: "I released four energy bombs in the test just now, but in fact, only the energy bomb in the southeast direction is directed at you. The other three were just to confuse your vision and seal off any escape route. Those three energy bombs weren't even going to hit you, but you've wasted nearly twice as much mental power as I have!"

It had to be acknowledged that the woman's standard was very high. The Flame Bomb was a Bronze-rank improved spell and its mental power consumption is almost the same as that of an energy bomb. Xiao Lin did not notice the specific attack directions of the four energy bombs earlier. It was still very difficult for him to accurately perceive it within a short amount of time.

In fact, such a feat was nearly impossible for all freshmen, as they had only been in the academy for more than four months. The woman's criticism of Xiao Lin was not wrong, but from the viewpoint of the new students, it simply made things very difficult for them.

After figuring that out, Xiao Lin looked at the woman calmly. After knowing that she was trying to evaluate him with a specific purpose in mind, he did not complain anymore. However, it did not mean that he was just going to accept it. After a while, he asked, "Do you still want to continue? Or do you plan to grade the assessment already?"

Xiao Lin had since omitted the honorific title of 'teacher' when addressing her, causing the woman's brows frown tightly. She said unhappily, "Is it necessary to continue? Isn't the outcome already obvious if two mages of similar level are fighting and one of them consumed more than double the mental energy compared to the other person?"

After a pause, the woman put away her staff and began to turn around, and announced the result, "I said it before. The actual combat level is the subject of consideration in this assessment. After all, you're not going to the New World in the future to play house with those spells! I acknowledge that your basic skill level isn't bad, but unfortunately your actual combat level does not match your level, so you failed the test!"

Xiao Lin was not surprised by this announcement, but he immediately stopped the other party, "Wait! What did you just say? Can you repeat that again? "

The woman thought he was pretending to be stupid, so she repeated it word by word, “You failed the test! That’s clear enough, isn’t it!”

“Uh, not that one.”

“What?”

“You said that IF two mages of similar level are fighting, didn’t you?” Xiao Lin asked with a grin and emphasized the word ‘if’.

“Yes.” The woman was puzzled

Xiao Lin had an even bigger grin as he spread his hands, “So that means you just made a hypothesis. Are you going to use a hypothetical situation to judge my failure in the assessment?”

“That’s a fact. Do you want to question my professional judgment in the field of magic?”

“No, no, no, I’m not questioning your professionalism, but obviously, you just used the standard of most people to judge. That’s very unfair to the minority.”

“Do you think you belong to this minority?”

“Yes.”

The woman laughed furiously, “A minority whose initial attribute value doesn’t even exceed ten? I’ve never seen it before! As rapid as your growth is, you’re still at the level of an ordinary person! Don’t mess around anymore. It’d be better for you to head back and prepare for the make-up exam!”

It seems that this woman had done some investigation before coming, but it was obvious that her investigation was not comprehensive. Xiao Lin gradually retracted his smile and said in a taunting tone, “You don’t dare to try? Are you feeling scared? Perhaps afraid that your judgment turns out to be wrong?”

“How do you want to try?” The woman narrowed her eyes. Even though she understood that he was deliberately provoking her, she still could not tolerate it.

“Your criterion for judging me as unqualified is nothing more than due to the fact that I consume more mental energy, is that right?”

“Yes, if you squander your mental energy without restraint and calculation like this, you can’t hold on until the end of a normal battle. You’ll not only harm yourself, but you’ll also kill your future teammates!”

Having said that, Xiao Lin finally felt relieved. How far was she going to compare her mental power with him?

“If this is the case, then why not try and see if I have enough mental power to splurge on!”

The woman had an uncertain look. She went back to discuss with a few other people, then returned to say in a cold voice, “We’ll give you a chance, lest you say that we’re deliberately making things hard for you in the future. We can’t find a Black Iron-rank mage for you to battle with right now, so you’re still up against me.”

“What is the standard to be measured against?” Xiao Lin made sure to clarify the standards on that occasion.

“Based on your style of fighting, your mental power can only support you to fight for about ten minutes at most.”

“Fifteen minutes?” Xiao Lin raised his eyebrows.

“Yes! No more than fifteen minutes, and my calculations won’t be wrong! If you can continue fighting for longer than that period of time, then I’ll consider it my mistake!” The woman’s tone was very determined.

Xiao Lin smiled and his heart finally settled down. All he had to do was maintain ten minutes of fighting? The only comment he had was that the woman was far too naïve. She either did not investigate Xiao Lin carefully or had absolutely no permission to view too many files about Xiao Lin. Otherwise, she would have known that Xiao Lin had been in The Final Land not long ago, and the battles he experienced on the way back far exceeded fifteen minutes.

Although Xiao Lin’s mental power was not comparable to that of most people when he first enrolled, four months of painstaking meditation would normally only bring him to equal the level of an ordinary person at most. However, the woman never knew about the existence of his SS-level talent, much less the Creation skills such as Miracle or even Ruin.

Chapter 396 - Clash of Spells

Chapter 396: Clash of Spells

The assessment began once more.

The woman still used novice-level energy bombs. According to the regulations of the assessment, the examiner was also not allowed to use spells beyond the scope of the freshman grade.

However, the woman has also increased the difficulty. The energy bombs she controlled in her hands were as flexible as her own limbs, other than increasing the number of energy bombs released each time, the attack angles were also very erratic.

Her intention was very simple, that was to suppress Xiao Lin with uninterrupted attacks from the sky, to the point where Xiao Lin could not get a breather. That way, Xiao Lin had to consume more mental energy too.

The difference in strength forced Xiao Lin into the situation even if he knew the opponent’s trap. He was unable to execute so many perceptive positioning in such a short time, and could only use the same well-practiced flame bombs to fill the gap.

If one flame bomb could not end things, he would release two. If two still could not solve it, he would launch another four.

For a time, the assessment turned into a spell bombing competition. The light blue energy bombs soared in an arc, forming a sharp contrast with the burning flame bombs flying all over the sky.

From the very beginning, Xiao Lin was obviously at a disadvantage. He was flustered in the face of such a sophisticated opponent. The continuous onslaught of energy bombs prevented him from ascertaining how many were directed at him and how many were just to confuse him. Considering the woman's ulterior motives, Xiao Lin could not take any risks and decided to intercept all the energy bombs.

Five minutes later, Xiao Lin was still suppressed.

Ten minutes later, Xiao Lin was still struggling to cope.

In 15 minutes, Xiao Lin seemed to have adapted to the rhythm of the energy bombs, and his interception efficiency had greatly improved.

Neither person realized that time was up. Xiao Lin's mental energy consumption was indeed very large, but he still had plenty of energy left. Even the miracle state had not been activated yet, but he was already starting to consider using Ruin if the woman continued to speed up her rhythm.

The other examiners on the sidelines were dumbfounded and tried to point out that the time had come. However, they all seemed to be a little afraid of the woman, as they did not speak despite having their mouths open.

As a result, the exam was still in progress.

After half an hour, Xiao Lin finally felt that his head was starting to grow dizzy. It was a sign of mental exhaustion, and although he did not pay attention to the time, he believed that it had been more than 15 minutes, but the woman did not show any signs of stopping.

Perhaps that woman knew that the time had already passed, but simply forced the exam to continue for the sake of her reputation, following which her purpose was not just to test him, but to knock him down.

Xiao Lin would not suffer much damage even if he wore a mage robe with extremely high spell resistance for the exam. Despite that, the woman could easily knock him down if that was her intention.

Xiao Lin was slightly angry, but as long as the woman's energy bombs continued, he had to continue to intercept with flame bombs until his mental power was completely exhausted. Countless energy bombs would then annihilate him until he fell to the ground.

"If this is the case, then I'll bring you down with me! Let's see who's afraid of whom!"

Xiao Lin suddenly yelled. Due to the exhaustion of mental energy, his voice was a little hoarse. The woman was a little anxious and did not seem to care about what he said, but she was soon forced to acknowledge that something was happening.

Xiao Lin had started his Miracle state, and the anger in his heart quickly elevated him to the higher and more explosive Ruin state. The sudden leap in strength gave him an explosive ability comparable to Bronze-rank, and the other woman finally realized Xiao Lin's abnormality, though she still did not pay much attention to it.

In the Ruin state, Xiao Lin's various attributes have been comprehensively improved, and he can also freely switch attributes. The result was that his near-exhausted mental power could be quickly restored. Although it was an overdraft recovery, he had been quite at ease when dealing with the situation at hand, despite struggling to cope in the beginning. By then, he could even stand there motionlessly and release flame bombs with one hand. Furthermore, he was even able to capture the trajectory of each energy bomb, intercepting them accurately.

The change undoubtedly made the woman even more irritated. She knew that Xiao Lin had passed the examination resoundingly that day.

Causing Xiao Lin to suffer in her hands was a way of redeeming her own dignity. That thought circled in her mind and finally made her lose her sanity. After seeing that the energy bomb's attack had no effect, she ignored the vague reminders of other examiners on the sidelines and did not hesitate to change to a higher-level spell.

The flurry of energy bombs stopped abruptly, but a football-sized lightning ball had already flown over, repelling all the flame bombs in its way. The level of that new spell was obviously not weak at all.

The frightened Xiao Lin sped up his spellcasting speed. He did not know many spells, and he had the sudden thought of a flame ball. The Flame Ball Spell was an improved version of the Flame Bomb, and Xiao Lin could easily use the former since he had learnt the latter. Doing so was not difficult and all he needed to do was re-add the casting steps that had been omitted.

There was no time to think about the feasibility and Xiao Lin raised his staff again. Fortunately, it had been ingrained in his memory, and the content of the spell book quickly filtered through his mind like a slide projector. Soon, he began resonating with the flame element in the surroundings.

A huge flame ball quickly condensed on the top of the staff. Xiao Lin was slightly surprised, because this flame ball was obviously not an ordinary one. He had seen that Black Iron-rank spell before, but his own ball was at least twice as big as that. Furthermore, it was burning with a much deeper flame.

Was it caused by casting a spell in the Ruin state? Xiao Lin was not too sure, so he had to wait until the assessment before thinking about it. For the time being, he immediately launched the flame ball in his hand.

In an instant, the two magic balls collided in mid-air, and then burst out an extremely dazzling light. The ensuing huge explosion and shockwave knocked Xiao Lin down on the spot.

...

The students waiting outside the training hall were feeling bored when they suddenly felt the entire ground shaking slightly. Some random people even ran away while yelling 'earthquake'. Of course, other calm individuals understood that they were in an independent space, which made it

impossible for a natural disaster like an earthquake to exist. The saner individuals realized that it was caused by a very strong blast wave, and the source of the shock wave was the training hall in front of them.

The people in the student union, who were responsible for maintaining order outside, also had weird expressions. They no doubt understood that it was just a reaction caused by collided spells, but the problem was that the freshmen were having their test that day. How was it possible for freshmen to produce a spell effect of such level?!

Chapter 397 - Expedited Curriculum

Chapter 397: Expedited Curriculum

People from the student union were responsible for maintaining order outside the library. Of course, they understood that it was nothing more than the reaction of collided spells, but the issue was that it was a freshman test on that day. How could a freshman execute magic of such a level?!

The student union was actually in a very awkward spot during the assessment. They had plenty of authority in previous years' assessments, but the military's powerful intervention had reduced them to being responsible for maintaining order at the venue. Furthermore, they were still in front of the freshmen, so they had to maintain seriousness and could not let their grievances show. That way, the student union's authority could still be preserved.

Although it seemed as though they were responsible for maintaining order, it was actually none of their business at all. The likelihood for anything untoward to happen to new students in the assessment room was practically nil, but as luck would have it, such a scenario did in fact happen.

The training hall returned to calm after the shock and impact. Just as several student union individuals hesitated whether or not to enter, the door was pushed open from the inside and a dusty Xiao Lin staggered out. The examiner soon followed, although no one knew whether her ashen face was due to the dust or anger.

"What happened?"

Many people looked around, and everyone who caught a glimpse of what happened in the training hall opened their mouths in surprise. The structure had changed completely. As a spell training hall specially used for freshmen, high-quality spell-resistant materials were used, but most of the floor seemed to have been blown up while the roof had plenty of holes in them.

Everyone looked at Xiao Lin as though he was a monster. It did not matter what transpired within, as it was simply unthinkable for any freshmen to wreak such havoc in the assessment.

However, Xiao Lin did not say much even though he was privy to what happened. He simply looked at the woman in charge of the assessment with a probing gaze. Although the explosion was strong and the woman was still fine, the mage robe on her obviously was clearly unable to handle it. Several holes had appeared on it, and she was quite ashamed and angry when she was exposed to everyone at the moment. In any case, she was well aware that Xiao Lin would not let her leave if she did not say anything to Xiao Lin there, so she angrily dropped a sentence, "You passed!"

Xiao Lin left in satisfaction. The damage to the training venue stopped the assessment for a while and it was not possible to continue until a new venue was replaced, but none of that had anything to do with Xiao Lin, and he was also very tired after using the Ruin state. Fortunately for him however, he did not use the Dragon's Breath Sword in the Ruin state.

He did not go directly back to the dorm, but came to Song Junlang's logistics department. The events that morning had signified that Xiao Lin had completed his assessment, but it did not mean that his freshmen life was limited to that only. It could only be said that increasingly complicated elective courses would be provided for students who passed the first stage after enrolment.

Xiao Lin wanted to plan for the future, and he believed that Department Head Song would definitely know more about the upcoming subjects for freshman year. Besides, he was quite self-conscious about the huge version of the Flame Ball he used that day, because a spell of that level still scared him slightly.

Song Junlang was still busy when Xiao Lin arrived. The former, who was dressed in a white coat, held a few small test tubes in his hands. The test tubes were filled with a blood-like liquid, and Xiao Lin wisely hid away and came forward about half an hour later, when he finally saw that Song Junlang was all done.

"Hey? When did you come here!" Song Junlang was probably in a good mood today as he greeted Xiao Lin warmly.

"I came half an hour ago."

"Why did you have to wait so long to come in! It's not like this is a tiger's lair. What are you afraid of?"

"I wouldn't be half as scared if this place really was a tiger's lair, but all of this is much more dangerous than that... Ahem, but that's not the point. Something very exciting happened in today's examination venue."

"You passed?" Song Junlang could tell from Xiao Lin's expression and smiled again. "You seem kinda miserable though."

Xiao Lin immediately recounted the situation at that time. Of course, the focus was not on how hard of a time the Mage Union gave him. For him, the only important thing was to pass the assessment, since he would not be meeting that woman too frequently in the future. Xiao Lin's befuddlement came from the spell that he launched in the end. The destructive power it produced was quite astonishing, and if it were not for the special mage robes provided by the academy, even Xiao Lin himself would be affected.

He was lucky not to have faced the embarrassment of getting injured by a spell that he had cast, but Xiao Lin was still a little scared when he thought about it. The spell's power surprised him, but he would rather not use it if it was derived from instability.

Song Junlang listened to it all and thought for a moment. After inquiring a few more details, he said angrily, "I'm afraid she was using a Bronze-rank spell, the Electric Blade Ball. This is an upgrade of the Black Iron-rank's Lightning Ball. How dare she use such a powerful version in the freshman's assessment!"

Xiao Lin tsk-ed to himself. He thought it was just a Black Iron-rank spell, but he never expected it to be a Bronze-rank one. Then again, he could block it with his Flame Ball, so could it be that his own spell had a corresponding level of strength?

However, the answer given by Song Junlang was very vague. He did not know much about Xiao Lin's Ruin state, but he made a guess of his own. "Although you're using a Black Iron-rank Flame Ball, it's probably not a pure fireball. I believe you added your own understanding to the casting action. I remember you saying that you learnt it from the notes in the spell book brought back from New Washington. That means it's not a pure flame ball. "

Still confused, Xiao Lin asked directly, "Is this a good thing or a bad thing, then?"

"I have no idea. I'm not good at magic, but I also understand that there's no absoluteness when it comes to spells. The overall number of spells can be considered to increase every year. One single Flame Ball spell can have various improved versions, and as far as I know, there are more than a hundred different variations and I can't know for sure which one you're using."

'Well then, it looks like I still have to study these spells myself,' Xiao Lin thought to himself and asked about the freshman year's curriculum. Song Junlang finally stopped what he was doing, looked at him helplessly, and said, "When it comes to things like that, it'd be better for you to ask the student union president directly. What do you take me for? How can I possibly know about the curriculum?"

"You have friends in high places!" Xiao Lin could finally say that with confidence.

The both of them stared at each other, and Song Junlang was the first to lose. He did not know whether to cry or laugh when he said, "Alright, alright. I didn't ask about the specific curriculum, but I'm told that the courses in the second half of the freshman year will be modified compared to previous years. To be more precise, your progress will be accelerated."

Xiao Lin remained calm. Compared with what he experienced in the past few months, speeding up the courses was not at all sufficient to surprise him anymore.

Chapter 398 - Gu Xiaoyue's Genes

Chapter 398: Gu Xiaoyue's Genes

Song Junlang was not that surprised by Xiao Lin's reaction and said innocently, "So you see, I don't really know all that in detail. Don't you have a good relationship with the student union president? You can just ask him."

Xiao Lin thought about the baby-faced president who had helped him countless times, but he also heard from other people that the president was a staunch follower of the dean, so it was no surprise that he showed that much concern for Xiao Lin. However, the military's intervention was already troublesome enough and Xiao Lin did not want to trouble the student union for the time being.

“Speaking of which, the holidays are upon us. Do you have any plans?” After noticing that Xiao Lin no longer asked any further questions, Song Junlang asked some questions of his own.

“Holidays?” Xiao Lin had a confused look.

Song Junlang sighed, “You’ve been in the academy for more than four months now, but I bet you haven’t even read the basic rules and regulations for freshmen... The freshmen’s rules clearly state that the academy will allow students a small holiday after each stage of the exam is over. You can take it as sort of a summer vacation.”

Xiao Lin could not help but blush. The rules and regulations for new students were issued to everyone by the student union on the first day of enrollment, but his two business trips to the New World caused him to spend little time in the college. As a result, the regulations had been completely forgotten.

“How long is the holiday? A month? Two months?”

“Keep dreaming! The academy doesn’t want to let the freshmen to get too relaxed after their enrolment, so this holiday will only be for ten days. Also, there’s some good news. Would you like to hear it?” Song Junlang blinked.

“Not really.”

“Can’t you be a little more cooperative!”

The two of them had another staring contest, and after a while, Song Junlang lost yet again. He waved his hands and smiled bitterly, “Okay, okay, well actually, this news is supposed to be announced a few days later, but I’ll tell you in advance. Based on the dean’s opinion, the student union decided that freshmen will be allowed to return to Earth for this holiday.”

Xiao Lin’s eyes widened. He remembered that the academy strictly controlled the return of freshmen to Earth out of fear that those rookies would cause unnecessary trouble. At the freshman level, most of them were not immune to weapons, and the academy did not want the students it so painstakingly trained to be shot down after getting into trouble.

“This is really great news, but isn’t there some rule prohibiting freshmen from going back?”

“This is an exception. Of course, in order to avoid any trouble, the student union will probably still screen the returning students for certain criteria. The specific details will only be released in another three days.”

“Why must it be another three days?”

“Because that’s the day the results of your comprehensive test will be announced.”

Xiao Lin nodded and had some guess of what the screening criteria were. Originally, he was still at a loss as to how he should spend his holiday, but since the student union made an exception, it was obvious that he had to go back to Earth.

Dawn Academy's entertainment facilities were very scarce, and aside from that, four months was equivalent to eight months when converted into Earth's time. For most people, homesickness was inevitable after having zero contact with family and loved ones for more than half a year.

"Are you going back?"

"Duh, am I supposed to choose staying here and continuing training instead of going back?" After the initial interest in the academy's curriculum and training, plenty of people had since entered into boredom, and few were willing to waste their precious holidays on training.

"Well, I'll head back with you."

"Oh." Xiao Lin nodded, then raised his head suddenly with a wary expression. "You're coming back with me? What are you going to do!"

Song Junlang rolled his eyes. "Don't worry, I'm not going back because of you. I remember you mentioning to me that you've met Gu Xiaoyue's sister last time when you returned to Earth. Isn't that so?"

"That's correct. You want to meet her?"

"I do."

"Gu Xiaoyue isn't familiar with you, so she's unlikely to agree." Based on Xiao Lin's understanding of Gu Xiaoyue, he actually wanted to tell Song Junlang that she would outright refuse.

"That's why I want to go back to Earth with you instead of going back with Gu Xiaoyue."

Xiao Lin snapped to his senses. Song Junlang wanted to avoid Gu Xiaoyue and meet her sister directly with Xiao Lin as the intermediary, which was not a difficult task at all. Although Xiao Lin had met the girl in a hurry previously, he could still be considered to have made her acquaintance. However, he did not immediately agree. "Her sister is quite pitiful, actually. You have to assure me that you don't have any malicious intent. Better yet, you might as well state your purpose right now."

"I'm not a lolicon, don't worry."

"Don't pretend to be an idiot. You know I'm not talking about that..."

The two of them had yet another staring contest. Song Junlang dispelled his joking expression slightly and lowered his voice, "You and Gu Xiaoyue came over for dinner two days ago and she accidentally cut her hand. I had a sudden idea, so I took the blood stains left behind and did a bit of analysis."

Xiao Lin directly saw through him. "That's not a sudden idea at all! You planned it a long time ago, and you cut Gu Xiaoyue's hand on purpose!"

Song Junlang said helplessly, "Let's skip this irrelevant question for the time being. I've been busy conducting identification tests on that blood stain for these two days. Since I used to be a doctor on earth, analyzing blood isn't difficult for me. "

“And the results?” Xiao Lin was eager to get an answer.

“I don’t know.”

Xiao Lin was absolutely lost for words.

At that point, Song Junlang did not look like he was joking at all. He took a deep breath, stared right at Xiao Lin’s eyes, and emphasized each word in a very low tone. “I don’t know if she’s a pure Earthling!”

In an instant, Xiao Lin felt like he was in an ice cellar as his blood rapidly ran cold. He collapsed on the chair and stared at Song Junlang in a daze.

Song Junlang kept quiet in order not to disturb him and simply allowed Xiao Lin to digest those words slowly.

“Impossible!” Xiao Lin suddenly shouted after a long pause. His emotions were a bit agitated, because he had guessed it before but simply thought that the possibility was very small. At that moment, Song Junlang’s words seemed to affirm that worst-case scenario.

“Calm down.”

“There must be something wrong with your test!”

“Wait for me to finish talking.”

Xiao Lin finally fell silent. He would probably only make a couple of remarks about it if it were anyone else, but he could not accept such a result when it came to Gu Xiaoyue.

Song Junlang finally had the opportunity to continue speaking. “Her DNA is amazing. It has obvious human characteristics with a double-helix structure, but at the same time, I’m also pretty sure that it’s not a pure human gene!”

Xiao Lin then noticed that Song Junlang used the word ‘pure’. He raised his head and asked in surprise, “Mixed-blood?”

Chapter 399 - Mixed-Blood

Chapter 399: Mixed-Blood

It was not the first time Xiao Lin came into contact with the term ‘mixed-blood’. He thought of the mixed-blood orc he had previously met in Gold City, and that comparison finally calmed Xiao Lin’s emotions down slightly.

There was a big difference between mixed-blood and pureblood. Xiao Lin could never accept it if Gu Xiaoyue was a pureblooded alien, because it meant that Gu Xiaoyue might be a spy. In that case, everything she ever said to Xiao Lin would be false and deceptive.

However, there were different reasons why someone was a mixed-blood. For example, the mixed-blood orc in Gold City had been completely abandoned by his scum of a father, and the mixed-blood individual was no doubt innocent themselves.

“Lifewater only has an effect on humans. Even a mixed-blood can never absorb its effects. When the formulation was first developed, the possibility of non-human use was never considered,” Song Junlang continued.

Xiao Lin suddenly thought of something, and wondered. “Will the lifespan of a mixed-blood child be very short?”

The half-human orc Hammerhead seemed to have mentioned that his life was limited. Xiao Lin did not really pay much attention to that, but could it have been a coincidence that Gu Xiaoyue had only two years of life left?

Song Junlang sighed solemnly. “Yes, this problem is very common. In fact, many academies have already done their best to study this very important topic. It has been an unspoken rule since long ago that Earthlings cannot have children even if they marry a Norman.”

“But a lot of people don’t seem to comply with it,” Xiao Lin added.

Song Junlang snickered. “You’re right. Many people come to the New World with this in mind, and the academy can’t just force them to stop. In fact, it was initially encouraged, as having few people in the New World was a disadvantage, so it’s a good thing to be able to increase the population. Once the fatal genetic defect of being the product of a mixed-race was discovered, such things were then banned.”

“It’s quite pitiful for Gu Xiaoyue then. She said that she never even saw her parents before. Those people are lower than scum!” Xiao Lin had completely calmed himself down and was venting out on behalf of Gu Xiaoyue.

“Gu Xiaoyue’s words might not be as simple as that,” Song Junlang hesitated slightly when he said that.

“Is there something else?” Xiao Lin was shocked.

“I don’t know. I still can’t be sure, so I want to confirm it personally when I go back with you.” Song Junlang still refused to let the matter slide, and Xiao Lin’s stares were no longer effective anymore.

After practically confirming that Gu Xiaoyue was a mixed-race child, Xiao Lin’s anxieties had not yet been relieved. He was most worried about her remaining two years of life. According to Song Junlang, such congenital genetic defects had no cure, whether it was with Earth’s technology or Planet Norma’s spells.

In any case, that was no longer a problem that Xiao Lin, or even the current earth colonists for that matter, could solve. In addition, Song Junlang also suggested that Xiao Lin should not talk about this to Gu Xiaoyue for the time being. Of course, what Song Junlang has studied so far is actually the hybridization of genes, but his research objects were animals rather than humans. However, Xiao Lin was still quite hopeful of Song Junlang’s research.

“What race is Gu Xiaoyue’s blood mixed with?” Xiao Lin was curious.

“Elves.”

“Are you that certain?”

“Please, the academy has gene banks for all races. It’s not difficult to check this kind of thing.”

Xiao Lin hesitated. “Will you tell the academy about this? Or to put it another way, do you think the academy already knows about it? For example, through the physical examination we went through when enrolling?”

“Data like this can’t be discovered through a physical examination.” Song Junlang had something of a teasing look. “Do you want the academy to know? ”

“Of course not.”

“Looks like you’re pretty bright still.”

Xiao Lin rolled his eyes, “It’s easy to understand when you think about it. Mixed-race children aren’t uncommon, but it’s problematic if a mixed-race child grew up on Earth. Whatever the issues are, I don’t want Gu Xiaoyue to be affected by it.”

Song Junlang’s face turned serious too. “This is related to the law. I have no way of explaining it to you clearly, but you’re right. It is impossible for a mixed-race child to be on Earth. If the academy intervenes and investigates it thoroughly, many people will have to suffer, and... Ah, never mind, you didn’t tell anyone about it did you?”

“Of course not.”

“Then those who know about this will stop with you and I!”

Xiao Lin was a little irritated with Song Junlang’s several unfinished words, but it seemed that the latter had no intention of revealing further information until he investigated it. Soon, he reasoned that he had to start packing for his return to Earth and chased Xiao Lin away.

On the way back to the dormitory, Xiao Lin’s mind thought about a lot of things. He immediately dialed Gu Xiaoyue’s phone number after arriving at the dormitory. She had just finished the exam and it turned out that she had some time to spare. Xiao Lin did not directly venture into that topic, because whatever the case may be, Song Junlang’s purposeful plan to identify her blood was not something that was worth the encouragement.

Gu Xiaoyue’s expression was the same as before. She was indifferent and did not talk much. During that time, Xiao Lin tried to pay close attention to every inch of Gu Xiaoyue’s face through the screen. Gu Xiaoyue could not help but frown at his burning gaze and was not at all happy with him, so she ended the call much in advance.

Xiao Lin chuckled a few times. He could not just tell her that he was trying to notice any non-human characteristics on her. Unfortunately, he failed to find any characteristics.

Perhaps Song Junlang was interested in that aspect too. The mixed-blood orc has obvious orc characteristics, but Gu Xiaoyu had no such characteristics. Regardless of how he scrutinized her, she looked just like an ordinary human. Of course, Xiao Lin still had very little knowledge of mixed races, but there was no issue with that. Since Song Junlang refused to say anything, he could just head to the library and search it up.

Xiao Lin's exams had all ended and the results would be announced three days later. Those three days could already be considered a holiday for the freshmen, as there were no longer any courses scheduled. Other than a few basketball courts and a football field in Dawn Academy, entertainment facilities were scarce, and many did not know what else to do when it was time for them to relax. Those who were slightly more ambitious would treat the library as a place to pass their time, unless they wanted to re-enter the training halls again.

When Xiao Lin came to the magnificent library, he wrote the word 'mixed-race' in a special piece of paper. The magic flying carpet Xiao Lin sat on quickly brought him to the bookshelf he was looking for. Books related to mixed races occupied a whole row of bookshelves. Each of the bookshelves there were a couple of floors high, with hundreds of related books on display. From that, it was clear that the problem of mixed races did not just start when Earthlings first reached Planet Norma.

Chapter 400 - Examination Results Announced

Chapter 400: Examination Results Announced

Xiao Lin had a lot of free time after the exam, so he drew out a very thick book from the shelf before taking the magic flying carpet to the reading area.

He spent half an afternoon reading that, but the books about mixed races were all about Planet Norma's races. As a multi-racial world with humans, orcs, elves, and the like, the problem of mixed races would certainly exist, like how the combination of Chinese and foreign families on Earth had long become commonplace. In fact, many still found such mixed races hard to accept on Planet Norma, especially when it came to the more traditional individuals.

The reasons for that were very complicated. Some of them could be traced back to historical reasons. For example, it was almost impossible for the elves and the orcs because the two were completely opposed to each other in terms of aesthetics and values. Another example were trolls and human beings, who have long feuded in a perennial war. There were also other congenital reasons.

Xiao Lin frowned when he read that. Since the book itself was translated from Normese by Earthlings, those statements were very vague. After thinking for a while, he quickly understood that it was about genes. Of course, the concept of genes did not exist for the Normans, but they have gradually realized over the years that mixed-blood can easily affect the blood of the next generation.

There were advantages and disadvantages with that kind of influence, but it was difficult to judge accurately. In some areas, mixed-race children would be regarded as a symbol of uncleanness, and even some Normese countries had laws that disallowed inter-ethnic marriages.

Xiao Lin thought of Ibeiya again, the mixed-race who claimed to be half-Norman human and half-vampire. Although she did not explicitly mention anything when Xiao Lin asked about her childhood, he could tell that Ibeiya's identity led her to face discrimination everywhere when she was young. It was a very saddening situation, as she was forced to remain anonymous.

In any case, the impact of interracial marriages between Normans was limited to a person's own ability. However, Xiao Lin never saw the slightest statement of shortened life spans even though he went through the entire book.

In other words, only Earthlings and Normans—regardless of which Norman race—could produce offspring with a very short life expectancy. The few words that Song Junlang said to him made Xiao Lin overthink, as it was difficult to say that the issue was too serious or too minor.

If Earthlings want to gain a foothold in Planet Norma, doing so by themselves was simply not enough. They could not just get Earth's entire population to migrate all at once either. However, reproduction was a matter of course in order to perpetuate their rule in Planet Norma, especially since those who had reached Silver-rank were not able to return to Earth anymore.

So far, practically all the academies—including Dawn Academy—encouraged intermarriage among Earth's people. They did not support intermarriage between Earthlings and Normans, but did not restrict it either. Xiao Lin could even imagine how many mixed-blood children like Gu Xiaoyue and Hammerhead existed as of then.

After spending the whole afternoon in deep thought, Xiao Lin only managed to get a general understanding of the mixed-race situation in Planet Norma. During the subsequent two days, Xiao Lin continued to soak in the library but still came up with nothing. The issue of interracial marriage between Earthlings and Normans were not included within the books, which undoubtedly left him quite disappointed.

The announcement of their comprehensive exam results came on the back of Xiao Lin's failed investigation. The specific time for the announcement had long been announced on the forum. No one was loitering out anymore when the clock neared 10am. Whether they were feeling confident or not, they were all sitting in front of the computer and anxiously waited for the announcement of the results.

In fact, everyone had a rough idea of the actual combat assessment's results, but what really worried them was undoubtedly the written test. Among them, the multiple-choice and short-answer questions were automatically graded by the computer, but the final essay questions were manually graded, hence the delay for two or three days.

When the time on the automatic clock jumped to 10am, everyone quickly clicked open their files. After a few minutes, the dormitory doors all opened, with cheers and complaints coming from the corridors and lounges. The noise was a mix of happiness and sadness.

Xiao Lin looked at the computer screen, but his expression was a bit strange. There was no direct score for the test results and was instead replaced using grades. His scores were as followed:

Basic melee assessment:

Basic Swordsmanship: S

Basic Physique: S

Basic Body Techniques: S

Overall score: S

Comprehensive score of basic spells: B

Basic subjects written examination:

Multiple-choice: S

Short-answer questions: S

Essay questions: D-

Overall score: B+

The final result was that Xiao Lin successfully passed the exam. There was a reminder sign next to the score, indicating that the ranking of the freshman exam would be announced on the top of the forum in half an hour. Many people also knew that in advance. In order to encourage everyone to learn and cultivate their competitiveness, Dawn Academy adopted a ranking mechanism that any people detested.

Of course, Xiao Lin is not concerned about that. Although he expected to pass the assessment, the score puzzled him because the comprehensive actual combat assessment of basic spells was only given a B, which was not very high. Xiao Lin was very unhappy with that.

In comparison, the basic melee assessment—where the military’s examiners clearly demonstrated their intent to give him a hard time—still gave him the highest S evaluation after being impressed by Xiao Lin’s strength. Xiao Lin’s impression of them improved slightly, because at the very least, they dared to admit their failure, unlike the Mage Union who clearly held a bit of a grudge against him by giving him that B.

It did not matter that much though, because Xiao Lin did not pay too much attention to all that as long as he passed. Another puzzling aspect was the essay part of his written test, which was only given a D- evaluation. For the record, that was lower than the bare average! In the previous monthly exams, the lowest evaluation Xiao Lin had ever gotten was a C-, and a D evaluation further showed that his answers were way off the mark, or equivalent to rubbish if one were to describe it a little harshly. Was the D- evaluation alluding to the fact that Xiao Lin’s answers were worse than rubbish?

The high scores of the short answer and multiple-choice questions had reached the passing standard and pushed his final comprehensive evaluation higher, but Xiao Lin was still not very happy about it.

The announcement of the exam rankings had already begun. Xiao Lin clicked in and had a look too. The first place was actually Chen Dao, whose spell score was an S and the written tests were also an S. The second place was Cheng Ming, who got an S in the melee test, but only obtained an A+ in the written tests. Meanwhile, Gu Xiaoyue was at third, with everything a perfect S except for her spell evaluation, which was only A-.

How could Gu Xiaoyue's spell evaluation be inferior to Chen Dao's?

Absolutely ridiculous!

It went without saying that the forum exploded. As for Xiao Lin's own ranking, he was a long way off due to his written test scores and the B he got for his spell evaluation. At the moment however, fretting over his grades was the last thing on his mind and he dialed Gu Xiaoyue's number at once.