

Elite Mages' Academy Novel

Chapter 501 - Escort

Chapter 501: Escort

Liang Taibai looked at him deeply, falling silent before saying, "I understand. I'll immediately contact the palace and gather up those to be escorted. As for the monitors, I'll leave them to you."

Liang Taibai had naturally assumed that Xiao Lin was the leader of the twelve of them, but Xiao Lin smiled and said, "I will let Cheng Ming know. This time, he will need to lead the team."

"You said that you needed to remain for some private matters?"

"Yes. Have you ever heard about the decennial martial tournament for the dark races?"

Liang Taibai's expression slightly changed.

In the next half an hour, Xiao Lin explained the matter to Liang Taibai, of course leaving out secret matters such as the Shard of Creation. Ibeiya and her uncle had helped Xiao Lin a lot this time; that shard seemed to have doubled his attributes.

However, there was a limit to that trust and help, which was that it could not affect Dawn Academy, which was why Xiao Lin needed affirmation from Liang Taibai. Liang Taibai had been an ambassador here for almost ten years, so he was definitely more familiar with the political landscape.

Liang Taibai was more and more surprised when he heard it, and took a few minutes to think before sighing, "I won't ask about your relationship with the St. Claude clan. Dawn Academy has never really interacted with that clan, seeing as it has basically deteriorated into insignificance. No, to be precise, we've not really interacted much with any of the clans. We don't have any direct conflicts of interest with the dark races, so we just don't interfere with each other."

Xiao Lin asked, "Then would my help this time affect the academy's policies?"

"It would if it was back then, but it's fine now." Liang Taibai smiled as he sighed again. "This time the higher-ups have many opinions on how Rosa should be handled. Even if the military will negotiate with the rebels, I'm not really fond of it. It disturbs the balance, and will affect our resurrection towers within the Rosa Kingdom. The dark races are like the local mafia, which make the royal family the government. Now that the government is about to fail, gaining the help of the local mafia before the situation settles isn't a bad idea."

“So, you don’t have to worry about it affecting the academy, but I’m more worried about you. I know of the tournament. I was lucky enough to see it when I first came to the royal city ten years ago. It’s nothing like training in the academy—it’s real combat. No one cares even if people are killed, so you best be mentally prepared.”

“I’m aware of that as well.” Xiao Lin had benefited a lot from the combat training course in the new semester. Of course, he was not dumb; to him the worst that could happen was losing 20 years of his life. The royal city still had a resurrection tower.

...

Early the next morning, Liang Taibai summoned Xiao Lin, letting him know that those on the list had already been gathered, and the carriages and luggage had already been arranged. The efficiency left Xiao Lin speechless. Of course, the royal family knew that the city being taken over was an eventuality, and had been eagerly waiting to head to Dawn City.

Xiao Lin woke the monitors up from their sleep, naturally earning himself a lot of complaints, especially from those that were just rescued the day before. They had been planning on sleeping for the whole day in the comfortable beds.

Once everyone gathered in the embassy lounge, Xiao Lin said, “Don’t forget, our monthly examination still hasn’t ended! If we leave now, we can still make it to Dawn City. Everyone, pack up and get food. Then, we’re heading out!”

Xiao Lin completely assumed the role of an officer issuing commands. After yesterday’s rescue, most of them did not really mind it, but they definitely minded the decision.

“The monthly examination? Isn’t it canceled?”

“No one said it was canceled.”

“But we were just captured and tortured. Why do we still need to complete the assignment?”

“Ah, we weren’t really tortured.”

“Bullsh*t! All that food that’s meant for the pigs? How could that not be torture?”

“Xiao Lin, what are your thoughts?” Cheng Ming went over and whispered to Xiao Lin, “Do you really think the monthly examination needs to continue?”

“We are students of the academy, but don’t forget, stepping out of school, we are strictly speaking soldiers. If we have not received orders to stop, we need to complete the mission. I trust no one wants their records to show that they did not complete the mission,” Xiao Lin said.

The arguments died down a bit.

Xiao Lin did not want to waste time. “Don’t head to that flight destination we came from. I feel like the griffins there are a bit strange. It’s a refugee area as well, so we never know what could happen. This is the latest map I got from Ambassador Liang. You’ll depart from this small path. You might need to make a few detours, but it’s fine, you have enough time!

“I’ve given you the information on the royal family. They’re not very powerful, but those who lived in royalty aren’t stupid. On the road, don’t bother with them, no matter what they say. Remember, we’re just escorts, not ambassadors.”

“Xiao Lin, it’s the first time I’ve seen you nag so much,” Chen Dao teased jokingly.

“You?” Cheng Ming noticed something in Xiao Lin’s words. “Are you not coming with us?”

“I’ll stay behind to handle some matters.”

Han Manman questioned him, “Why? I’m sure you’re just planning on lazing off and enjoying yourself here!”

She had held back for so long that Xiao Lin almost thought she had changed her ways, but it seemed like that was not the case. Xiao Lin smiled. “Ambassador Liang agreed to this. If you have any questions, you can ask him.”

Everyone was silent.

Everyone was once again exasperated. Of course, it was not because Xiao Lin was staying back, but rather in admiration of Xiao Lin’s connections. Liang Taibai was basically the highest-ranking person locally, and could order everyone else around, but it seemed like that Ambassador was quite friendly with Xiao Lin.

“I’ll leave it all to you. If I can make it, I’ll definitely catch up!” After tidying everything up, Xiao Lin gave Cheng Ming a few last words before sending the large convoy out from the royal city’s southern gate.

There were a total of 25 people to be escorted. Those that had helped kidnap the monitors had been eliminated from the list. Other than those of royal blood, there were also a few of Rosa’s more reputable ministers. Other than that, they did not bring anything else. Even if the royals could not bear to part with their riches, Liang Taibai’s warnings left them with no choice.

Chapter 502 - The Essence of Blood

Chapter 502: The Essence of Blood

After the escort team left, Xiao Lin started his preparations for the tournament. A week remained until the tournament, but at noon, Ibeiya had run over to the embassy in search of Xiao Lin, telling him the time had been moved forward, and it would begin that night.

“The Argos clan suddenly notified everyone. They are the winners of the last tournament, so they have the right to do this. Since it’s only bringing it forward by a few days, most of the clans did not have any objections.” Ibeiya seemed to be in a panic. A few days were not much, but she worried that it could affect Xiao Lin’s matters.

Xiao Lin was quite suspicious. They had just rescued everyone from the Argos clan last night, and now the tournament was being moved forward. It was clear that the Argos clan was beginning to make some moves. Xiao Lin could not help but count his lucky stars, thankful the escort team had already left.

Xiao Lin consoled Ibeiya and got Liang Taibai to make a special pass for her. The embassy was Dawn Academy's own sovereign land within the Rosa Kingdom. Whoever took over the royal city, no one would dare barge inside unless they were ready to make an enemy of the academy.

Of course, the embassy was not a place anyone could get in. With the special pass, if anything happened once Xiao Lin left, Ibeiya and her uncle could still avoid disaster there.

That was part of Xiao Lin's repayment for the Shard of Creation. As for the martial tournament, Xiao Lin might have agreed to participate, but he actually did not have much confidence in winning.

Liang Taibai saw through Xiao Lin's worries, and consoled him. Liang Taibai's words were very simple, asking Xiao Lin to just focus on the participation. It had not been reported to the higher-ups. Even if he lost, Xiao Lin would not lose anything other than 20 years of his lifespan, so there was no pressure.

Other than that, Liang Taibai had kindly provided a batch of potions, such as physical and energy strengthening potions. Those potions could temporarily raise someone's basic attributes, and were basically stimulants. Xiao Lin was no stranger to those potions.

During the end of semester examinations, the student union had repeatedly emphasized the fact that the strengthening potions were not allowed to ensure the fairness of the examinations.

They were not at the academy, and no matter how he looked at it, the clans of the dark races were definitely not honorable, principled people. Liang Taibai told him, "I told you before, the dark races that stay here are not that strong, but they will all have some tricks during the tournament, such as potions or certain mysterious forbidden techniques. You need to be careful of all that."

"I understand. I'll just focus on participating."

When it got late, Xiao Lin headed to Ibeiya after taking four different strengthening potions. The four potions had increased each of his attributes by 10 points. It was a pity that the individual potions did not stack, but a 40 point increase was still good.

Ibeiya had dressed up properly that night, putting on a pure white gown with the bottom of her dress reaching the ground. She had light mascara and red lipstick. She also had a pair of high heels adorned with jewelry.

Planet Norma did not have high heels before the habits of Earth seeped into their culture after hundreds of years, slowly influencing the locals. At some point, the locals had also started to wear high heels as a status symbol, but it was of course limited to special occasions.

Ibeiya had always possessed both naivete and seductiveness. The make-up had taken away all her childishness, making her look even more mature and alluring.

Xiao Lin stared absentmindedly, and Ibeiya started to blush. However, she quickly let out a little shout as she almost fell, obviously not used to the heels. Xiao Lin shook his head, smiling as he said, "We're only going to a tournament, not a banquet."

The old man next to Ibeiya said, "You don't know this, but it's actually a banquet on top of a tournament. It's a banquet that only happens once in ten years, and it's our chance to show off the power of the St. Claude clan, so we naturally need to maintain the most basic of appearances so as to not disgrace the clan!"

"Fine! Fine!" Xiao Lin did not feel like arguing with the old man who was so fixated on past glories. He carefully helped Ibeiya the entire day, because her constant swaying was quite pitiful.

"This is a drop of blood essence left behind by the old master. I'll give it to you. I hope you don't disappoint us." The old man might have been a stiff stickler, but he was very careful in his preparations. Since Xiao Lin's weapons had all disappeared when they were kidnapped, the old man had prepared weapons for him. At the same time, he handed over a blood essence around the size of a fingernail.

Ibeiya had been bright red leaning against Xiao Lin. When she saw the amber red object, she had a pensive look on her face, and her expression dimmed. Looking at Xiao Lin's confusion, she explained, "This is father's blood essence. Please keep it. Each drop of blood essence can strengthen your attributes. If we use your method of calculation, it will increase by about twenty points."

"How long does the effect last?" Xiao Lin thought it was something like a potion.

"It lasts forever!" the old man said expressionlessly.

Xiao Lin was surprised. It increased 20 attribute points immediately. Something like that was more valuable than a weapon of any quality.

If it was not something Ibeiya's father left behind, Xiao Lin would have asked for more. Ibeiya saw through his thoughts and smiled, "Blood essence is something vampires leave behind when they die. It's a pity, but my father's skills were not great, or it would not have such a meager effect. Blood essence can't be taken lightly either; it can only be taken no more than once a year, or it will be hard to digest and cause side effects."

The value of 20 attribute points was different for each individual, but after drinking the potions, Xiao Lin would actually have had 300 attribute points for the first time. That was the level of a Bronze-ranked individual. Even if it was temporary, it was still a significant jump.

Xiao Lin looked at the distraught Ibeiya and could not help but feel sorry for her. Even though Lilith and Yu Mei had told him the girl had some hidden schemes, Ibeiya had yet to do anything to harm him, and he actually owed her a lot instead.

Regarding the blood essence, Xiao Lin did not need to ask to know that it was definitely left behind for Ibeiya by her father. She was probably to use it when she grew up.

Chapter 503 - Banquet

Chapter 503: Banquet

Even if it was a little strange to drink someone else's blood, Xiao Lin did not want to betray Ibeiya's kindness. He put the blood essence in his mouth; it was cool and smooth. Xiao Lin did not even swallow it yet when he felt the blood essence dissolve, turning into energy and flowing into his body.

The increase of 20 attribute points was hard to feel, but jumping from Black-Iron rank to Bronze, even if temporary, brought about large changes.

Xiao Lin immediately felt the mysterious changes. If a normal person got to Black Iron, they would be able to directly perceive and feel the various energies in the air. Getting to Bronze-rank from there was like gaining a deeper understanding of the energies within one's body.

At that moment, Xiao Lin did not need to enter meditation to feel the various energies flowing within his body. Elemental energy, death energy, and even natural energy. The distributions were not equal; elemental and death energies were more dense, while the natural energies signifying life were comparatively lesser.

It seemed like a change that was not very significant, but it meant that he could control his energy much better during the battles, allowing him to control his energy use better.

To Xiao Lin, temporarily stepping into Bronze rank had given him much more confidence for the tournament.

The location of the tournament was a castle in the outskirts. The lifespans of the dark races were longer than regular natives, and majestic, well-defended castles were usually where a lot of the clans stayed.

"This castle used to be the residence of a clan that had been exterminated a few hundred years ago. It was later occupied by the Argos clan. Of course, only they could really afford to buy it, and they use it for the martial tournament," Ibeiya explained.

"So the Argos clan is the host?"

"The host?" Ibeiya asked.

"Oh, I mean that they're the owners. It's fine, it's not important. What I mean to say is, will they have even more advantages?"

"They naturally will, but the Argos clan has been like this since the internal power struggle. Be careful of Valen!" Ibeiya's small face had a very serious look of warning.

"Are you very familiar with Valen?"

“I would not want to know someone like that.” Ibeiya suddenly looked away with a strange look on her face, and did not seem to have any intention of continuing.

Xiao Lin felt that it was strange, but did not continue asking.

They reached the castle after half an hour. The environment was not great around there. There was a cemetery near the castle, and with the dark night sky, standing in the deathly quiet cemetery sent chills down Xiao Lin’s spine.

“This is an abandoned cemetery.” Ibeiya consoled Xiao Lin, but the horrifying atmosphere was not really related to whether or not it was abandoned.

Xiao Lin nodded. “I can see that.” A lot of the gravestones were in disrepair, and multiple spots had clearly been dug out. Planet Norma had the habit of offering funerary objects as well. Even if it did not seem like a noble cemetery, the objects would still be worth a bit.

Of course, that was not the main point. Xiao Lin looked at a skeletal head not far away. Two large empty holes were staring in his direction. Xiao Lin could not help but look down on the grave robbers. They could have at least tidied up the bones.

The castle was large, even bigger than the Argos clan’s castle he had infiltrated. However, it was not tall, since the original owner did not like tall buildings.

It was very different from the horrifying atmosphere outside. The interior of the castle was extravagant, the most valuable jewels and statues were seen everywhere. Ibeiya told him that even the carpets on the floor were made from high-ranked and valuable beast fur.

It seemed like the dark races were the same as humans when it came to enjoying riches.

Xiao Lin had felt like Ibeiya’s attire was excessive initially, but he found out now that the one who really stood out was himself. The men were all in tuxedos, which was of course influenced by the colonists. The women were all scantily clad in extravagant clothes, some even completely baring their breasts, causing Xiao Lin and Ibeiya to blush at the sight.

Ibeiya even cursed softly in an unladylike manner. “Those cursed succubi! What right do they have to be here!

“Big Brother? You’re liking what you see!” When Ibeiya noticed where Xiao Lin’s attention was focused, her voice was suddenly raised.

“Ahem!” Xiao Lin immediately averted his gaze, seriously saying, “I was just trying to observe their strength so I’m prepared for later.”

However, even Xiao Lin was starting to get suspicious. It looked like an extravagant banquet. Would there really be a tournament? There were various liquors and delicious foods in the middle of the hall. Of course, the ‘delicious foods’ that were dripping with blood caused Xiao Lin to hold back the urge to vomit, and he turned around to leave.

“Welcome, St. Claude clan! My dear Ibeiya, I thought you would not come tonight. This is the biggest surprise I’ve had tonight!”

A flamboyant man raised his goblet as he walked over. The crowd automatically moved aside, and followed the man's gaze toward Ibeiya. However, everyone had already noticed them, though Xiao Lin had been the focus of attention instead of Ibeiya. Xiao Lin had casual clothes on, and stood out like a sore thumb in their eyes.

In truth, the old man had wanted to give Xiao Lin a change of clothes, but Xiao Lin had rejected it. He was not used to wearing suits, but the local Normese, donned in Earthen attire staring at him like he was garbage, caused Xiao Lin to shed a tear.

"That's Valen Argos!" the old man suddenly said. The old man had fallen silent since they stepped into the city. He was only a servant of the St. Claude clan, so he did not have any right to speak in public spaces. He had strictly adhered to that custom.

Xiao Lin composed himself, looking at the current leader of the Argos clan in shock. Valen was much younger than he had thought, since necromancers had the same lifespan as regular people. Valen's young voice and face were enough to surprise him.

Ibeiya was very careful toward the slowly approaching Valen. She retreated a few steps like a scared rabbit, furrowing her eyebrows as she said, "Valen Argos! You barely know me!"

"Oh, what are you saying, you're my future bride." Valen's face looked like he was chiding Ibeiya for being cheeky, but his eyes were cold, not matching his smile. He continued moving forward, and reached his hand out to touch Ibeiya's face.

Slap!

Valen's hand was slapped away by Xiao Lin.

Chapter 504 - Prologue

Chapter 504: Prologue

"Where did this child come from? You want a bride before your hair has even finished growing? Quit joking around!" Xiao Lin looked like he was joking, but his tone was sharp.

The entire banquet suddenly fell silent. When Xiao Lin called him a child, everyone, from the scantily clad succubi to the crowd talking about official matters, had turned around in shock, and all of their expressions changed.

Valen's gentlemanly smile froze on his face. The boy did not just look young. He was actually quite young. Youth was never an advantage in the dark world. The youth were often met with undisguised mockery in these circles, which was why Ibeiya had not received any attention when she came in.

Of course, Xiao Lin did not understand all that, nor did he know that his one sentence had managed to start a flame in Valen's heart. However, even if he knew, Xiao Lin would not have cared, so he was very annoyed at that moment as well.

Future bride? A fiancée!

What a joke!

Xiao Lin had rejected the old man's suggestion of an arranged marriage because he did not want to be a pedophile. He could not bear someone else being a pedophile with Ibeiya's even more. It was also obvious from Ibeiya's uncomfortable expression that she was not happy being that person's fiancée.

Yes? Hold on!

Xiao Lin was just about to console the uncomfortable Ibeiya, but he suddenly noticed a sly smile on her little face. There was no trace of awkwardness or frustration.

"Big Brother, I have nothing to do with this boy. He was the one who's been declaring that I'm his new bride, which was why I left Rosa, but it's all okay now." Ibeiya moved over and held Xiao Lin's arm. She affectionately nuzzled her head against Xiao Lin's skin.

Xiao Lin was speechless.

Valen was incredibly angry. The intention behind Ibeiya's actions was very obvious. He did not even need to continue asking—he would just be humiliating himself. He took a deep breath, the young man forcing himself to calm down. Then, he revealed a warm smile.

"So you found someone you like. That's a pity, but it's no matter. That way, the St. Claude clan will finally have someone to carry on the family. As the first clan from ancient times, I had hoped to see their resurgence. That's right, could I know who this lucky young man is?"

The tension in the hall could be cut with a knife's edge, but it was quickly diffused by Valen's laughter. Only, the clamor had noticeably died down, and everyone still had their eyes fixed on the commotion.

Xiao Lin had doubts in his heart; the patience and steadiness that man had shown was completely in contrast to the young look on his face. To any opponent, it was quite the trap.

"His name is Xiao Lin," Ibeiya said honestly, the change in Valen's expression had also caused her to be even more careful.

"Xiao Lin?" Valen's was confused.

Xiao Lin narrowed his eyes. Valen might have never met him, but could Valen have never heard of him? Xiao Lin refused to believe that. At least, after the destruction from that night, Valen could easily have figured out who did it. Xiao Lin never expected to be able to hide the fact. After all, with his status here, no one would dare do anything to him easily.

However, Valen was able to feign ignorance, and had smiled toward Xiao Lin. "If that's the case, are you here to represent the St. Claude clan? I hope you're happy with my treatment."

Valen stopped speaking, and turned around to leave, a very cold smile on his face.

“Big Brother, did I cause you trouble?” Ibeiya said pitifully.

“It’s alright.”

Xiao Lin replied, though he knew for sure he had offended him. However, thinking about it, he had already ensured that they would not get along after sneaking into the Argos clan’s castle.

The banquet continued, but no one dared to make too much noise anymore. Everyone seemed to have noticed the abnormal atmosphere, and the hushed whispers all involved pointing at Ibeiya and Xiao Lin. Xiao Lin had managed to make out some words, but those words that were said in languages that were not Normese were not understood by Xiao Lin.

However, something was already obvious; no one came forward to greet Ibeiya. Even if Xiao Lin knew about the St. Claude clan’s decline, as a clan that had been around since ancient times, it was quite a sad sight to see them in this state.

Ibeiya did not mind that much. Instead, she pulled Xiao Lin to a corner and introduced some notable opponents to him and their clans.

“Speaking of that, how long will the banquet continue for?” Xiao Lin asked.

“It will continue until midnight. The tournament is the last event.”

“Event?”

Ibeiya sighed. “Not everyone who’s here will participate in the tournament. Some clans know they do not have the strength, and will voluntarily withdraw. After all, we’re not like you guys, and only have one chance in life. We really die if we’re killed.”

“Alright, then where will the festivities after the food be held?”

“Here.”

Xiao Lin remained silent.

“There will probably be some ceremonies later. I hope you aren’t bothered by them.”

With the boring banquet coming to an end, Xiao Lin quickly found out what those ceremonies were. Under Valen’s order, a few bound humans were brought inside and forced to kneel. After that, a few robed persons came in and started to chant.

After a few minutes, they suddenly took out their swords and stabbed into the captives’ hearts. As large amounts of blood started to flow, the entire hall erupted. Everyone was in a fervor of excitement as they shattered the glasses in their hands and started to pray in an incomprehensible language.

Xiao Lin had a bad look on his face, not expecting this. Ibeiya seemed to have expected it, and said softly, “Those are some homeless people captured from the streets. The royal guards would not

care about them. I know it's not good, but it's tradition to offer the fresh blood of humans to the Dark God."

The fervor lasted for about a minute. Once all the food and drink had been taken away, only the unmoving bodies remained. The air was saturated with the thick smell of blood, but a lot of the ones present licked their lips at the smell.

"According to the rules of our ancient god," Valen stood up again, saying loudly, "As the heir of the Argos clan, I announce the tournament to formally begin!

"Following the usual rules, we will randomize the pairings for the tournament after the list of challengers has been submitted, but doesn't everyone think that's very troublesome? We live in the darkness; our ancestors have walked this world much longer than humans have. Why do we need to follow these rules that have come from them?"

Chapter 505 - Start

Chapter 505: Start

Ibeiya's expression changed. She whispered into Xiao Lin's ear, "This method of deciding a leader through a tournament was set forth by the Rosa Kingdom's founding king, and was decided in exchange for protecting us."

"What is he planning on doing?" Xiao Lin looked at the outwardly calm Valen, who could not hide the fervor in his eyes. The young man wants to go against tradition. Even if it was just a small insignificant matter, it was still enough to display his wild ambition.

"Valen! Are you afraid of competition?" someone mocked. The Argos clan might be the most powerful, but not every clan was afraid of them.

"It's fine if you're scared, you just need to give us your right to rule. We won't have any objections. Oh, I almost forgot, the one with the right to rule is the last clan leader of Argos, not you," someone followed, their tone full of mockery.

"Oh? Scared?" Valen was not angry, instead looking very surprised before he started laughing softly, the volume increasing until it drowned out everyone's voices.

After a long while, everyone quieted down and Valen finally said in a cold tone, "I was going to follow up with the rules of this tournament. It will be much simpler, and as the last leader, I will be the one challenged. Those that are here, anyone at all, can challenge me directly if they wish to. There will be no limit to the number of challengers, nor the time! How about it?"

After a moment of silence, a wave of shock and excitement resounded. It was basically a group assault, everyone against Valen alone. It was straightforward and saved a lot of time.

"If you lose, how will we continue?" someone asked.

“That would be your own problem. If I died, I would be unable to interfere anyway.” Valen’s words shot through everyone’s hearts.

“How arrogant!” Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows. Valen either wanted to die or did not think he could lose.

“What is Valen’s skill level like?” Xiao Lin looked back, asking the old man behind Ibeiya.

The old man said, “His skills should be around Bronze in rank, or maybe lower. He is the youngest of the Argoses, so he can’t be that strong.”

In truth, the old man had already said it before, Argos was a young necromancer. His current abilities would only allow him to control low-leveled undead or spells at most. Necromancy was something that took time to master.

The rest of them were suspicious as well, but they did not care about Valen’s life. Anything said during the banquet could not be taken back, or he would be shunned by everyone, and he could not hope for anyone to listen to him.

That was why the moment Valen’s words ended, it signaled the start of the tournament. At least ten of them rushed forward. It was not only those who spoke up against Valen earlier; there were many more who rushed forward just to try. In the face of power and ambition, everything was secondary.

The fight started without any foreshadowing.

Xiao Lin did not go forward immediately, and many were the same as him, wanting to check out Valen’s skill first, but holding back caused many of their hearts to almost pop out of their chests.

Facing the dozen or so people rushing at him, Valen’s smile did not change. He raised his hand and threw out a green ball of light—the Soul Disintegration spell!

Xiao Lin immediately recognized it, but he was not sure if Valen was the one in the prison who had kidnapped them.

The rest of them knew the strength of the Argos clan’s Soul Disintegration spell, and they had already come prepared for it. They either shot out spells to counter it or had their own defensive spells, while the more nimble ones chose to dodge. Other than two of them who got hit due to their lack of skill, the group dispersed, surrounding Valen and cutting off all his escapes.

“Valen! You’re dead!”

A dozen weapons, all with their own glows of energy pierced into Valen. After that, Valen slowly fell, his smile still remaining on his face. They thought the guy was up to something, but he had been slain so easily.

Everyone else looked at each other, and one of them turned around, coughing dryly as he said, “Since Valen is dead, then are we just supposed to simply fight each other next...”

“Ah! Careful!”

Someone shouted out. It seemed like they were from the same clan as the person who spoke earlier. However, his words were a bit too slow, and the man was stunned to find a large hole on his chest, clearly the result of Soul Disintegration.

“Really! I just gave all of you some appetizers. Did you need to be so excited?” Valen had stood up from the ground again, stretching his neck. His wounds seemed to have disappeared.

There was a sudden silence, and the fighting had stopped because of that. Valen’s strange body was writhing. Other than the Soul Disintegration, his hands had turned into sharp weapons, easily piercing through everyone’s hearts.

In just a few minutes, half of those on the stage had collapsed in a puddle of blood. The rest of them quickly retreated, but had more or less sustained injuries. The tables had been turned in a flash.

“Impossible!” everyone shouted out in shock.

Those that attacked had all done so with the intent to kill, and had seen several holes pierced through Valen. Seeing him stand up as if nothing had happened was something that no one knew how to deal with.

“Is Valen a vampire?” Xiao Lin suddenly asked.

“No. Even if he had the constitution of a vampire, he could never stand up after something like that.” The old man replied. He knew what Xiao Lin wanted to ask, and added, “Not every vampire possesses regenerative abilities as strong as Her Highness.”

Ibeiya’s regenerative abilities were indeed capable of being called rising from the dead, but Xiao Lin knew that, no matter what, the girl had ancient blood in her veins. No matter how much the clan had fallen, her blood remained, so her regeneration had an explanation.

However, who was Valen? Necromancers usually had horrible constitutions, and younger necromancers were all humans, so there was no way they had regeneration, let alone something like resurrection.

Xiao Lin’s face was very serious. He had remembered something, but did not dare be certain, so he decided to quietly look on.

The battle was still going on. Even if the sudden resurrection had shocked everyone, there were quickly more challengers who surged forward. Even if he stood back up, Valen’s skills did not seem like much, and the ones who were killed were just unprepared.

Chapter 506 - Start Of The Battle

Chapter 506: Start Of The Battle

As the chaotic battle progressed, Xiao Lin brought Ibeiya a bit further away to keep her from getting hurt. He fixed his gaze onto Valen, the alarm in his heart already at the maximum.

With more people jumping into the battle, spells started to fly within the hall, but the power levels were not that great. The castle was made with very good materials as well, and had very strong anti-magic properties. Xiao Lin understood why the tournament was held there.

Valen's situation did not seem good, but his skills had caused some surprised expressions. The old man next to Ibeiya said that, as a necromancer, Valen's speed and spellcasting were all much higher than usual.

However, since it was a group assault, with so many of them fighting Valen alone, after about ten minutes, the injuries on Valen's body started to pile up. A lot of those who were attacking used black magic, which had a very strong decaying aura. Valen's right hand was already half-rotten, revealing white bones underneath his flesh, which made for a shocking sight.

Xiao Lin's eyebrows started to twitch. He noticed that, even though Valen was in a bad situation, his face remained calm. That hateful smile never left his face. The most important thing was that Valen's breath was not the slightest bit erratic, causing Xiao Lin's unease to increase, because that meant Valen had not used his full power.

Valen was a necromancer. Necromancy was different from elemental magic, but the principles were still the same. Casting rapidly was a huge burden, and jeopardized success rate and accuracy as well, but even with Valen's heavy injuries, he still maintained a high level of casting.

However, it did not change the results. After a few minutes, Valen once again collapsed in blood. This time, they did not let their guards down, worrying that he would fake his death again. So, they sent a few spells at his dead body, causing flesh and blood to fly. It took until the corpse that remained did not even have a single piece of flesh left for them to stop!

The hall was once again excited. It seemed like a lot of them could not accept a young man like Valen standing at the top. However, the cheering lasted for less than a minute. Under the ugly expressions of everyone, the remaining flesh on the ground started to gather together and fuse. In just ten seconds, Valen once again stood in front of everyone with a strange smile on his face.

"Impossible!"

Resurrecting again dealt a huge impact on everyone mentally, the noise once again stopping in the hall. In skill and in numbers, they were absolutely at an advantage, but no one dared to advance at that moment.

"Big Brother, how is he coming back? He definitely died just now!" The worry began to show on Ibeiya's forehead.

"Ibeiya, help me do something." Xiao Lin looked around coldly before whispering into Ibeiya's ear. Thinking about it, he said to the old man, "You leave with Ibeiya first!"

The old man did not understand, but Ibeiya had forcefully pulled him aside. It was quite chaotic within the hall, and after Valen resurrected again, he started another attack and killed several

people. That was why no one noticed Ibeiya's movements, but Valen sensed it, and his gaze quickly shifted over. Ibeiya's white dress caught his eye.

Whoosh!

A Soul Disintegration spell flew over. Because Xiao Lin was far away, he was slow to react, but the old man had been on alert and blocked the green ball of light. The cost was half his arm.

"Your Highness, leave!" the old man shouted.

"But!"

"Hurry up and leave!" Xiao Lin hurried over, smiling. "Relax, I'm still here!"

Ibeiya nodded, understanding that it was not the time to be indecisive, and she rushed out of the city. Thankfully, there were no guards. Valen watched Ibeiya leave, and looked a bit angry. He quickly regained composure, as if saying that she could run tonight, but would not be able to escape forever.

"What did you ask Her Highness to do?" The old man still did not know what happened, but he felt like Xiao Lin did not just want Ibeiya to run away.

Xiao Lin opened his mouth, but he noticed that Valen's gaze was still fixed on them, so his words turned into those of consolidation. "Don't worry, I got Ibeiya to seek refuge at the embassy. Nothing will happen to her."

Xiao Lin was actually wondering if he should leave as well. His greatest guarantee behind being able to help Ibeiya in this tournament was the fact that he was a colonist, and would only lose twenty years of his life in the worst case. With his wealth, buying two bottles of novice Lifewater was not a big deal.

However, he was starting to have an unsettling thought, which was why he was hesitating. Yet, he was very clear that, if he left at that moment, then no one would be able to stop Valen. The young necromancer would completely subdue the dark clans here, and would be the absolute power behind the dark races in the royal city. Xiao Lin did not believe that Valen would have any goodwill toward Dawn Academy.

That was why the best choice was to settle everything there. It would help him, Ibeiya, and Dawn Academy eliminate any future problems!

If Xiao Lin's guess was right, then he still had a chance to win. At least, in terms of skill, Valen was not unbeatable. The man was still too young; it was just the strange resurrection ability that caused everyone else to be unwilling to make a move.

"Is this the power of demons?"

"No, it might be the power of the ancient King of Darkness!"

"I heard that only the King of Darkness's blood can resurrect without limit, but the St. Claude clan has already fallen. Even their bloodline is extremely rare now."

“Could Valen be the new King of Darkness?”

...

The discussion in the hall suddenly died down. When they understood that it would be hard to kill Valen, the thought of submitting to the strong naturally took over. Since they could not fight him, they naturally could only follow him.

Just as the idea started to take hold and everyone was hesitating, they noticed that the stranger who came with Ibeiya had slowly walked forward.

Xiao Lin finally decided to stop being a spectator. Valen still did not suspect anything, and he needed to earn enough time. Valen was not surprised that Xiao Lin walked forward, and even moved a few steps forward himself, coldly smiling. “Since you’re Ibeiya’s fiancée, then are you representing St. Claude to challenge me?”

“Challenge? No no no, challenging is done by the weak toward the strong. You’re strong? Ahem, that joke is not funny at all!”

“Are you trying to provoke me?”

Chapter 507 - Resurrection

Chapter 507: Resurrection

“Are you trying to provoke me?”

Valen focused his attention on Xiao Lin, slowly walking forward. As he walked past others, even if Valen looked like he was full of holes, no one dared to touch him at that moment. Everyone was waiting to see how Xiao Lin would react.

“You seem very comfortable.” Xiao Lin could not see any rage coming from Valen’s face.

“Aren’t you the same? You’ve been observing me the whole time. It seems like you’ve already figured out how to deal with me?”

“No, no, I’ve seen many like you. I’m not exaggerating when I say it would not be a problem for me to kill two of you with one hand.”

“Oh, you’re quite a jokester, but I can’t seem to understand the jokes from your world.” Valen did not bother hiding anything, revealing that he knew who Xiao Lin was.

Xiao Lin understood why Valen did that. The others did not know Xiao Lin was a colonist. Colonists still held a very special and high position in most of the dark races’ eyes, but if Valen killed Xiao Lin easily, then Valen’s power in the royal city would be solidified.

“Right, have you fixed up your home?”

“Yes?”

“I heard that your house got thoroughly ransacked by some intruders. The safety in the royal city has really been a mess lately, but don’t you worry; I’ve already relayed the message to Dawn City, and they’ll send a big troop over later.” Xiao Lin retorted, not showing any weakness.

The crowd stirred. Xiao Lin’s status as a colonist was already enough to astonish them, and the news Xiao Lin had just revealed was even more of a blow. First was Xiao Lin’s status, next was the troops Dawn Academy was sending over. What were they for? To fight the rebels? Or just to ensure the safety of the colonists in the city? Or is it to fight against the dark powers?

“Ah, why is it different from what I’ve heard? Dawn City has already sent someone to talk to me, and even asked for me to be in charge of the city in the future.”

“Huh, the dean did not mention that the last time we ate together.”

...

The scene was very strange; neither of them made a move, and instead seemed to be chatting like friends, puzzling everyone. Yet, the venom in their words got thicker.

After a moment, they seemed to have run out of things to say. After a brief silence, Valen suddenly laughed, “Are you stalling for time? Did that little Ibeiya run off to get help?”

“You’re stalling for time too.” Xiao Lin answered the question with another, “Are you gathering your strength? Even though you’ve revived yourself after a few fatal blows, the timing of your resurrections has been getting longer. Your resurrections are probably quite taxing to you.”

Valen’s expression changed for the first time, and the others who were on the verge of giving up suddenly had a look of realization, and started to look at Valen differently. That mysterious resurrection skill originally had them stumped and near giving up, but if it was like Xiao Lin said, then the resurrection was not absolute.

“Haha, you look so nervous. I was just joking with you.” Xiao Lin saw that Valen’s expression was starting to get dangerous, and immediately switched the topic. He only wanted to stall for time and buy enough time for Ibeiya; only then, would he guarantee his victory.

However, Valen started to seem impatient, especially with the unkind gazes that were being shot at him, waiting for someone to make the first move.

“You’re right, but wrong at the same time. I am gathering up my energy, but not in preparation of reviving, since there’s already no way you can kill me!” Valen once again spoke.

His voice suddenly turned raspy, and his robes seemed to be fluttering in the wind. Xiao Lin felt like something was off, and did not hesitate as he charged forward. The weapon the old man prepared for him was of Bronze rank, and was said to be a treasure of the St. Claude clan. The black tip of the sword hid a strong poison.

Swish!

The tip of the sword pierced right into Valen's body. Valen did not even make a move to dodge, but he did not die immediately that time. Instead, he held onto the blade, smiling coldly as he said, "How amusing; that sword must be the one that the St. Claude clan stole from us a century ago. You're actually using something like that against me!"

Pang!

The sword had been snapped by Valen in a flash. Xiao Lin looked back and glared at the old man, whose face was full of shock, but it was not the time to blame anyone.

Xiao Lin did not have any intentions of retreating with only half a blade in hand. Instead, he did not hesitate to activate the Ruin state. Since he was already at Bronze rank, he got an even bigger surge of power entering Ruin.

Flame Sword Aura!

Xiao Lin channelled intense flames into the sword. The broken tip could no longer withstand such a strong surge of power, and the blade quickly turned bright red. Xiao Lin then immediately withdrew, heading to a corner to hide.

Boom!

An intense explosion was seen; the sword that could not contain the flame energy exploded as shards shot out in all directions, completely mutilating Valen's body. Even the ones around who could not put up a defense in time were harmed.

However, no one planned on doing anything to Xiao Lin at that time, everyone's gazes were fixed on the chunks of flesh on the ground. After a few seconds, the flesh started to slowly move and gather together.

"It's slower! The speed really got slower!" someone shouted. Xiao Lin's earlier statement was confirmed.

Facing Valen, who resurrected again, they no longer had the same fear as earlier. The lack of knowledge was the scariest thing. They might still not understand the reason behind it, but being able to counter it meant there was nothing to be afraid of.

Only Xiao Lin sighed in a corner. That was not the result he wanted. Valen's resurrection speed did decrease each time he died, but at the rate it was decreasing, Xiao Lin did not know how long it would take until Valen no longer had the strength to resurrect. Xiao Lin knew it clearly, having already experienced it once, but he was not going to say it out loud.

"Everyone, charge!"

"Kill him!"

"Valen has exhausted all his strength!"

...

The situation that was already settled once again erupted into chaos. Valen's smile finally disappeared from his face. He did not attack right after resurrecting, instead floating in mid-air. He had actually been gathering his energy. Even if it was interrupted by Xiao Lin, he decided to not wait any longer.

Chapter 508 - Valen's Transformation

Chapter 508: Valen's Transformation

Xiao Lin, who had wanted to continue his attack suddenly felt a sense of unease. Activating Ruin had increased his perception dramatically, and he immediately decided to fall back. The others had thought Xiao Lin was scared and silently felt happy. After all, the fight would ultimately decide who had the right to rule.

Roar!

Valen suddenly let out an animalistic roar in mid-air, the roar resounding throughout the banquet hall like thunder. Even the walls that could withstand strong spells started to shake.

A green light started to rise from Valen's body, and green circles started to ripple outward. An unfathomable power surged out from his body like a violent volcanic eruption. Suddenly, every corner was filled with enough power to kill.

In the veil of green light, Valen was rapidly undergoing a shocking change. His skinny, human body started to grow larger and taller, and his muscles rapidly expanded, resulting in his shirt ripping apart, revealing his bare upper body. His shocking muscles looked hard as steel, even reflecting light like it was a metal. It was hard to believe that he was once a weak necromancer.

The most terrifying things were two pitch-black, half-meter long horns that started to grow out from Valen's forehead, and an oval shaped object grew right in the middle. He started to look like a devil staring at everyone.

Boom!

The transformed Valen waved his hand, and a streak of green light shot out, turning a few that were nearby into powder.

"Soul Disintegration?"

"No! How could Soul Disintegration be so strong?!"

A few shocked voices could be heard, and Valen laughed coldly. "I'd rather call this skill my Disintegration Ray. Haha, if you're smart enough, you should know what this skill does!"

Xiao Lin turned around and at the old man; the old man with a broken arm was noticeably dispirited. The Soul Disintegration from earlier was still affecting him, but he still tried his best to explain, "The Argos clan is also an ancient family. Soul Disintegration is a cruel spell that was

invented back then, but the spell had long since deteriorated after being passed down so many times. If Valen isn't lying, then what he is using is probably the original spell from back then! It's a spell that kills the soul directly!"

The old man urgently said, "Xiao Lin! The situation has gone out of control. We need to leave quickly. You're no longer a match for him!"

Xiao Lin's greatest trump card was his resurrection ability as a colonist, so he was not afraid of Soul Disintegration, but the Disintegration Ray was definitely terrifying.

Xiao Lin was shocked. Just as the old man said, if the Disintegration Ray really did directly kill the soul, then it was a natural counter to the colonists! For Valen Argos to do so much to acquire that spell, his sights definitely did not lie only on that tiny little royal city.

"What's the deal with how Valen looks? Don't tell me he's being possessed by some old ancestor or broke some old seal, returning to an ancient form?" Xiao Lin could not help but crack a joke despite the tense atmosphere.

"The Argos clan is a clan of necromancers. Even back then, necromancers were already like this. They have nothing to change back into!" The old man was not joking around.

"Fine, I understand, he doesn't look like a necromancer at all, so you don't know what's happening?"

"Yes..."

"Wow, it's rare to hear that from you."

Xiao Lin pursed his lips, looking back at the demon-like Valen. He temporarily stopped after killing a number of the other guests in a terrifying manner. After all, his end goal was not to kill everyone. He then shouted out in a deep voice, "Kneel down and swear your allegiance to me! Or die!"

"Kneel down and swear your allegiance to me! Or die!"

"Kneel down and swear your allegiance to me! Or die!"

"Kneel down and swear your allegiance to me! Or die!"

...

The thunderous voice echoed, carrying a strange sort of magic. Everyone who heard it had a look of struggle on their face before finally shuddering as they slowly knelt down.

"Hey, what's going on! Are you trying to betray Her Highness Ibeiya?!" Xiao Lin did not feel anything, but he turned around to look at the one-handed old man with a look of struggle on his face. His legs were shuddering, looking like he was about to kneel down.

"I-I can't hold it back. Cur-curses, des-despicable!" The old man panted, as if suffering from an intense pressure, not even managing to speak properly.

“It’s useless! As long as you have the blood of the dark races in your veins, then you won’t be able to stand up against this power!” Valen was very happy with what he had caused. In the kneeling crowd, Xiao Lin naturally stood out, and Valen’s sights quickly landed on him.

“Ahem, it seems like you’re stronger than I thought. Whatever, I won’t interfere in the matters of the dark races. I’ll take my leave now. Goodbye?”

“Xiao Lin! Did you think I would let you go after you destroyed my castle?” Valen suddenly shouted with rage.

“Ahem, so you admitted it. I thought you’d be more stubborn than that.” Valen finally admitted that he had known that it was Xiao Lin who infiltrated his castle, so Xiao Lin naturally dropped all pretenses, coldly smiling as he said, “I’m very curious; if you have so much power, why didn’t you stop me when I was in the castle?”

“If he didn’t stop me, if the preparations were already done then...” Regretfully, Valen’s words stopped there.

“I heard you were the most exceptional among those your age in Dawn Academy! If it’s age, then I should be the same as you. Let’s test it out and see who’s stronger. Is it you outsiders from a foreign world, or me, who inherited the ancient dark bloodline!” Valen said wildly before throwing a sword toward Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin was shocked. Valen’s words were not hard to understand; he definitely was the most exceptional among Dawn Academy’s new students, but that was the internal business of the academy. How could a small-fry necromancer like him know about that?

“I’ll return this to you. I don’t want anyone to say I’m bullying someone without a weapon!”

Stuck on the floor was the Holy Sword that Xiao Lin had gotten Lu Renjia to make. It was a weapon with Gold-ranked destructiveness.

Chapter 509 - The Fight With Valen (1)

Chapter 509: The Fight With Valen (1)

Xiao Lin was naturally happy getting his weapon back. Before that, neither the weapons he stole or the sword Ibeiya gave felt right. After all, those weapons were all meant for those who primarily focused on necromancy, and were not meant for someone like Xiao Lin.

“Then why don’t you return that thing on your finger to me as well!” Xiao Lin said. On Valen’s right hand was a silver ring.

Xiao Lin was not very certain before that, but he could more or less confirm it now that the ring was his spatial ring made of perfect grade starmetal. It was a priceless treasure.

Valen answered with a smile. Of course, Valen naturally knew what a treasure it was, and would not return it. However, Xiao Lin knew as well that the seal that Silverlight had set up before she died could only be unlocked by himself. No one else would be able to use that ring unless their mental strength was greater than Silverlight's.

"If that's the case, I'll have to kill you to get it back!"

"Are you capable of that?"

"How would I know unless I try?"

Xiao Lin once again activated his Ruin state. After his total attributes reached the Bronze rank, another noticeable change was that his control over his Ruin state had improved. He now had the freedom of entering and releasing it as he pleased without using any additional strength.

Disintegration Ray!

A green light shot out from Valen's hand, but Xiao Lin knew to not get hit by that horrific attack. His speed was explosive under Ruin state. He already had over 60 points in his speed at Bronze rank, and after the boost from Ruin, it was at least 100 points.

Xiao Lin left a slew of afterimages in the banquet hall, and appeared behind Valen in less than half a second. He was high in the air, and slashed at Valen in midair, but chose his most simple and practical skill: Slashing!

As the first skill he mastered, he could double the power it unleashed. It was a weak skill, but under such a dramatic boost of speed and strength, it contained immense power.

Simply explosive!

Xiao Lin was very happy with the sharpness of the Holy Sword. The tip of the sword sliced through Valen's right shoulder. Even if Valen's expanded muscles had increased his strength multiple times, Xiao Lin still did not feel any hint of resistance. It was just like slicing a knife through butter. Blood flowed as the right part of Valen's body was sliced in half.

Flame Sword Aura!

Flame Ball!

Xiao Lin did not hesitate after his attack landed, and converted all his attributes to Intelligence before unleashing his magical sword aura and spell at the same time. The entire hall suddenly heated up at that moment, and when Valen's body was engulfed in the flames, his pressure suddenly stopped, allowing the crowd that was kneeling down enough time to run away.

However, Valen only remained in the flames for a dozen or so seconds before his mutilated body was regenerated. He then let out a strange laugh, "Trying to burn my body with flame magic? How naive!"

"Sh*t! Is the resurrection speed faster than before? Is it not gone yet?" Xiao Lin could not help but glance at the entrance. Outside the entrance was where Ibeiya fled to earlier.

“Your strength and speed have increased. You really are surprising, you know? This is the first time I’m trying out this state, so meeting an opponent like you really is fun!”

Valen was just gauging Xiao Lin’s skills earlier. When Valen regenerated, he wasted no time in starting his attack. He no longer relied only on magical attacks, instead using those fists that were filled with scales to attack, looking like he wanted to smash Xiao Lin into pieces.

The Holy Sword collided persistently with the demonic fists, and the heavy sounds of the impacts echoed in the hall. Their afterimages constantly moved around among the increasingly strong flames. Valen was very quick with his attacks, and would suddenly shoot out Disintegration Rays.

However, Xiao Lin’s reactions were not slow either, and under the Ruin state Xiao Lin was like a killing machine. His cold gaze caught all of Valen’s movements.

Xiao Lin had exhausted all the sword techniques that he had mastered. In terms of combat experience, Xiao Lin definitely had the advantage, and had killed Valen another two times, but Valen quickly revived after both those times. In this state, Valen’s revival speed was horrifying. Even if it slowed down each time, he still revived in a matter of seconds.

On the other hand, as the limit of Xiao Lin’s Ruin state approached, the balance would quickly soon be broken.

“Why aren’t you using that dragon’s breath skill!” Valen suddenly shouted.

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly. He could definitely kill Valen if he used it, but it would be useless and only speed up the end of Ruin state. However, his mouth could not bear to spare Valen, and he mocked, “There’s no need. It looks like, even if you used some way to change your body, your transformation isn’t complete yet. Are you trying to hide your power? Or is this all to your power?”

The two of them were on even footing, but Valen’s own strength could be better.

Valen’s face was quite ugly; it really was not his best condition. Xiao Lin’s sudden appearance had thrown his plans into disarray, causing him to not be able to gather enough power before entering this state, affecting his skills. However, he would naturally not admit to it.

Xiao Lin’s heart was also in misery. If he could not take away that resurrection cheat, he would have no way to defeat Valen. All he could do was stall his time with his words, which was why he suddenly increased the distance between them, shouting, “You’ve probably seen that I can’t maintain my current state. You’re being very calculative when you fight. Are you planning on defeating me after my peak? I can’t believe someone from the Argos clan could be so weak!”

Xiao Lin could see that Valen was a very conceited person. He was very young, and had the matching skill. However, he could not stand being mocked. Valen craved acknowledgement, and craved for others to tremble and submit to his might.

Valen really did get furious, but the angrier he got, the more holes that appeared in his attacks. Xiao Lin could only hope that his Ruin state would be able to last for long enough that he could deal even more fatal blows with the new holes. Slowing down the speed of resurrection enough for him to escape.

Before Ibeiya completed her task, Xiao Lin knew escaping and hiding was the best plan. Otherwise, even if he was not hit by Valen's Disintegration Ray, if his guess was right, Xiao Lin might not even get a chance to resurrect if he died.

Chapter 510 - The Fight With Valen (2)

Chapter 510: The Fight With Valen (2)

Valen was furious, but his attacks did not get sloppy because of it. The man might be conceited, but he did have power. Valen knew as well that he was not in good enough condition to defeat Xiao Lin in his Ruin state, but if he waited for Xiao Lin's explosive power to run out, then Valen's victory would lose its greatest sense of accomplishment.

Valen took a deep breath, suddenly calming himself, but his rage did not subside. He stayed on alert against Xiao Lin's attacks while saying, "You were somewhat correct earlier; I'm not at my perfect state. Even if I did gather up enough energy, I would still not have been able to reveal my true abilities. Do you know what you're facing?"

"You sure speak a lot of nonsense!"

Valen continued, "You're actually very lucky—not many can witness this ancient form. This is the most basic form of life in Planet Norma. I threw countless years into this before I obtained this power. This will mark a new rise of the dark races."

Valen got more excited as he spoke, and started to sound fanatical. Xiao Lin could only look at him like he was a crazy person, but Valen did not have any intentions of stopping as he continued, "I know you don't understand it. To put it in a way you would understand, my form is the original form, the way the first life on this world was. To put it in layman's terms, it is the form of a god, the god that created all life!"

"You've really gone crazy!"

Xiao Lin looked at that fanatical man with a pitiful look. God? The God of Creation? Even if he was not certain of the existence of God on Planet Norma, no matter what, that pitiful madman could not be it.

Valen no longer spoke, probably already done with his nonsense. The next moment, the bulge on his forehead suddenly emitted a vibrant light that hurt the eyes like a star. Xiao Lin shut his eyes, and when he reopened them, his heart sank.

What was on Valen's forehead was a third eye, almost causing Xiao Lin to be dumbfounded. He was not wrong. Compared to his own, and even Silverlight's, the size was the same. However, it was not completely similar, because Valen's third eye emitted a green glow, while Silverlight and Xiao Lin's emitted a white light.

Valen's third eye locked onto Xiao Lin after opening, covering him in a green light. Xiao Lin suddenly felt like he had sunk into frozen depths, the chill reaching his bones and causing him to

shudder. He could not avoid it no matter how he moved; even the speed of his Ruin state was not enough.

“It’s useless! Stupid alien, my God’s eye can release the coldest chill. Haha, I can’t believe I needed to use this against you, but it’s no matter. The result is still the same. Death, or turning you into an ice sculpture!

“There’s no need to struggle! Only God’s eye can go against itself! This is the inheritance we got from the ancient King of Darkness; you invaders from a foreign world will never...”

Valen’s words were suddenly cut short as he looked at Xiao Lin’s forehead in shock. Xiao Lin’s own third eye slowly opened, and the white glow was countering Valen’s own green light. Xiao Lin took the chance to get out of the cold, but his Ruin state had reached its limit.

At the end of the Ruin state, Xiao Lin immediately felt extremely fatigued. Even though reaching Bronze rank allowed him to not faint after using Ruin, just standing was putting him at his limits.

Valen did not attack immediately, having been frozen by Xiao Lin’s third eye. His face had waves of shock on it as he muttered repeatedly, “Impossible! This is a gift to us from the God of Darkness. How could you have it! How did you get this!”

Xiao Lin wanted to know the answer to that as well. Based on what Silverlight had said, the third eye was unique to Atlantean royalty. After Silverlight died, logically he should have been the last one alive to have such an eye.

Yet, who was Valen, and what was that third eye that emitted a strange green light?

The questions in Xiao Lin’s heart were more than Valen’s, but it was not the time to think about all of that. Without Ruin and with the state of his body, he had lost all ability to defend himself.

No, he still had the eye on his forehead. The eye was still open, but the eye that Silverlight had given him did not have any combat ability.

Time Rewind was a good skill, but it was useless to him at that moment. Xiao Lin had no way of using the energy consuming Time Rewind after using Ruin anyway.

However, Xiao Lin remembered that Silverlight had said her eye had two abilities. Other than Time Rewind, the other ability was seeing the truth and seeing through all falsehood. Silverlight did not explain much about the ability, and Xiao Lin had tried using it before, not managing to find anything special about it. It could not increase any combat ability, nor did it have any special effects; it felt very weak.

However, it was the only thing Xiao Lin had left. Other than that, he was weak to the point that he could not even use Slashing. Even the Holy Sword in his hands felt like it weighed a ton; just raising it was difficult.

Silverlight had said before that each third eye had skills unique to itself. What Silverlight’s eye had was Truth, and Time Rewind was only obtained after levelling up. So, as a basic skill, Truth used only very minute amounts of physical and mental strength.

Xiao Lin shut his eyes, and the third eye on his head subtly glowed. Valen did not notice the change in his frantic state of shock.

Truth, activate!

The eye did not change at all after activating, but Xiao Lin's vision did. Valen remained the same in front of him, but around his body were densely packed threads of thin lines. Each line seeped deeply into his body, and the other end went in a direction out of the castle.

Xiao Lin could not help but reach out to touch a thread, and his hand merely passed through it. The thread did not move, not seeming to be affected at all.

It was not a thread with an actual form. It could not be touched or felt. When Xiao Lin deactivated his Truth skill, the threads momentarily disappeared, which was how he confirmed that they only appeared with the Eye of Truth.

Chapter 511 - The Eye Of Truth

Chapter 511: The Eye Of Truth

The Eye of Truth could see through all falsehoods. Xiao Lin started to understand what Silverlight meant by that, but he still was not certain.

Those threads were not completely unmoving. They would start to move at certain intervals, as if something was being transferred. Looking out of the door, there was no way to see where the threads ended, but the direction did lead to some thoughts from Xiao Lin.

Valen seemed to finally snap out of his fervor. Even if Xiao Lin had the same eye as Valen, a truth that dealt Valen a bigger impact than he expected, the conceited man quickly made a decision. "I just need to kill you. That's right. If I kill you, your eye will be mine, and I will still be the only one with God's Eye!"

After losing Ruin, Xiao Lin had no way of retaliating. Valen flashed over and kicked Xiao Lin away. Before Xiao Lin even landed, Valen once again appeared and landed a few punches in Xiao Lin's stomach.

Xiao Lin could only lean against the wall for support, spitting out a few mouthfuls of blood. He had already exhausted everything he had. If Valen used Disintegration Ray, Xiao Lin would be killed instantly, but he had intentions for Xiao Lin's eye.

If Disintegration Ray was used, the instant destruction might destroy his eye as well. Valen's greed did not allow such a valuable eye to disappear, which was why he did not use that much force either, allowing Xiao Lin to stay alive—for now.

Xiao Lin might have been battered, but his third eye was still fixed on Valen. Xiao Lin could not retaliate, but he could observe.

Each strike would cause a change in the threads, as if Valen's strength came from them. No, more accurately, he was on the other end of the threads.

That was the most reasonable explanation. By all accounts, Valen Argos's skills were very ordinary before this. As a young necromancer, that was normal. However, the young Valen suddenly defeated his brethren and obtained the position of clan leader, and then revealed such a strange and powerful ability.

Power was earned gradually, even for geniuses, unless Valen had used some special way to increase his strength. However, even if the dark races had a special way of doing that, it would not be to the degree that Valen had shown.

"The resurrection tower. You're getting your power from the resurrection tower." Xiao Lin panted as he tried to verify his guess from Valen.

If it were a few minutes ago, Valen would not have answered that question, but Valen was already certain of his victory. He knew that Xiao Lin could not even run. His conceit caused him to love bragging, so he admitted, "That's right. That man was right, you do know a lot, which is why you need to die here! Ah, the resurrection towers that you colonists rely on to live is now my stepping stone. I really should thank all of you!"

It was no wonder that, throughout the civil war, despite the rebels not having that much goodwill toward Dawn Academy, they had never destroyed the resurrection towers. Dawn Academy's military leaders had thought that it was because the rebels were afraid of them, and had even sent representatives over to negotiate for peace.

The thought suddenly appeared in Xiao Lin's mind. It meant that the rebels could very well have been in cahoots with Valen—no—it should be with the high priest Asabanor, Valen Argos's backer!

It was definitely not good news. In Wildfire Town, that corrupted resurrection tower Xiao Lin saw could only allow an undead without any form of sentience to resurrect. It had no effect on beings with higher intelligence, such as Normese humans. It was only limited to just resurrection, and not boosts in strength.

In just a few months, Asabanor's research into the dark resurrection towers had leveled up again.

Xiao Lin actually calmed down after his guesses were confirmed. Valen smiled coldly, "What? Did the truth cause you to give up completely? How meaningless. After I deal with you, I'll send your friends over to hell to accompany you!"

Valen's killing intent rose, and the fatigued Xiao Lin immediately reacted, saying, "Valen, you wish to bring glory back to the dark races and become the new King of Darkness, yet you're Asabanor's slave. Is there really no problem with that?"

Valen's movements slowed, but he quickly laughed. "There's no meaning to your provocations at this point. I'm merely working together with Asabanor for our mutual benefit!"

"Do you know who Asabanor is? Do you know where what he's giving you comes from?"

"I have no interest in that."

“Ah, but your expression clearly says otherwise! Have you ever heard of the Final Lands?”

Valen paused again. Even though he was silent, it was obvious that he was interested in the Final Lands. In Normese legends, the Final Lands were the final resting place of God, and was somewhere that only existed in legends.

Xiao Lin found a promising avenue, and deliberately slowed his speech down, saying, “In truth, the first time I met Asabanor was in the Final Lands...”

After that, a long story followed. Xiao Lin had spent months in the Final Lands. Of course, Xiao Lin did not tell Valen everything; his stories were a mix of fact and fiction, adding fire to certain parts while omitting the important parts.

Valen wanted to interrupt Xiao Lin a few times, but had been drawn in by Xiao Lin’s words, such as the undead that Asabanor had created in the Final Lands. As a necromancer, how could Valen not be interested?

Xiao Lin was already as good as dead. Valen did not mind allowing him to live a little longer.

Xiao Lin spoke for half an hour. If he really wanted to, he could continue for days on end. Each time Valen revealed an impatient expression, he would hurry past the unimportant matters and bring up something interesting, causing Valen’s impatience to die down.

Another twenty minutes passed, and Valen furrowed his eyebrows, coldly interrupting Xiao Lin, “Are you trying to stall for time?”

Xiao Lin coughed out two mouthfuls of blood, dryly smiling. “Even if I was stalling, I’m not a match for you.”

“If your hopes are on Ibeiya, then you should give up. I already sent someone after her. That girl’s bloodline can only be used by me!”

After those words, Xiao Lin suddenly smiled. His Eye of Truth had been active the whole time, and he saw that those threads surrounding Valen were slowly receding.

Chapter 512 - Returned To Its Rightful Owner

Chapter 512: Returned To Its Rightful Owner

Valen’s power did not come from himself, but was instead a special external power. Even if Xiao Lin did not know how that cursed priest Asabanor did it, he just needed to cut off Valen’s connection to the dark resurrection tower to stop his power.

Those threads were the connection between Valen and the resurrection towers. Without cutting that connection off, there was no way to defeat Valen. Xiao Lin had said so much not to converse with Valen, but to stall for more time for Ibeiya.

Xiao Lin already had a suspicion earlier, which was why he immediately got Ibeiya to head to the nearest resurrection tower to check it out. If it came to be true, then she was to find Liang Taibai and destroy the resurrection tower.

Even if it was taking longer than he expected, Xiao Lin still believed in Ibeiya. True enough, it was delayed, but the threads that represented the power of the resurrection tower finally left Valen's body, being cut up like kite strings, disappearing into the air.

Valen did not seem to have noticed, but the Eye of Truth could see it all. In contrast, the person that was affected was the one who had a hard time seeing through it.

Since his goal was accomplished, Xiao Lin did not bother wasting time talking to the man anymore. Valen did not seem to have had enough, furrowing his eyebrows as he said unhappily, "Why aren't you continuing? If I'm happy enough, I might even let you live."

Xiao Lin smiled coldly. With the current situation, Xiao Lin definitely needed to be rescued if he were to get out alive, Valen naturally knew that as well. Letting him live was just a cruel lie.

Valen still did not know he had lost the source of his strength, as well as the power to resurrect. However, his current power would not disappear just like that, which meant that Xiao Lin still needed to kill him once for it all to end. For Xiao Lin, who had run out of power, it was impossible.

Xiao Lin had planned on his Ruin state still being around by the time Ibeiya got Liang Taibai to destroy the black resurrection tower, then he would use his dragon breath to kill Valen, but he did not expect everything to be delayed for so long.

Thankfully, Xiao Lin had other plans. He had wanted to get more information from Valen, such as information about Asabanor, but with Valen's increasing impatience, Xiao Lin knew he did not have much time left, and he could no longer hesitate with his life on the line.

So, Xiao Lin reached his hand out, using all the mental strength he had gathered up during his forced conversation with Valen.

Valen felt that something was off, but he only smiled. He was too conceited and had too much confidence. He thought that anything Xiao Lin did would be futile. No spell that could be used with that little mental strength would harm Valen, and with that, he lost his last chance.

In the next moment, a shocking amount of death energy began to seep out, like a volcano finally erupting after being contained for too long. Valen did not even have the chance to retract the pleased look from his face, since the death energy that seeped out was too close. In just a flash, a sword surrounded by a black aura pierced through Valen's heart.

Xiao Lin finally let out a breath of relief after his sneak attack was successful. Standing behind Valen was the black knight. The undead knight still had its full suit of armor on, and the only holes were for its eyes that danced with green flames. It had loyally followed Xiao Lin's orders, and no

matter how hard Valen struggled, how hard Valen slammed his fists on the armor, it held onto the sword tightly, completely plunging the sword into Valen's body.

"You really should not have shown my stuff off in front of me!" Xiao Lin finally managed to vent, smiling with mockery. "Weren't you so curious as to why you could not open the ring, and why I can do it so easily?"

Valen just stared. He opened his mouth to speak, but all that came out of his mouth were the remnants of his organs. The blade held by the black knight was no ordinary weapon, it had a large and thick amount of decaying aura, which was seeping into Valen's body.

"You want to know the reason? Oh, I won't tell you!"

The black knight had always been in the spatial ring. The ring was taken away when Xiao Lin was kidnapped, and Xiao Lin saw the ring again on Valen's hand at the start of the banquet.

It was not impossible to force Valen to return it, but Xiao Lin was sure that Valen could not open the spatial ring. It had been sealed by Silverlight who had lived for thousands of years, and only Xiao Lin's own mental strength was allowed inside. Only those with greater power than Silverlight could force themselves in, and no matter how strong Valen was, he definitely was not at that level.

Valen had definitely seen through the shocking value of the ring. Even if he could not use it, he would definitely not throw it away. It was this greed that had caused his own demise. Xiao Lin had already started considering this plan the moment he saw the spatial ring. The black knight was actually stronger than he was, and would definitely not be detected by Valen.

Thankfully, Valen's strength had been depleted. Xiao Lin had actually been very worried that the black knight would not be able to kill Valen in one blow. After all, he could not accurately say how powerful Valen was after his transformation.

Valen was unable to accept the result, and was struggling as he laughed. Even if his carelessness had led to him receiving a fatal blow, he only needed to resurrect before he could destroy that man in front of him.

After a few seconds, Valen's face stiffened. He could feel his strength rapidly disappearing. After resurrecting a few times, he knew that it definitely was not a sign of resurrection.

Surprise, cluelessness, shock, and rage...

Many expressions flashed through Valen's face. He finally understood something, but did not seem to have grasped the reason. It was a pity he would never understand it. He fixed his glare on Xiao Lin, hoping to get an explanation for his death, but Xiao Lin had already issued the last order to the black knight.

Valen had died to his own hubris. If he had killed Xiao Lin earlier, he would not be in this situation. Xiao Lin could not commit the same error.

"Eliminate him!"

The black knight raised his sword, and slashed through Valen's throat. Valen's head quickly flew off, and his body collapsed. Once Xiao Lin retrieved his ring, he threw the corpse into a fire before picking up the head, eyes still open. He walked out of the castle, swaying in his steps.

Chapter 513 - What Is Needed

Chapter 513: What Is Needed

The other dark clans had already taken the chance to flee before that, but most of them did not go too far. After all, the battle in the castle would determine who ruled over the area for the next ten years. If Valen won, then there was nothing much to say. Regardless of whether or not they were happy with it, they could only submit.

If Valen lost, then it would be different. The winner would be the king, and it would be Xiao Lin who got the right to rule based on tradition. However, now that they knew Xiao Lin was from Dawn Academy then, no matter what Dawn Academy's influence was in the Rosa Kingdom, it would still be hard to completely get the acknowledgement of everyone as he was a foreigner from a different world.

When Xiao Lin walked out, everyone's eyes landed on him before shifting toward his hand. The blood on Valen's head had yet to dry, and the look of shock in his eyes was evident.

Valen was dead. Xiao Lin had killed him.

The Argos clan was also done for because Valen's siblings had all died without rhyme or reason, and the ones remaining in the Argos clan could not bear the large responsibility.

Even if everyone was shocked that Xiao Lin killed Valen and were curious as to how he did it, unfriendly looks started to be directed toward Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin was very weak at that moment, the fatigue on his face hard to mask. However, Xiao Lin could not be bothered with speaking, and instead threw Valen's head in front of the crowd. After that, with a snap of his finger, the black knight behind him slowly walked up with its dark aura.

All of their expressions changed; black knights were middle-stage undead beings, which was already unimaginably powerful in the city. Normally, obtaining a black knight needed a long process, which was why those with black knights were definitely extraordinary.

The dark clans were all more or less descendants of ancient bloodlines. Even if the dark races were once a major force in the history of Planet Norma, they had already lost their past glory and prestige. When Xiao Lin revealed his black knight, no one dared to have any further objections.

"What did Valen say earlier? Oh, either you submit or die, right." Xiao Lin revealed a warm smile. "Don't be scared, everyone. Since he's dead, those words don't mean anything anymore."

The few of them who were closer started to have friendlier looks in their eyes, and one of them walked forward in congratulations. "You really are from Dawn City. Your skills are shocking. We

will definitely remember your contributions today. If we have the chance to go to Dawn City in the future, we will definitely repay you.”

Xiao Lin smiled coldly, all that nonsense just implied that he should hurry back to Dawn City since he had already gotten rid of Valen, and to stop interfering with the clans.

Xiao Lin once again clapped, and the black knight behind him took a large step forward. The blade was raised and when it fell again, another head was sent rolling on the ground.

Silence!

Xiao Lin’s sudden change in attitude left most of them no time to react. Xiao Lin walked around, and the ones who were thinking of moving forward had all retreated. He took a deep breath, shouting, “To submit or to die. I don’t need your submission, I need your loyalty. What I want is very simple, either you show loyalty, or you die!”

“Loyalty to who?” someone asked.

“To Dawn Academy, and to myself personally!” After pausing, Xiao Lin glanced over at the old man who was glaring at him before adding, “Of course, loyalty to the St. Claude clan as well.”

The few intelligent ones had a look of realization, and those who did not understand quickly had someone explaining to them.

Submitting to Valen and being loyal to Dawn Academy were two completely different things. In truth, even if it was not all of them, most of the clans were still willing to deal with Dawn Academy. Since Xiao Lin had placed Dawn Academy in front, and the St. Claude clan and himself behind, it meant that the St. Claude clan had already made ties with Dawn Academy.

Going against the St. Claude clan was equal to opposing Dawn Academy!

Some of the smaller clans started to have obvious looks of hesitation. They were willing to follow Dawn Academy, but were worried that Xiao Lin had no right to decide that. Those races that lived longer than humans were naturally more understanding of Dawn Academy’s government.

Some of the clans with more history were not willing to rely on someone else, and were thinking of the words to decline when Xiao Lin said again, “I know what all of you are thinking. The rebels are about to invade this city, and you want to try building a connection with the new king to gain more power and empower your clans. Of course, it seems very tempting.

“However, don’t forget, Dawn Academy was not planning on interfering with the military, but now there’s enough proof to show that the person behind the rebels is actually an enemy we’ve been after for a long time. In the future, Dawn Academy’s troops will take back this country.

“Do you wish to turn into our enemies and be eliminated, or do you want to be our friends and help us defend this city and build a close partnership?”

Everyone fell silent, they had actually already guessed Valen Argos’s goals. Valen had already made some agreement with the rebels. He had hoped to acquire the city, or possibly even more. Now that Valen had lost, they were faced with sides to pick.

The rebels or Dawn Academy.

The smart ones noticed that Xiao Lin had tossed the Rosa royalty aside, which moved them. It meant that this could very well become Dawn Academy's direct colonial grounds in the future, which meant a country would be established. That also signalled the birth of new royalty and countless nobles, which they could very well become.

"How much do you know about us dark races?" At some point, a voluptuous woman had moved closer from the distance. Much of her skin was exposed, and she had a beautiful face. Her eyes were a seductive purple, signifying that she was a succubus.

The woman stopped about ten meters away, showing that she did not bear any ill intentions.

Xiao Lin muttered to himself. He had a lot of sources of information on the dark races. Ibeiya's stories, Captain Yu Mei's information, as well as what he found in the library. In terms of understanding, it was not that deep, but the woman was obviously not testing his basic knowledge.

Suddenly, Xiao Lin thought of something. He slowly opened his mouth and said, "You need land, you need a country that you can call your own!"

Chapter 514 - Liang Taibai's Concern

Chapter 514: Liang Taibai's Concern

The succubus was quite surprised. As far as she knew, most of the otherworlders did not understand a lot about the dark races, especially since Dawn Academy was friendly with the Rosa royalty, and they did not need to interact with the powers in the dark.

However, the succubus did not approve of Xiao Lin just because of that. Her smile still contained a coldness that rejected everyone as she used her sweet voice to say, "That's right, after ancient times, we've been rejected by Planet Norma's society. In truth, we don't really need much. We would not, at least most of us, won't have ambitions like that madman Valen. Returning to past glories and bringing forth the power of darkness are things we've stopped caring about. We only want a country that can be considered ours."

"Humans would not exist in our country, and hunters should not be able to find us. It should be somewhere completely safe, and would be somewhere we can forever be happy!"

The succubus got more and more emotional, as if she was venting. The dark races had resided in the darkness for thousands of years, which was something everyone had thought was logical. However, who could possibly not want the ability to live without hiding.

Unfortunately, it was something that seemed impossible on Planet Norma. The world rejected them, and hunters were constantly after them. They never knew if they would wake up with a knife to their throats. Every time they went to another city, they could not divulge their identities easily, or they would not be able to enter, and could even be jailed.

Even the Rosa Kingdom, that tolerated the dark races, had various segregation. Those clans did not have too bad a time living in the royal city, but their lives were definitely not great.

The rest of them looked at Xiao Lin, but their faces were full of mocking. They felt that, even if that otherworlder knew what they needed, they would never be able to get it.

A country, or at least a city that really belonged to them, was something that was impossible.

Xiao Lin understood as well. He could not even guarantee that Dawn Academy would completely hand over the royal city to them. Even if they cooperated and prevented the rebels from attacking, Dawn Academy could very well continue to support the Rosa Kingdom's royalty.

Xiao Lin suddenly thought of something, and said, "I think all of you know Ibeiya. She has the prestigious St. Claude clan's blood, and is also of the Rosa Kingdom's royalty. If this city is handed to her, I think all of you should be fine!"

"Ibeiya?"

"The St. Claude clan?"

"I've heard that she really was born from royalty, but..."

"If it's Ibeiya, I don't mind, but would Dawn Academy accept it?"

"There's still the matter of the rebels."

...

The crowd that had been quiet was suddenly in a clamor. Xiao Lin understood that they would not be able to make a decision in a short amount of time; after all each clan looked for different benefits. He needed time to convince a lot of people as well. Regardless, the night could be considered a success.

Xiao Lin promised that he would do his best to pursue a conclusion that would satisfy everyone. The succubus represented the other clans in guaranteeing that, if Ibeiya was really given the right to rule over the city, then they would do their best to protect the royal city against the rebels, and would also be willing to be vassals of Dawn Academy.

With that verbal promise, the exhausted Xiao Lin finally returned to the embassy, stumbling upon Ibeiya who was full of worry. The girl's white dress had been ripped, and there was even some blood, leading to Xiao Lin exploding.

"Who! Who attacked you!" Xiao Lin's face was full of anger.

"It's nothing. I met some pursuers that Valen sent earlier, and I faked my death to escape."

Xiao Lin let out a sigh of relief. Ibeiya's combat strength was nothing much, but she could often rely on her extremely strong regenerative abilities to fake death and trick enemies.

“That’s why there was such a delay. I was very worried that I affected your plans.

Xiao Lin naturally did not blame her for anything, and brushed it aside, telling Ibeiya that Valen was dead to her happy cheers.

Ibeiya was also tired after a night of running around. Xiao Lin helped her look for a room to rest in before going to the lounge to wait for Liang Taibai’s return.

Liang Taibai slowly walked in at dawn. Xiao Lin was not surprised. Destroying a resurrection tower was simple in itself, but there were countless things to deal with in the aftermath.

Liang Taibai looked exhausted, slumping right into the sofa before angrily saying to Xiao Lin, who had started everything, “You really caused a huge mess last night! You actually got a little vampire to get me to destroy a resurrection tower! Do you know that, if anyone else were the ambassador, they would probably have killed Ibeiya for being a spy!”

“But you’re not an ordinary ambassador,” Xiao Lin sincerely said. Liang Taibai being bold enough to destroy a resurrection tower had helped him greatly.

“My trust for Ibeiya was purely out of my faith in you. You’re lucky that I’ve heard about the corrupted resurrection tower.” Liang Taibai referred to the corrupted resurrection tower back in Wildfire Town. The case had been classified to everyone, so anyone who knew of it would not have a low standing.

Xiao Lin was just about to voice his admiration, but Liang Taibai had a difficult look on his face, staring at Xiao Lin. “You really gave me a lot of trouble. Destroying a resurrection tower is very complicated.”

“I know, resurrection towers have self destruct mechanisms. As the ambassador here, you definitely had the activation scroll. Did you not use it?” Xiao Lin joked.

“That’s right, I destroyed the corrupted resurrection tower, which is why this city is not under the protection of one at all. The royal city is the Rosa Kingdom’s largest city and we have a lot of merchants here. The resurrection tower is their greatest protection. What do you think they would say?”

Sighing, Liang Taibai continued, “To be safe, I’ll gather everyone we have who hasn’t left the city yet tomorrow and ask them to leave quickly. Compared to the approaching rebels, I’m more worried about the fact that someone corrupted a resurrection tower before our own eyes!”

“Since you’re back, Valen Argos is definitely already dead. You should go back to rest.” Liang Taibai was not surprised at Xiao Lin’s victory. He had heard of Xiao Lin’s skills.

Chapter 515 - Casino

Chapter 515: Casino

Looking at Liang Taibai's haggard face after working for the whole night, Xiao Lin thought for a moment before sitting back down, bringing up what he had talked to the other clans about.

"That's the gist of it. I had my hands tied in that situation. I did not have much strength left after killing Valen. Even my black knight would have been greatly outnumbered. I could only temporarily placate the clans, but I thought about it on the way back, and it seems like a good idea." Xiao Lin waited for a reply after his explanation.

After a long time, a cold wind blew in from the windows as Liang Taibai looked at Xiao Lin speechlessly. Xiao Lin could only cough awkwardly at the gaze.

"Xiao Lin, stop torturing me!" Liang Taibai had a powerless look on his face. "I understand the idea behind it, and I've also heard of Ibeiya's status, but why do you think that Ibeiya controlling the dark clans would be useful to us?"

"I trust Ibeiya a lot."

"You?"

Xiao Lin paused, sighing. He understood that, even if he trusted Ibeiya a lot, even if that girl showed a maturity beyond her age, Ibeiya had never held any ill-will toward Xiao Lin, and she possessed a special bloodline.

If Dawn Academy needed to support a local to take over the Rosa Kingdom, Ibeiya was definitely the best choice.

That was definitely so from Xiao Lin's perspective, but the problem was that only he trusted her. To everyone else, not even just the military, but anyone with power in Dawn Academy, entrusting such a huge responsibility to a girl in her teens was impossible.

"However, your actions tonight aren't meaningless. At least, you've helped us open up a lot of possibilities." Liang Taibai patted Xiao Lin's shoulder.

Liang Taibai was decisive. After losing the resurrection tower and knowing they faced an unknown opponent, he immediately made the call to retreat. He had the right to do that as an ambassador, even if that decision might lead to the locals being attacked by the approaching rebel troops; it was still better than having their own people die because of it.

Xiao Lin was actually unwilling, but he did not have any right to speak on the matter.

The next morning, Xiao Lin started to pack up after getting enough rest. Every person from Dawn Academy was doing the same thing. No one wanted to lose their lives for no reason, and the lack of a resurrection tower had taken away their reason to stay.

The Rosa Kingdom's resurrection tower was large, standing tall in the middle of the city, its coverage encompassing the entire royal city. It was the symbol of Dawn Academy, yet it was gone in just one night. The citizens of the royal city might not have understood the complicated processes behind it, but they could still guess what was happening from the increased security in the embassy, as well as the sudden closure of various colonist shops.

The entire royal city entered a state of chaos. Everyone had felt unsafe before this, but at the very least, the existence of Dawn Academy meant that the rebels would not inflict too much destruction if they entered the city. That was why many citizens decided to stay behind despite the large number of refugees, and normal order was maintained.

However, now their last pillar had been destroyed. Without the colonists, it was difficult to say what the rebels would do when they came. This world did not have any international regulations. Whatever atrocities the rebels did when they entered the city would only be known by the heavens.

Ibeiya definitely needed to be brought along. As for the other clans, Xiao Lin did not have the time to handle it for now. That was due to the fact that he had rushed to the largest casino in the city, Century Casino, right after receiving Liang Taibai's retreat order.

At the start of the monthly examination, An Fumin had asked him to bring some items back. That was quite normal, since couriers did not exist on Planet Norma. With the civil war in the Rosa Kingdom, anyone else doing it would have very low reliability.

Xiao Lin guessed that it was something to do with money, even if it would make things hard for him. If the amount was large enough, it would definitely affect their journey and increase the danger, such as being chased by the rebels. However, Xiao Lin never broke his promises.

Century Casino had already received a notification from the embassy. However, the large and luxurious casino did not stop their operations on that day. Even with the entire city in that state, there was still no shortage of gamblers within the city.

Xiao Lin used his embassy pass to enter the casino office. The boss, a middle-aged woman who oozed femininity, received him.

"I'm Sun Jia, the boss here. Ah, even if that bastard has mentioned you to me before, I really didn't think you'd be so young."

"Hello!" Her low neckline revealed two half-hidden white globes, and Xiao Lin quickly retreated two steps before politely saying, "I was asked by An Fumin to bring some things back. I trust you received the embassy's notice as well, so I hope you'll make your preparations quickly and not delay anything. I'll let the embassy know to allow your transports to leave earlier."

Sun Jia looked at Xiao Lin, amused. "That bastard did not tell you what you were transporting. It seems like he doesn't trust you that much. Hahaha, let me tell you, you must not believe that bastard too much, or you'll eventually be sold by him for money."

Sun Jia's intimate way of addressing An Fumin caused him to speculate on their relationship, but Xiao Lin did not feel like gossiping at the time, so he somewhat coolly, "I'm only working with An Fumin, helping each other out. That's right, he promised he would support me financially. My gear has been quite beaten up lately, and the embassy does not have that much of a stockpile, so I hope you can prepare some better equipment for me."

Sun Jia smirked. "You're quite bold. Don't worry, my information network is even better than the embassy's. The rebels are still a month away from us. Just two days won't change anything."

"But shipping money would attract too much attention." Xiao Lin could not help but remind her.

“Who told you you were transporting money?”

“What, is that not the case?” Xiao Lin started to redden, realizing that he seemed to have misunderstood something.

“Hahaha!” Sun Jia laughed once again.

Chapter 516 - Sudden Accident

Chapter 516: Sudden Accident

“That bastard really loves money, but this thing is more important than money.” Sun Jia’s smile was radiant. She was from Earth, and had been in the Rosa Kingdom for many years. Her attire had been completely localized, but was still alluring beyond belief. Of course, she was definitely not as young as she looked.

Sun Jia was very open to conversation and constantly teased Xiao Lin until he could not stand it and planned to leave. She finally said, “Fine, let’s talk official business.”

Xiao Lin’s eye twitched. It meant that everything she said before was just nonsense. He rubbed his forehead powerlessly, sighing, “What does An Fumin want me to bring back?”

“It’s this.” Sun Jia pointed at a box the size of a palm on the rack next to her.

“Are you sure this thing is valuable?”

“Of course; this thing is more valuable than the entire casino.” Sun Jia’s expression changed from cheeky to serious, signifying she was sincere.

Xiao Lin said powerlessly, “Then why did you put it somewhere so obvious. Are you not afraid that someone would steal it or just take it away?”

“Have you ever heard the saying, the most dangerous place is the safest? There are no foolproof locks or seals in this room. Compared to racking our brains on it, why not just place it in the most obvious place, where people would not notice it? Tell me, did you notice it at all since you walked in?”

It was true, the box looked very ordinary; the materials looked like common wood. There were no jewels or adornments. In fact, it would be no surprise if anyone thought it was trash.

Xiao Lin did not want to dwell on that question, so he asked curiously, “What’s in the box?”

“Many people have searched all of Planet Norma looking for this, and countless people have lost their lives for it too. Too many people want it, but have never seen it.”

“Yet you still haven’t told me what it is...”

Sun Jia looked at Xiao Lin like he was stupid. “Don’t you understand? How could I tell you what such a valuable object is? An Fumin wanted to find a reliable person to bring it back to Dawn City, but had never felt safe.”

Xiao Lin was speechless.

Fine, Xiao Lin finally decided to stop talking to the unreasonable woman. He was only finishing a task he was asked to do. An Fumin could definitely have just asked someone official from Dawn Academy to bring it back, especially someone from the military. It would definitely be much safer, since no one dared provoke Dawn Academy. Xiao Lin believed An Fumin definitely had the connections to do it.

However, An Fumin did not go through official channels, which meant that the guy did not want Dawn Academy to know of the existence of the thing, or at least, he did not want to hand it over to the academy. That was why An Fumin could only rely on his private connections and power to get it sent back.

What disappointed Sun Jia was that Xiao Lin suddenly lost all interest after his initial attention. To Xiao Lin, it did not matter what was in the box, since it was An Fumin’s. Since it was not Xiao Lin’s, there was no need to continue with the questions.

“It’s going to be much more convenient if it’s just a box. When the time comes, depart with us and mix into the team.”

Xiao Lin thought for a moment before adding, “Oh, it’s best you remove all the makeup on your face.”

Normese women did not put on makeup. Even if various makeup products from Earth had appeared throughout the years, it was only an item reserved for upper society. If Sun Jia did not want people to immediately recognize her, then she had to make sure she looked more like a commoner.

Sun Jia still wanted to talk to Xiao Lin, trying to get some information, but Xiao Lin treated this potential lover of An Fumin with a purely official attitude. After discussing the journey, Xiao Lin left.

The embassy was incredibly busy. After the civil war, the workload in the embassy had greatly decreased, but the chaos today caused even more refugees to flood outside the embassy. Liang Taibai had asked Xiao Lin to help handle some matters. Even if Xiao Lin did not strictly speaking have any qualifications to do so, having not even graduated, he was still from Earth.

Liang Taibai smiled bitterly in frustration. “I could have actually gotten people from the royal chambers to help with this, but after you were ambushed and the resurrection tower was corrupted, I’ve completely lost trust in outsiders. There is no way it could have happened without internal sources.

“Since we’re leaving in a hurry, we basically won’t be bringing anyone else with us.” Liang Taibai thought for a moment before continuing the explanation. Of course, he could make those decisions himself without explaining anything to Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin understood what he meant. “Are you referring to the dark clans? I understand. It is regretful, but they aren’t the most important thing at the moment. However, we at least need to bring Ibeiya and her uncle.”

“That girl from the St. Claude clan? Don’t worry, it’s not an issue. Just bring them along.” Liang Taibai paused for a moment before patting Xiao Lin’s shoulder meaningfully.

“Ambassador Liang, I think you’re misunderstanding something...”

Liang Taibai waved his hand, his expression indicating, ‘You don’t have to explain, I understand’.

Xiao Lin sighed powerlessly, not bothering to argue. With the tasks Liang Taibai had assigned to him, he was busy for most of the day. He dealt with the more minor things, separating the documents that were not too high-leveled. Those with value would be brought away, and those without would be burned.

Currently, including Liang Taibai, there were only about ten or so people in the embassy. However, according to the newest military reports, the rebels would only be able to arrive at the city in a month. The Rosa Kingdom’s military would not hold on for long, but they would not be instantly defeated. If the rebels met with any sort of delay, it would take them at least two or three months.

That was why Xiao Lin and everyone else was not too panicked. Even if the outside world was in chaos, everything within the embassy still proceeded in an orderly fashion.

At midnight, Xiao Lin was deep in sleep when he was violently woken up by Liang Taibai. After lighting the magical lamp, the light lit up the room. Liang Taibai’s expression was ugly, his eyes red.

“Ambassador Liang, it’s the middle of the night; is there anything that can’t be delayed for tomorrow?” Xiao Lin yawned as he complained.

Liang Taibai’s breath was erratic, looking like he had just rushed over from somewhere. Looking at Xiao Lin, he said, “The rebels have already surrounded the city!”

In a flash, Xiao Lin lost all of his earlier sleepiness.

Chapter 517 - King

Chapter 517: King

The rebels had already surrounded the royal city!

When he heard that, Xiao Lin had thought that Liang Taibai was joking, but Liang Taibai’s eyes were red and his face was frantic, letting Xiao Lin know it was not the time for jokes.

Xiao Lin quickly put on his clothes, and followed Liang Taibai into the palace.

“Did we not say during the day that the rebels were still a month away, and we also had the royal army to hold them off. How could they be here already?”

“We’re looking into it, but it’s not the time to think about it now.” Liang Taibai sighed.

“How many troops are in the royal city?” Xiao Lin guessed something from Liang Taibai’s expression.

“There are still three thousand troops.”

“How about the rebels?”

“We’re still not clear on the details, but by the approximation of the guards, there are at least twenty thousand of them.”

“F*ck!” Xiao Lin could not help but curse. Even if defending a city was easier than attacking, the difference in numbers was too great.

Liang Taibai picked up the pace, revealing even worse news as he did. “The three thousand troops in the city are all mostly old or injured because the main force had been sent to stop the rebels. Who knows what happened to those idiots. They haven’t been gone for a few days!” The usually polite Liang Taibai cursed out loud, obviously looking down on the combat ability of the kingdom’s army.

Xiao Lin gaped, and was quickly deep in thought.

After a moment, the two of them arrived at the castle. Even if the royal city had a curfew, they were not stopped at all as Dawn Academy’s ambassadors. In fact, they were not even checked on.

In the beautiful palace, Xiao Lin saw the king of the kingdom. They might have already escorted all the king’s children out, but the king still remained.

Initially, the military had planned on using the king as a bargaining chip in their negotiations with the rebels. Xiao Lin had even heard from Liang Taibai that a lot of the upper echelons for Dawn Academy were not happy with the current king. Not only did the civil war cause a lot of trouble for Dawn Academy, the relationship between the kingdom and the academy had not been the best in recent years as well. In fact, when Dawn Academy requested more resurrection towers to be built in the Rosa Kingdom two years ago, they were rejected harshly by the king.

Now, it was obvious that, even without what was happening, Dawn Academy would not have tolerated this person’s continuing to sit on the throne. This was the first time Xiao Lin met the king who dared oppose Dawn Academy. Before, they had always avoided the king when dealing with anything.

The king’s sideburns were white, and he had a thin beard, making him look very old. However, Xiao Lin had seen from the reports that the king was only over forty years old. He had his crown on, but it was not very luxurious. The crown was only adorned with eight jewels shaped like roses.

Inside the palace was a large round table. All the officials sat near the table while the king sat on a dais at the front, facing everyone. Of course, as ambassadors from Dawn Academy, Xiao Lin and

Liang Taibai did not need to sit where the officials did. Instead there were two chairs prepared next to the throne, signifying they were equals to the king.

After the civil war, many of the officials in the city had run away or gone into hiding. Now, there were only seven or eight of them in the palace. They were all waiting inside, but were quite surprised at Xiao Lin's appearance, but to them, what they needed was a representative from Dawn Academy; it did not matter who it was.

Once Xiao Lin and Liang Taibai sat down, the sudden meeting formally started. First, the armored generals stood up to make their reports.

"Not long after night fell, there were some movements with the automatic sentry towers in the eastern gates. Of course, the guards thought it was a malfunction, and went over to check. Then, a short conflict happened... I happened to be nearby at the time, and felt like something was off. I opened up the searchlights Dawn Academy had given us and noticed that a large number of troops were nearby, and basically had us surrounded..."

Liang Taibai immediately started his questions, trying to gain even more information, such as the number of enemies and the relative strength, including formations and gear. However, since it was so sudden, the general did not have too much information. The shock at that moment had caused him to immediately run back with the report, and await the king's decision.

"It's definitely the rebels; there's no question about it!" Someone was not happy about Liang Taibai's questions, but did not want to be too obvious with it, so he turned to the king and said, "My king, while the enemies still haven't fully surrounded us. We should use the cover of night to immediately send our troops out for an attack!"

"That's right! We should leave immediately! His Highness cannot be captured, otherwise Rosa will have no future!"

"Your highness, please leave immediately! The royal city does not have any ability to defend itself. If we fight our way out and group up with the troops we sent out two days ago, we will have a chance!"

The officers' words were sincere, all advising the king to leave immediately, all while shooting glares at Liang Taibai. They all obviously knew that Dawn Academy had deliberately removed the king's name from the escort list and left him for death.

The king waved his hand, signaling for the officials to be quiet before turning toward Liang Taibai, asking, "Do the two of you have any opinions?"

The king's wizened face was very calm, not panicking at all with his city being surrounded. Xiao Lin did not know if he was forcing himself to be calm, or if he had already given up, knowing that Dawn Academy had already pinned him as a scapegoat.

Xiao Lin silently speculated, but no matter what, he definitely did not have a good impression of the king he was meeting for the first time. That had nothing to do with Dawn Academy, or with the kingdom, or with the starving peasants in the kingdom. It was purely because the man on that throne was Ibeiya's grandfather!

Even if Ibeiya's words were filled with lies that were difficult to tell apart, she had never lied about her birth. That was something Xiao Lin had verified from numerous sources.

Ibeiya was a mix between a human and a vampire; her mother was a princess of the Rosa Kingdom, which meant she was the daughter of that king, and Ibeiya was naturally his granddaughter.

However, Ibeiya's youth had been very pitiful. The St. Claude blood in her veins caused her to be in great danger, and her father was hunted because of that as well. Yet, the Rosa royalty never acknowledged her existence, and had even forced the princess out of the palace. When the princess died of blood loss giving birth to Ibeiya, Ibeiya basically only had her uncle, the old man, left to live with.

Chapter 518 - Surrounded City (1)

Chapter 518: Surrounded City (1)

Xiao Lin could no longer do anything about Ibeiya's childhood, but the root of all her suffering was undoubtedly that king, Ibeiya's grandfather. If the king had not chased away her mother, Ibeiya would very well be a proper princess, enjoying the life someone her age should be enjoying.

With that in mind, Xiao Lin's words were unkind the moment he spoke. Before Liang Taibai said anything, Xiao Lin took the chance to say, "Opinions? Well, what opinions can we have? The army is near, and the only ones defending the city are weak troops. You can only run."

"We're not in a hurry; even if the rebels enter the city, they might not do anything to us." Liang Taibai added. Of course, they were planning on leaving, but the royal city had been surrounded. With the lack of a resurrection tower, breaking through the siege would result in unneeded casualties.

Liang Taibai was decisive, abandoning the plan to leave the moment it was impossible. As for the king, it was still unclear if he wanted to leave during the night, and Liang Taibai was wondering if he should make up an excuse to hold the king back. As the ambassador of Dawn Academy, Liang Taibai clearly stood with the academy, and he needed to consider how to reap the greatest benefits at moments like this.

"Yes, thanks for your suggestion." The king remained warm and calm. After nodding, he faced the officials and said, "I've decided that I won't leave this city. This is the kingdom my ancestors left for me. Even if I die, I want to die on my own land."

"Your highness!"

"You can't do this!"

...

The officials immediately voiced their objections after a moment of shock, but even after over ten minutes of their advice, the king merely faced everything with a smile. No matter what the officials said, he merely shook his head resolutely.

Finally, once everyone had said their piece, the king suddenly stood up, declaring, “The enemy is right next to us, we should stop wasting our time here. I am the king, but I was a warrior when I was young. Battle is my true calling!”

After saying that, the king took up his armor and weapons in front of everyone’s stares, taking off his robes and walking toward the city gates with his armor on.

After a pause, the officials discussed it among themselves and hurried behind the king.

Only Xiao Lin and Liang Taibai were left looking at each other. It was unexpected. They had thought that the king would try to flee. That should have been what happened; they did not feel like three thousand old and weak soldiers would be able to hold off the rebels outside the city. Even if the royal city had been strengthened in its history, their numbers are still far too little.

“What do we do?” Xiao Lin asked.

“Let’s leave!” Liang Taibai was helpless. If the king did not do as they expected, then they could only wait. The loss of the resurrection tower meant that he could not consider helping anyone other than the ones from Earth, attackers and defenders be damned.

However, not helping did not mean they would merely look on. After leaving the palace, Liang Taibai gathered the people of the embassy and split them into two. One group would patrol the city, including weapons storages and supply depots, and the other group would follow him to the city gates.

Liang Taibai still did not fully believe those from Rosa; he needed to see the enemy with his own eyes, and Xiao Lin chose to do the same.

The night was very dark, but with the special pass, Xiao Lin and Liang Taibai still managed to head to the city gate towers on the eastern side of the city. It was the largest gate in the royal city, and had the most defensive towers.

“Even if the rebels are great in number, this is still the capital city. Its defensive capabilities are still excellent. On top of that, during our cooperation, we’ve helped them erect many high-leveled magic defense towers; the power is quite impressive,” Liang Taibai told Xiao Lin softly.

“Ambassador Liang, do you think the city will fall?”

“It will!” Liang Taibai gave an affirmative answer, adding after that, “However, how long it will take is uncertain. The magical defense towers need large amounts of energy stones as a resource. Ever since the kingdom rejected our suggestion of building even more resurrection towers, we’ve basically stopped providing them with energy stones. The Rosa Kingdom lacks resources, so the energy stones they have in store are all probably from the past. I don’t know how long it will last.”

“Plus, we actually know nothing about the rebels.” Liang Taibai said with concern. “I’ve received many reports these few months, but I’ve never managed to get reliable information on the strength of the rebel troops.”

Xiao Lin said suspiciously, “Aren’t the rebels just formed out of the local farmers and commoners? With an untrained army like this, if we can even call them that, would they really be that strong? Everything aside, they would probably have a hard time dealing with the defensive towers.”

Liang Taibai said, “Your words make sense, but do you know how many of the Rosa Kingdom’s troops have been defeated since the start of the civil war? Over twenty thousand! Including any new conscripts, basically ten regiments have gone up in smoke. Do you really think that a rebel army comprising farmers can do so much?”

Xiao Lin started to be doubtful. He knew that Rosa’s civil war had gone on for a long time, but he never knew that the army had taken so much damage.

“When it comes to the rebels, what I know might not be as much as you, so I’m just as curious as you are. Therefore, let us see what the rebel army’s strength is like!”

The city gates were quite spacious. Other than defensive towers, there were also searchlights and search towers given by Dawn Academy. Night battles on Planet Norma had always been a big problem. Even if their mages had all sorts of ways to illuminate the battlefield, their mental strength could not maintain it for that long, and the range was limited.

The searchlights were built with Earth technology in mind, using a combination of magic and science to create. They used energy stones as power, and used local materials to make specialized circuits capable of providing large amounts of light.

Under the orders of the commander of the city gates, the usually expensive searchlights were protected from all forms of weather. As countless energy stones were added in, the light began to shoot out after a few seconds. It looked like a miniature sun. With the power gained from energy stones, the searchlights were even more powerful than those from Earth.

The rebels naturally did not have advanced toys like that, and the local troops were quite pleased with themselves. However, when everyone saw the troops below the city, their expressions changed.

Chapter 519 - Surrounded City (2)

Chapter 519: Surrounded City (2)

Under the white magical light, the darkness disappeared, but the scene that appeared in front of them left everyone shocked. There were many troops around the city, but what they wore was the armor of the Rosa Kingdom’s army, including the red rose flags.

“The royal guard! It’s the royal guard!” The soldiers at the gate quickly realized the identity of the troops.

Liang Taibai’s face was steely as he said, “The royal guard are the royal city’s last line of defense. The soldiers that I told you were sent to stop the rebels were them. I can’t believe they turned into rebels so easily! Curses, most of the equipment for this army was bought by us!”

The Rosa Kingdom was a small country, which was why they relied on Dawn Academy to bring in a lot of their weapons and equipment. It was also an important line of business for the academy. However, that equipment falling into the hands of their enemies was not a good sign.

Xiao Lin was deep in thought, as the searchlight moved further to check on the enemy numbers, he suddenly shouted, "Hold on!"

Xiao Lin shut his eyes, as if feeling something. Liang Taibai seemed to have seen something as well, but he was not certain, so Liang Taibai waited by the side with a stern expression.

After a few minutes, Xiao Lin opened his eyes, muttering with some disbelief, "The death energy here is very dense!"

"Is that so?" Liang Taibai's expression worsened. Only those who learned necromantic meditation were more sensitive to death energy, so he only had suspicions, but could not be sure. Nevertheless, he did not ask how Xiao Lin learned necromantic meditation.

Death energy existed everywhere, but it was not normal for it to be so dense. Either countless corpses were buried under the city, or the death energy came from the army in front of them.

"Undead troops!" Liang Taibai clenched his teeth as he voiced the guess in his mind, but he kept his voice low, not allowing the Rosa soldiers to hear him.

...

The siege slowly began, but what gave everyone some relief was that the army did not seem to have any equipment meant to siege the city. As the capital of the country, the royal city had great defenses. The walls were massive, and intricate protection completely shielded their ranged attackers. They also had specialized magical enhancing tools as well as various defensive towers.

Even if the troops protecting the city were all older, which meant their strength and speed and other attributes had deteriorated with age and robbing them of the ability to charge forward, defending a city was something that was not that taxing on the body. Instead, the experience they have gained from their age proved useful.

The sounds of battle never stopped throughout the night. The shooting of arrows and the explosions of magic decimated the troops around the city that did not have any mechanisms for a siege. It was a pity that there was such a limited number of troops defending the city, resulting in difficulties covering a large area. That was why the battle was prolonged. The defensive towers had their full power on display, especially the magical defensive towers. They dealt massive damage to the undead army.

Each ball of flame flew into dense crowds, killing at least a few dozen. However, what caused headaches were the lack of pain or fear felt by the undead. Unless they were thoroughly destroyed, they would continue advancing, even if they were missing a limb or two.

At the crack of dawn, the first ray of sunlight could be seen over the horizon. The desperately attacking undead army seemed to have received new orders, and suddenly retreated completely. After over ten minutes, all that was left around the city were magical flames that had yet to die out and countless corpses.

Cheers could be heard around the city gates; each soldier that participated hugged each other in celebration. Thanks to the lack of long-ranged weaponry and siege machinery, the damage dealt by the attacking army was miniscule.

Xiao Lin and Liang Taibai looked on from a tower for the whole night. Even though Xiao Lin wanted to help, he was stopped by Liang Taibai. The seasoned ambassador could tell that it would be difficult for their enemies to attack the city, and would not be able to that night.

“Go back. You’re tired!” Liang Taibai did not say anything else.

On the way back to the embassy, Xiao Lin saw many Rosa soldiers spreading information, announcing the victory last night. That was because news of the city being surrounded had leaked earlier and was quickly spread around the entire city, resulting in obvious chaos.

“It seems like the king still has some resolve.” Xiao Lin let out a word of praise. The moment the defense of the city ended, the king sent his troops to quell the chaos. That was why he saw massive crowds on his way back, but there was no large-scale chaos.

The biggest taboo for defending a city was undoubtedly internal chaos. It was more terrifying than the enemy. If the masses lost their minds and wanted to open the city gates to flee, then the city would essentially self-destruct.

“It would be great if this order was maintained after a week!” Liang Taibai said.

Xiao Lin sighed. He knew that the victory last night was only temporary. Low-ranked undead were still sensitive to light, and were not as strong as during the night. So, their victory was obtained due to the strategy of their enemies.

If the city was not attacked by undead, and instead the actual rebel army, their chances of defending the city would be higher. They only needed to keep the city defended and wait for the royal guard to return. At that time, the rebels would be pincered, and their lack of training could even mean an instant loss.

However, there were no ifs in the real world. Even Xiao Lin, who had no military strategy training, could tell that it would be very hard to hold onto the city, because the Rosa Kingdom no longer had any troops that could come to the rescue.

After returning to the embassy, Xiao Lin only managed to take a nap in a blur. He woke up after three hours and noticed that Liang Taibai had not slept at all. Instead he was discussing matters with the others in the embassy. When he saw Xiao Lin, he smiled and waved before everyone went into the office.

Xiao Lin slowly acquainted himself with everyone in the embassy during this time. After a few greetings, he sat down, quietly waiting for the conclusion of their discussions.

Would they leave, or would they stay?

Elite Mages' Academy

Chapter 520: Surrounded City (3)

The king's children had all already been sent away, the royal city's resurrection tower had also been destroyed due to corruption, and it was also very possible that there was a spy within the city. The Rosa Kingdom's last line of defense had also turned into an undead army and was assaulting the royal city.

With more and more disagreeable conditions rising up, everyone felt like the city would not last for much longer. Furthermore, the rebels corrupting the resurrection tower showed that the enemy had close ties with what happened to the resurrection tower in Wildfire Town, meaning they definitely did not harbor any goodwill toward Dawn Academy.

"Our only choice is to leave." A spectacled lady voiced her opinion after everyone had added in their thoughts.

"If we leave now, it won't be as simple as abandoning a city." Even if the situation was clear, not everyone agreed with the suggestion.

"That's right. If we leave now, we'll completely lose control of the Rosa Kingdom. Based on our data from three months ago, we have thirteen resurrection towers in the Rosa Kingdom. If the royal city falls, we might not have access to those towers anymore."

"Compared to destroying the resurrection towers, I'm more worried about the corrupted resurrection tower. This is the basis of our existence in this world. If a country has thirteen dark resurrection towers, I won't even be able to sleep well at night."

"Everyone knows how hard it is to build these towers. Starmetal is very valuable. It's fine if we lose the resurrection towers, but if we lose all that starmetal, I think we should all just quit our jobs!"

...

The small meeting had a lot of differing opinions. Different perspectives offered different suggestions. Xiao Lin did not speak, since he was not high enough in status in this situation. He spent his time in a corner, sipping some hot tea, thinking about something with his eyes narrowed.

Liang Taibai listened in for almost twenty minutes before raising his hand and interrupting everyone. "Can we please have some more practical suggestions. If we retreat, how will we leave the city safely? If we defend it, how are we going to do that?"

Everyone suddenly fell quiet, looking at each other. They suddenly found it hard to speak. As envoys from Dawn Academy, they were very good at politics and administration, but they were definitely no military specialists.

"It will be hard to defend."

"It will be hard to break out as well. After all, we don't have the resurrection tower, but it should be safer."

...

Another debate ensued. It seemed like leaving was definitely easier than staying. In terms of the conclusion, the choice seemed simple. Tossing aside the benefits to the government, their first priorities were still their own lives. After all, no one wished to stay in this foreign country and be buried with Rosa's king.

Just as the decision seemed like it was going to be made, Xiao Lin suddenly raised his hand in the corner. "If we tried to break out, how high would the success rate be? Do we have an approximation?"

The others looked at each other, uncertain why Xiao Lin asked the question. Liang Taibai answered, "We've long since made similar plans. In truth, we were planning on using the griffins to leave at the right time, but the rebels came too suddenly, and the griffin landing point outside of the city has probably been overrun. However, we have other plans."

Liang Taibai gave a simple explanation. They would use the fact that the undead troops did not attack at night (1) to leave the royal city through the northern gate deep in the night. Since the rebels attacked from the south, it would be hard for them to gather too many forces in the north. If they left at the right time, the complicated terrain toward the north would be hard for the undead to get through. After losing the undead army, they would move in a big circle, passing through the British Royal Academy's land before returning to Dawn Academy's territories.

"It might take very long, but it's the safest plan we have at the moment." Liang Taibai did not hide anything from Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows, suddenly saying, "I object. I'm against leaving."

The others did not understand, and Liang Taibai did not get angry as he said, "What's your reason?"

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly. "If we only have one way out, I don't think the rebels will be stupid enough to not notice. If they prepare an ambush on the way, even if we manage to defeat the enemy with our combat ability, our casualties will be massive without a resurrection tower. Don't forget, aside from us, there are still many merchants in the city."

The others had skeptical expressions. Xiao Lin paused before adding, "What I mean is, it's very possible that the enemy has been trying to force us out of the city from the start. This is basically a trap. Surrounding the city and leaving one obvious point of escape."

"This feels like something that would only appear in a TV show..."

"We don't have any grudges against them. Even if they don't plan on being friendly with us, I doubt they would face us straight up. I feel like they would deliberately let us escape. A royal city without the power of Dawn Academy would easily fall into their hands."

"What would be the goal of that?"

Liang Taibai sighed, putting his hand up. At the highest-ranked person there, everyone else immediately shut up at his motion, looking at him with a confused expression, because Liang Taibai had obviously been starting to think about Xiao Lin's suggestion.

"I received some reports a long time ago that I never really believed, but Xiao Lin's words caused me to rethink my position." Liang Taibai hesitated before saying, "Ordinarily you shouldn't know about this information, but it's not time to think about all of that. Take a look at this report. You don't have to ask about the source; we've never verified the news."

Liang Taibai took out a document. Most of the documents had been burned away in the cleanup over the past two days, and the important documents were all carried around personally.

The document was passed around, and Xiao Lin was the last to receive it. He had already felt something from everyone's looks, but opening the document and looking at the words, his expression changed instantly as well.

The document was titled, 'Report on the Investigation of the Dark Resurrection Tower in Wildfire Town'.

'Attention: The document is a preliminary analysis. Due to the lack of experimental material and data, a conclusion has not been reached. The report will only be used as a reference and is not to be circulated.'

What followed was a chunk of information, even using various complicated chemistry formulae. Xiao Lin knew that Dawn Academy did not lack geniuses and highly-educated figures. It was them that managed to combine Earthen technology with Planet Norma's magic.

Xiao Lin did not understand those figures, and skipped everything. Just like everyone else, he flipped right to the conclusion on the last page.

Chapter 521 - Wildfire Town Investigation Report

Chapter 521: Wildfire Town Investigation Report

'Initial Conclusion of the Report:

'The black resurrection tower still contained the Law of Immortality after being corrupted, proving that the enemies do not have enough power to eliminate or change the existence of the law. Thus, we can infer that the enemy is not at a level higher than Legend. That is considerably good news. Dawn Academy is unprepared to handle a Legend-ranked opponent.

'However, the Law of Immortality was distorted. The enemy is very intelligent, they are unable to change the law, but used a mysterious power to forcibly distort the target for the law. If explained in terms of computer programming, the opponent added a strong virus in the program, corrupting the programming of the law.

‘We have analyzed the power, and with the help of historical information provided by Judge Academy, we have determined that the power is astrological in nature. Regretfully, astrology is the most mysterious branch of magic in Planet Norma and the academies all have limited research on it. As such, we decided to research the matter with the other academies, and have arrived at a horrifying conclusion.

‘The corruption is not yet complete. Even though we have no way to completely analyze it, currently all the data indicates that the corruption can be improved. The enemy was very rushed in the preparation of this corrupted resurrection tower, but it seems like the Normese are slowly understanding the importance of experimentation.

‘We have no way of anticipating the next steps of the enemy, but from the viewpoint of the researchers, if the corrupted resurrection towers are targeting our own people, then the next step we would take is to experiment on other people from Earth!

‘The most important pieces of data are still lacking from the black resurrection towers, which include the effects on a human’s body and combat ability, and even what would happen if a person was forcibly linked with the dark resurrection towers and made to resurrect. We would never do these kinds of experiments, but we are unable to guarantee that our foes would have the same opinion.

‘This report has been sent to all embassies in the areas around Wildfire Town. All outbound diplomatic staff should take note of the matter. However, the report currently lacks enough verification, and the accuracy cannot be guaranteed, and so will not be allowed to be spread.’

...

That was the last segment of the report. The entire room fell silent after reading it, leaving only the sound of the dancing flames on the lights to be heard. The dark resurrection tower in Wildfire Town had been covered up by the higher-ups quickly, so not many people knew a lot about it, and it did not cause that much of a commotion.

Most of those who knew about it did not fully believe it either. After all, they were not like Lilith and Xiao Lin who had witnessed the horrifying nature of the corrupted resurrection towers firsthand. Most of them had been living in the current status quo for a long time, and they had absolute faith in the resurrection towers.

That included those who were present, which was why they had been shocked by the report. It was even a report written by the specialists from various academies. Those specialists were nothing like the half-baked fakes on Earth; they were all genuine geniuses at the peaks of their fields.

“So, you’re saying that the enemy might want to capture us to experiment with?” someone said uneasily. The report did speculate the possibility. If anyone wanted to capture the colonists to be experimented on, foreign envoys were the most appropriate. That was because the colonial territories all had stringent checks, and anyone remotely suspicious would find it hard to enter.

Even though the report emphasized that it was just a hypothesis by the researchers, with everything that had happened in the royal city, everyone understood the hypothesis was very probable.

The report was not clear on what the methods of experimentation would be, but as people from modern Earth, everyone had definitely watched movies. After reading the reports, images of various disgusting human experimentations flashed through their minds, so everyone's faces naturally paled.

Xiao Lin's expression was ugly as well, but what he focused on was different from the rest of them. After finishing, his gaze fell back on the word 'Astrology'. Even on Planet Norma, very few people have ever mastered the study. However, looking back at the long history of the planet, there existed one true master of astrology: the old high priest, Asabanor!

Xiao Lin had already suspected that the old undying bastard had something to do with what was happening in the Rosa Kingdom, but now he was certain. That old man could even already be outside the city.

Thinking about his interactions with Asabanor, the crazy old man had really left a deep impression on Xiao Lin. He could not hold back and said, "No matter what, we can't leave the city! Absolutely not!"

Xiao Lin briefly told everyone about the general situation with Asabanor. Liang Taibai was not surprised, so he should already have had some information on it. However, there were quite a few who knew nothing of the high priest, and with the added weight of the report, everyone started to believe more in Xiao Lin's words.

Liang Taibai sighed as a conclusion. "I suddenly remembered the sneak attack on me a few days ago that cost me twenty years of my life. I think Asabanor might have planned it. The Argos clan was probably a chess piece of his, and he had probably planned on using Valen Argos as an internal spy to seize the city, turning the city into his experimental grounds. However, Xiao Lin foiled his plans, which is why we are being attacked."

"The good news is that the current attack on the city was not planned by the enemy, which is why the assault last night had no siege equipment at all. It means that the enemy did not have enough preparations. The bad news is that we can no longer leave the city; the only choice is to defend it."

"Then comes the last question: how will we defend the city?"

Saying his piece, Liang Taibai threw the question back. Even if everyone was a foreign diplomat, they had still gone through many years of monthly examinations at Dawn Academy. They might not have been specialists, but they were no strangers to war, and had certain abilities.

What followed were purely military discussions. Xiao Lin felt like he had no room to speak on that since he did not hold a candle to those who had graduated after four years at the academy, so he got up and bid Liang Taibai farewell.

After leaving, Xiao Lin knocked on Ibeiya's door. He had been worried about the girl's safety. Xiao Lin had already brought Ibeiya into the embassy to stay temporarily, and since everything had died down somewhat, Xiao Lin decided to visit her.

Chapter 522 - Request To Defend The City

Chapter 522: Request To Defend The City

Ibeiya had rings around her eyes. She had not slept well last night. Of course, it was not easy for anyone to sleep well in such uncertain circumstances.

However, Ibeiya obviously had her own information network. When Xiao Lin entered, Ibeiya immediately made some tea for him before sitting next to Xiao Lin. She looked at him with a cute gaze, asking, “Undead troops are not like the rebels. Even if the low-ranked undead don’t have intelligence and move slowly, and are even compromised at night, if the rebels have enough necromancers, it would be a disaster.”

News of the undead army attacking the city was not spread, and even the announcements did not mention it. The guards were not allowed out of the city gates as well; the king had issued the order to maintain stability inside the city.

Xiao Lin did not know where Ibeiya got the information from, and gaped for a moment as he drank the tea. The tea had a subtle fragrance, and looking down, he noticed a few purple petals in the tea leaves. It was roses grown in the Rosa Kingdom, and had a unique taste when paired with tea.

“Big Brother, is it good?” Ibeiya smiled, her face obviously asking for praise.

When Xiao Lin fulfilled her wish, Ibeiya said proudly, “Roses actually don’t blend completely well with your tea leaves, and a certain ratio is needed for their tastes to match properly. The ratio is something I researched myself.”

“It really is nice, and refreshes the mind as well. It’s better than regular tea or coffee. How did you get it this way?”

“If you want to know,” Ibeiya fluttered her eyes, “then can you answer a few questions first?”

Xiao Lin smiled bitterly and nodded. The girl had probably been waiting for it.

“You will leave, right?” Ibeiya said with a determined tone before adding. “Will you give up in this city?”

Xiao Lin let out a smile. He knew what Ibeiya was worried about. He could not help but reach out to pat Ibeiya’s head, smiling softly, “Don’t worry, we won’t leave. We will help you defend this city.”

Ibeiya was not a normal little girl who could be persuaded with just a few words. She said suspiciously, “Is that true? I know you’ve lost your resurrection tower, and you have very few people who are specialized in combat in the city. What can you do with just those diplomats and merchants?”

Xiao Lin suddenly turned serious, pausing for a moment before saying, “That’s why I came to look for you. In truth, Ambassador Liang has the exact same headache. Just like what you said, relying on just us without a resurrection tower would not be of much help. That is why I hope to get help from you.”

“Me?” Ibeiya was surprised, and responded intelligently. “You want to rely on the dark clans?”

Xiao Lin nodded. “You might already know this; there are only a few thousand soldiers left in the royal city. The other troops have unfortunately already been turned into the undead outside of the city. The commoners and merchants in the city have never undergone any training. Compared to that, your clans are all naturally stronger than Normese humans, so I hope they can help defend the city.”

Ibeiya smiled bitterly. “Big Brother, are you planning on giving the order through the St. Claude clan? You killed Valen Argos in the last tournament, earning the St. Claude clan much honor. Uncle even said that he got a lot of visitors in the last two days, something unthinkable before that... However, you should know our relationship with humans right?”

“The history classes talked about it, and I’ve read books in the library too,” Xiao Lin answered. The dark races used to rule the planet during ancient times, but the humans had replaced them as the rulers while the dark races went into hiding, even hunting them down.

Even in the Rosa Kingdom that allowed the dark races to stay in, the clans only had a mutual partnership with the royalty. The deals involved were complicated, and Xiao Lin was not interested in knowing. Basically, they would never be friends with the native humans.

“Are they waiting for the rebels to enter before working together with the enemy?”

Ibeiya fell into an awkward silence. Xiao Lin understood her expression. The undead troops outside of the city proved there was a necromancer. Necromancers were part of the dark races. As the same species, they would definitely be more trustworthy.

Was Asabanor a trustworthy person?

Absolutely not!

The undying priest was obsessed with his revenge against Earth, and would only drag everyone into his vengeance. If the dark races in the royal city participated in that, Dawn Academy would definitely not let them off when it came time to pay back those debts.

Of course, Xiao Lin was not concerned with those clans, but Ibeiya’s St. Claude clan was part of them, and even an old prestigious one. Xiao Lin did not wish for Ibeiya to be dragged into it when the time came.

...

The peace during the day gave the royal city enough time to prepare, such as bringing out more weapons from the storage and repairing everything that was damaged last night. The undead archers might not be very accurate, but the occasional hit still caused some damage.

In the embassy, since they decided to help defend the city, Liang Taibai decisively went to the palace to meet the king. Xiao Lin was surprised when Liang Taibai brought him along yet again, instead of the other diplomats. Xiao Lin did not know what use he could be.

The king did not express any happiness or excitement at the embassy's participation, instead rudely asking, "What do you want from me now?"

Xiao Lin could not help but roll his eyes; the old man was actually not thankful for receiving some coal in the winter. It was no surprise that Dawn Academy started to dislike the king.

Liang Taibai was used to it, maintaining his smile as he reiterated the stance of himself and Dawn Academy. Without a doubt, they were allies with decades of close ties, and had to help each other in times of need. It was all basically a normal diplomatic speech from Earth.

The king looked puzzled, and Xiao Lin could understand and even emphasize. China's diplomatic speeches were a deep branch of study, and it was not easy for the natives here to understand.

However, seeing as Liang Taibai did not voice any demands, the king hesitated before nodding in agreement. He had no other choice but to hand over command of the city's defense to Liang Taibai.

Chapter 523 - Secret Behind The Rebellion

Chapter 523: Secret Behind The Rebellion

Liang Taibai politely thanked the king, and the king looked thankful as well, but the truth was, even if the king did not hand over command, Liang Taibai had countless ways to seize command for the army anyway.

Those many years of support that Dawn Academy had given the Rosa Kingdom were not all for naught; the support had given them absolute control of the country, politics, financial matters, and even the military. That was especially true when the current king started to show signs of disobedience. Dawn Academy had arranged for officers closer to them to be in key positions, which were all fail-safes for certain scenarios.

The king understood that as well, and decided to make things easier.

After getting what he wanted, Liang Taibai did not leave immediately. After exchanging some empty pleasantries with the king, the ambassador suddenly turned around, pushing the idle Xiao Lin to the front before smiling and saying, "We were in a rush last time, and I didn't have time to introduce you. This is Xiao Lin, a personnel sent over by Dawn Academy not long ago. He might be young, but he has a lot of combat experience. If it's possible, I want him to hold a temporary officer's rank in the city. It would make command easier later."

"I've already given command of the military over to you. You can decide on the officers yourself." The king felt like it was strange. He knew that Liang Taibai would definitely place more of his own people into the military after achieving command, but there was no need to tell him that since he was already mentally prepared.

Liang Taibai's goal was obviously not just that. He smiled. "You might not know this, but you actually owe Xiao Lin a huge debt."

The king had a curious gaze. "A debt?"

Liang Taibai said, “Your granddaughter went out a few months ago, and Wildfire Town was under attack back then. She was saved by Xiao Lin.”

The king had a neutral expression. “Our princesses all stay in the palace year-round, not even allowed to leave the Rosa Kingdom, let alone head to Wildfire Town. Of course, they were escorted out by you two days ago.”

Liang Taibai let out a smile, ‘kindly’ saying, “I’m talking about Princess Ibeiya. I don’t think you would have forgotten about your own granddaughter.”

The palace immediately fell into a deathly silence.

The king’s face was frozen solid. He looked over, measuring Xiao Lin in earnest for the first time. The last two times they met, he had just treated Xiao Lin as Liang Taibai’s lackey.

Xiao Lin felt a bit awkward and confused. He did not understand why Liang Taibai suddenly brought up Ibeiya, but he curiously observed the king’s face, trying to see if the old man felt any regret for chasing his own granddaughter out of the palace.

After losing himself for a moment, the king regained his calm, turning to Xiao Lin and saying, “Ibeiya’s mother might have been chased out of the royal family for violating the law, but Ibeiya still has royal blood in her. Thank you for saving someone of royal blood.”

The king’s expression was very neutral, his warmth carrying a hint of coldness. It was easy to see that the gratitude was purely for formality, and the king did not care about Ibeiya.

Xiao Lin never felt anything good about the king, but now his impression of him was worse. If it was not a diplomatic situation, he might even have rushed forward to beat up the cold old man.

After that, Liang Taibai did not stay around, taking Xiao Lin out of the palace. Once there were no guards around, Xiao Lin could not help but voice his confusion. He did not believe that the sharp and experienced ambassador would do something so meaningless.

However, Liang Taibai did not answer immediately, instead seriously asking, “What kind of person do you feel Rosa’s king is?”

“I don’t know him very well.”

“Doesn’t matter. Tell me your first impression.”

“He might have seemed friendly to us, but everything he says feels very defensive. He doesn’t welcome us. I can’t say if he’s a good king or not, but he’s definitely not a good family member,” Xiao Lin said.

Liang Taibai smiled, unable to deny it. He said with a complicated expression, “To be honest, putting aside my own biases, he’s not a bad king. Do you know what the first thing he did was after he got the throne?”

Xiao Lin shook his head.

Liang Taibai continued, “The natives were all quite curious about our mysterious toys from Earth, and many of our things have turned into mainstream items. The last few kings would always ask for those things from us, and it was an annoyance, but the diplomats would all naturally fulfil those small requests. However, this king was different; he started to ask us for books the moment he got to the throne. Large amounts of books on every subject.”

“Books from Earth?”

“That’s right. We have quite a lot kept in our own library. Of course, we would never let the natives look at our history books. However, with the amicable state between our countries, we gave him quite a lot of books. After all, those were not worth anything.”

“What books did he ask for?” Xiao Lin seemed to have guessed something.

“He asked for many of them. Out of books on history, culture, art, and everything else, the most he asked for were economy books. We never felt like it was anything before for someone who knew nothing of Earth’s history to read Earth’s economy and governmental books. However, after a few years, the king started to reform the Rosa Kingdom.”

Xiao Lin opened his mouth in shock. “He wants to shed away our ties?”

“That’s right.” Liang Taibai sighed, his face revealing a mix of regret, pity, and even admiration. “How could he be better at politics than those higher-ups in Dawn Academy that are centuries old. Even though the king’s reforms were very subtle, the academy quickly realized what he was doing”

Xiao Lin fell silent. “We probably did not allow him to put those reforms in place.”

“The Rosa Kingdom is a very important vassal state for us. We would never let it go that easily. However, if we tried to assassinate him or used other methods to force the king off the throne, we would have instigated the conservative officials in the kingdom, or even the military. We don’t want a Rosa that is in chaos either. That was why we secretly sent our people in to stop the king’s reforms in various places. It caused the officials to believe that the failure of the reforms that led to the country being even poorer was because of the king, causing them to lose faith in him.”

Xiao Lin suddenly exclaimed, “Ambassador Liang, surely you aren’t telling me that the civil war was instigated by us!”

Liang Taibai smiled bitterly. “We calculated our actions back then, and we could never have caused a civil war. However, it ended up being used by someone else who caused some waves in the shadows, who used us to start a civil war.”

Chapter 524 - A New Siege

Chapter 524: A New Siege

It was definitely Asabanor who used Dawn Academy. No matter how much the higher-ups of the academy thought about it, no one would have considered someone who had been dead for almost a century in their plans. Asabanor’s appearance had exceeded everyone’s calculations.

To a certain degree, the ones who let Asabanor out were Xiao Lin and Lilith, so Xiao Lin could not help but notice that all the problems he was facing at the moment seemed to have come from himself.

Feeling Xiao Lin's frustration, Liang Taibai, who had a basic understanding of what happened in New Washington said, "There's no way to change what has already happened. History is unchangeable, and no one can pin any blame on just one person. Just go think about how to defend the city. I'm planning on making you a legion commander."

"What?" Xiao Lin was surprised. Liang Taibai had said that he would be made an officer, which was normal. Liang Taibai obviously did not trust the natives in a war, and was even more worried that Rosa's officers might betray them. With that being the case, it was better for Dawn Academy's own people to hold important ranks.

"But legion commanders need to command an entire legion." Xiao Lin wanted to say that he was not qualified.

Liang Taibai asked, "I seem to remember that you are a monitor. You've participated in monthly examinations before, right?"

Xiao Lin nodded. "That's right."

Liang Taibai then laughed, "Then you already have experience being in command. Isn't that enough?"

Xiao Lin did not know what to say. "I only needed to command my class during the monthly examinations. It was only a few dozen people."

"How many do you think you will need to command here?"

Xiao Lin paused; based on Planet Norma's standards, each legion usually had about ten to twenty thousand people, even going up to thirty, but there were only a few thousand crippled troops left in the city.

Liang Taibai gave Xiao Lin an overview of his plans. The first thing was to have Dawn Academy take control of the defensive systems in the city. That was a must, but even among the colonists, there were few that were completely trustworthy. After all, it was only an embassy, and the merchants in the city all had complicated backgrounds, some even coming from other academies.

That was why Xiao Lin being a commander was forced. Thankfully, Liang Taibai planned on allowing Xiao Lin to have helpers. Thinking about it, Liang Taibai teased, "You have a great relationship with Ibeiya. Only you can have her as a bridge for communication."

Xiao Lin immediately understood. Liang Taibai wanted to get the dark races as well. In order to protect the city, they could not do without the power of those clans. Liang Taibai might represent Dawn Academy, but it was still hard for him to directly interact with the dark clans. Compared to that, thanks to Ibeiya, Xiao Lin was much more suitable.

In order for Xiao Lin to be in charge of that, they would need to give Xiao Lin an appropriate rank. Negotiating as a student was definitely not appropriate.

In the same vein, thanks to Ibeiya, Xiao Lin had the possibility of communicating directly with the royalty from a more trustworthy angle. Even if Xiao Lin suspected that that king, who did not care for Ibeiya, would really trust in him, and even if Xiao Lin felt like Liang Taibai was hiding something in that matter, he did not desperately need answers.

Liang Taibai was definitely an experienced ambassador. In just one short day, he had thought about everything. After handing over the defense of the city to Xiao Lin and some others, he immediately contacted the colonist merchants in the city. It was not only those from Dawn Academy, he included the other academies as well.

It still looked early when they returned to the embassy, but Xiao Lin had immediately gone to bed after hurriedly eating something, since he would not be able to sleep that night. Not long after the sunset, Xiao Lin was woken up. The undead army had started their attack once night fell.

Xiao Lin had arranged for an assistant named Luo Jianhui. He was a polite-looking man with spectacles. Luo Jianhui was an aide in the embassy, but had never been in a military position. However, he was also a monitor back in the academy, and had commanded battles at that level. It might not be at the level of a legion, but there were no better choices at that point.

As they hurried to the gates, Xiao Lin opened his mouth. "I'm only a student. In truth, you should be the one acting as the legion commander."

Luo Jianhui waved his hand, smiling. "I've been stuck in administration since graduating. It's been a few years; I'm probably less familiar with combat than you at this point. Furthermore, we're both monitors. We'd be formally at the same rank after you leave the academy. However, I heard you had good relationships with the royalty and the dark clans, so you're definitely more suited to it than me."

"Are monitors treated better after graduation?"

"Of course; don't treat being a monitor as nothing. When emergencies like this happen and a commander is needed, those who were monitors are always the first choice"

Now it was not as surprising that Liang Taibai had made Xiao Lin the commander of the guards. There were only two former monitors in the embassy: Luo Jianhui and Xiao Lin. Even Liang Taibai had not been a monitor.

Xiao Lin was not completely devoid of experience on this front. He remembered the orc supply depot during the third monthly examination and the experience he had defending it. However, the situation was more complicated and difficult this time.

Xiao Lin humbly discussed the matter with Luo Jianhui. The battle had just begun when they reached the gates. Under the searchlights, the wild undead army flooded toward the city walls like water, and the magical defense towers around the walls started to fire.

The high-level defense towers installed in the royal city had very far-reaching attacks, and they unleashed Gold-ranked flame spells. The bright balls of flame had unimaginable power. Each ball would cause enemies in a hundred-meter radius to be disintegrated, and the flames that remained on the ground burned the corpses that did not have any anti-magic equipment.

Xiao Lin shouted out at the walls, but the high-ranked defensive towers had long firing intervals. Even if Dawn Academy already invented those with higher firing rates, the king had angered Dawn Academy, and the more advanced towers never reached the Rosa Kingdom.

Even so, each explosion still caused extreme damage to the undead. The enemies that forced their way through the sea of flames all had their armor melted, revealing rotten corpses.

Chapter 525 - Warehouse

Chapter 525: Warehouse

There were many spells that could create undead. The most basic ones used curses to inject death energy into corpses, allowing them to rise again. The higher-leveled ones used certain mediums to make the undead stronger.

From the corpses in front of them, Xiao Lin could tell that they had not died for long. Otherwise, they would be facing undead skeletons, not the zombie-like things in front of them.

However, no matter what kind of undead they were, amassing tens of thousands of troops like these in such a short time was extremely hard. Xiao Lin did not believe that Asabanor could do it alone. It was obvious the high priest had found more allies and helpers, which was very unsettling.

Xiao Lin's appointment had already been notified to every soldier. There were many officers from Rosa sending him battle reports as the battle went on. Of course, the main goal was to interact with and to understand the new commander. As for how their original commander was, no one cared.

Luo Jianhui conscientiously stood behind Xiao Lin, and was in charge of introducing all the officers that came to Xiao Lin. The embassy was not only focused on diplomacy; they were also in charge of compiling all sorts of information in the royal city, and Luo Jianhui was the one in charge of the military.

After accurately calling out everyone's names, the officers were all shocked. Luo Jianhui was actually warning them that Dawn Academy knew a lot about them. No one was to disobey any orders, or it would be easy to find them.

Xiao Lin put his focus on the battlefield, and the information he gained set them at ease.

The undead troops did not have high combat abilities. They even had a hard time getting a thousand meters within the vicinity of the city. The few that managed to reach that distance would be shot down by arrows or some lighter spells. They might not have had many guards, but thanks to the terrifying power of the defense towers, their numbers disadvantage was covered up.

Xiao Lin was still not used to being a commander, but he never expressed that feeling. Instead, he used a warm and stern tone to appease the officers, reminding them to not falter.

Defending the city in such a situation, they relied on mostly their defense towers and long-ranged attacks, and did not need any special commands. Liang Taibai understood that as well, which was why he was happy to leave Xiao Lin there.

The battle continued. The undead were said to be attacking the city, but it felt more like they were committing suicide. Without any siege mechanisms, the strength of the city walls, and the fact that the undead army did not have any magical attacks outside of a few bows, meant the numbers did not matter.

“How long can our defensive towers stand for?” Xiao Lin asked with concern. He had been with Luo Jianhui at the nearby command tower since midnight. After all, arrows did not have eyes. With the lack of a resurrection tower, it was better for them to be safer.

“Don’t worry, the kingdom has been at peace for a long time. The warehouses are practically full of energy stones.” Luo Jianhui knew what Xiao Lin was worried about, and smiled, “The defense towers we gave Rosa might be old models, but their durability is guaranteed.”

The defense towers were vital to their continued defense. Based on Luo Jianhui’s estimations, the energy stones in store within the royal city would be able to keep all the defense towers up for about a month.

Liang Taibai had already used quite a few energy stones to send a long distance message, conveying the severity of their situation to Dawn City. Barring any mishaps, Dawn City would probably be getting their army ready.

“Would the military allow it?” Xiao Lin had his doubts. He knew that the military and the dean had opposing views on governance. Would the military, that wanted to focus on the other academies, really mobilize for Rosa’s rebels?

“That’s not an issue. The military might want to negotiate with the rebels, but that’s under the condition that Dawn Academy’s influence in Rosa is preserved. Do you know what the basis for that influence is?”

Xiao Lin answered, “The resurrection tower.”

“That’s right, the resurrection towers are the symbols of our power. That’s something everyone on Planet Norma knows. Now that the rebels dare to scheme with Asabanor to corrupt our resurrection towers, we can no longer tolerate them. No one would dare ignore such a thing.” Luo Jianhui’s tone was cold. He still could not let go of the fact that they had to destroy the corrupted resurrection tower.

“For Dawn City to assemble their troops and reach this place, it would take about a month. We will only need to make sure we do our jobs at this time.” Luo Jianhui paused and added something, because he saw Xiao Lin’s expressions turning ugly. He knew that Xiao Lin had no intention of being a commander, so he wanted to alleviate the pressure on Xiao Lin. It was not difficult to rely on the defense towers.

However, Xiao Lin was not worried about that. He exclaimed in a low voice, “The energy stones!”

“Energy stones?”

“We’ll never be able to defend the city without them. If they investigated the royal city, how could the enemy not know about it! Where are the warehouses?”

“The energy stone warehouses are very strictly guarded. We even sent our own people to look after it yesterday.”

“I still want to take a look.” Even though Luo Jianhui trusted the guards arranged by the embassy, Xiao Lin was still worried about Asabanor. That old man was very cunning. He did not believe that Asabanor would allow them to wait until Dawn City’s reinforcements came.

Even though Luo Jianhui did not understand Xiao Lin’s concerns, Xiao Lin was still the commander. So, Luo Jianhui got another officer to bring Xiao Lin over, while he stayed and assumed temporary command.

The energy stone warehouses were nearer to the southern gate. The royal city only allowed the population to use three of the main gates, and the southern gate was exclusively left to the military. Only the army was allowed in, and the royal city’s military camps were also all there.

The one who brought him there was a Rosa officer, a squad leader. He was full of admiration for his colonist superior, and under Xiao Lin’s request, he hastened his footsteps, not even daring to ask for a reason.

As they ran toward the southern gate, a quiet scene greeted them. The undead army did not attack there, so the defense towers were also very quiet. The military camps were empty, because all the troops in the royal city had either been turned into zombies or were guarding the city at the gates. The only ones left in the military camps were very old guards, who were still alive.

Xiao Lin let out a sigh of relief. At least there were no traces of infiltration.

Chapter 526 - Lost

Chapter 526: Lost

The guards there did not seem to recognize Xiao Lin, but when he showed the seal issued by the royal family, the soldiers quickly stepped aside, and they brought Xiao Lin to the warehouses at his request.

“Since the attack yesterday, we’ve been in charge of guarding this place. We have not noticed any suspicious infiltrations or damages,” the soldier said in broken Mandarin. The result of Dawn Academy’s decades of influence on this place was that Mandarin had turned into a second language here. Even the kids on the streets spoke a bit of it.

Xiao Lin was somewhat put at ease. It might really be like what Luo Jianhui said; he was only thinking too much because he was unused to being a commander.

The energy stone warehouses had basically taken up half of the city. It looked like private research. The energy stones that the Rosa Kingdom stored were all mid-level. They were more reliable than

low-grade energy stones. When the guard took out the keys to the warehouse, Xiao Lin furrowed his eyebrows.

An ordinary soldier was in charge of such an important warehouse. The soldier explained that it was because they were using the defense towers as of late, and there were more and more people who needed to transport the energy stones. That was why he held the keys—to make it more convenient to open the warehouses and to not affect the battle.

The magical lights in the warehouse were lit, but it was still very dark inside. In the end, magical lights were not as bright as electrical lights.

Xiao Lin's heart stopped, his thoughts from earlier once again surfacing. He hurried over and opened a storage box nearby. All the boxes had been made by smiths because energy stones needed to be kept in specific temperatures and stable environments, or they would easily lose their power.

However, the boxes were all haphazardly thrown about, and the inside of the boxes were pitch-black. The stones themselves shone, and the boxes were all half-transparent. A warehouse full of energy stones was like one full of gold; there was no way it was that dark.

The soldiers who followed behind quickly panicked. At Xiao Lin's shout, they frantically began to open up all the boxes. What shocked them was that all the boxes were empty!

Walking out of the warehouse with heavy footsteps, Xiao Lin's face was absolutely dark. An alert and suspicious gaze fell on the soldiers that were in charge of guarding the warehouse, and his hand slowly pressed against his Holy Sword.

"No, it's not us!" the soldiers quickly explained in panic.

"We did not steal the energy stones!"

"I have a wife and kid at home. How could I betray Rosa! How could I join those despicable undead!"

...

Xiao Lin's gaze shifted, asking, "Other than this warehouse, are there any others in the royal city?"

"There are none. No, hold on. There is one in the royal chambers. But that is just an emergency warehouse, and it's very small. We're not sure if there are energy stones inside."

Xiao Lin fell silent. It was no longer important to find out whose fault it was. Without energy stones, those defensive towers were basically scrap metal. They had to find the missing energy stones.

Xiao Lin looked at the soldiers once again, his gaze frightening them. In truth, Xiao Lin did not think they did it, or they would have fled after emptying the warehouse instead of waiting for it to be noticed.

Xiao Lin quickly found the point of suspicion, and asked, "You said earlier that a lot of people came to retrieve the energy stones? Can I look at the name list?"

The few soldiers trembled, crying as they explained. Other than having records from last night, they did not have records from the last few times. That was because a Rosa military official had come for the stones, and they were only met with anger and even whipping when they asked for verification, blaming them for endangering the battle. That was why they did not dare ask too many questions, and had left it as it is.

“A military minister? Which minister?” Xiao Lin asked, full of killing intent.

“It’s-it’s the guard general of the royal city. No, it was the former defense general, the old commander of the royal city’s guards.”

So it was the one who had his job taken away by Xiao Lin. Of course, that was no reason or excuse; the man’s actions could very well destroy the entire royal city.

Xiao Lin no longer wanted to bother with the soldiers there, and had gotten the officer to capture them. As for how they were dealt with, it had nothing to do with him. Xiao Lin then immediately headed to the embassy, but Liang Taibai was not there. Ambassador Liang was in discussions with the merchants at that moment.

Xiao Lin knew he did not have time to wait, so he headed to the palace himself, immediately getting someone to wake the king up. Even though the servants were extremely scared of waking the king up from his sleep, they also knew that the current one in power in the royal city was Dawn Academy.

The king immediately appeared in the guest area in his sleeping robes. Ignoring all pleasantries, Xiao Lin immediately asked, “Where is your military minister? Get him to see me!”

Because of Ibeiya, Xiao Lin did not have a good impression of the king. Even though Liang Taibai said that the king was someone who pushed good governance and reforms, it still did not change Xiao Lin’s views of him.

“I’ve already handed over the military matters of the city to you as Ambassador Liang wished. What else do you want to do?” The king’s voice was steady. He was more or less a puppet at this point, but he had never made any motion to flatter or get close to Xiao Lin or Liang Taibai.

“The energy stone warehouse has been emptied. Of course I need your military minister to ask about the energy stones! The defense towers at the gates need them!” Xiao Lin stared at the king, trying to tell if the man was part of it. In terms of politics, a figurehead king giving up and working with the rebels to attack the royal city was not impossible.

On the king’s face was first astonishment and disbelief, followed by anger, an unimaginable fury. In his rage, he threw a few valuable ornaments to the floor.

With the floor filled with shattered remains, the king’s rage suddenly disappeared as he powerlessly sat on the throne. His face seemed to have aged another ten years. After a long time, he sighed and said, “I really don’t believe it. In the end, he still betrayed me and this kingdom!”

Xiao Lin looked on coldly. After the king’s tantrum, he said, “Now, he’s a traitor. I don’t think you would harbor a traitor, so just hand him over.”

The king shook his head. “Regretfully, I don’t know where he is. He hasn’t been in the palace since he was stripped of his rank.”

Chapter 527 - Pursuit

Chapter 527: Pursuit

Xiao Lin asked bluntly, “Where is his home? Surely he has family. We at least need to find them...”

“No, he doesn’t have any family.” The king looked up, looking at Xiao Lin as he said slowly, “His family died a few years ago.”

Xiao Lin gaped, asking, “All of them died? Could they have faked their deaths to escape? How did they die?” He quickly regretted asking that question.

That was because the king calmly and coldly said, “His family died in a fight a few years ago. It was a conflict with you otherworlders; he himself only managed to survive thanks to my protection.”

Xiao Lin was stunned, unsure what to say at that moment.

It was the king who waved his hand, saying, “It wasn’t Dawn Academy, but Judge Academy from the north. However, your embassy did turn the other way when it happened.” The king’s subtle smile carried an unfiltered sense of mockery.

Xiao Lin did not want to ask what the conflict was, because he knew that any conflicts between the colonists and the natives in colonial territory would always end up with the natives on the losing side. He really wanted to say that Dawn Academy was not Judge Academy, and that they were completely different, but he could not say that. To most of the natives, they were all from the same world.

“I’m sorry.” Xiao Lin did not know if he was apologizing on behalf of Judge Academy or Earth.

“I thought that he would already have let go of his grudge after so many years, but I never expected him to do this.” The king sighed understandably.

“No matter what, his actions cannot be forgiven. If you have any clues that would lead to him, I hope you will let me know quickly. If not for us otherworlders, then please consider Rosa’s citizens.” Since the king was adamant that he knew nothing, there was nothing Xiao Lin could do despite how suspicious it was.

The king suddenly called out to Xiao Lin, who was preparing to leave, furrowing his eyebrows as he asked, “How is the situation with the battle?”

“Not great. If we don’t have energy stones to replenish the defensive towers, even holding the city for a week will be a problem. We’re only relying on the stones that are already in the defense towers currently; it won’t last more than a few days.” Xiao Lin did not even turn around. He still did not like the king.

“Asabanor... Do you understand a lot about that person?” the king asked.

This time, Xiao Lin turned around, looking at the king with a strange gaze. It was obvious that man had his own information network. He mulled over the reason for the king’s question before saying, “He’s a completely insane madman.”

“He’s a pitiful madman whose country you destroyed, leaving him without a home!” the king mockingly added to Xiao Lin’s words. He did not differentiate Dawn and Judge Academies. To the natives, there was no difference. Asabanor was also quite a famous figure in Planet Norma’s history, so it was not strange for the king to know about him.

“Fine, maybe you’re right.” Xiao Lin shrugged. He could not be bothered explaining, seeing as the king’s antagonistic attitude toward Dawn Academy was quite obvious.

The king did not plan on just leaving him be, continuing, “If Asabanor gets in the city, what do you think he would do?”

“What do you think?” That was quite a stupid question, so Xiao Lin rudely retorted.

“Revenge,” the king answered. “How do you think he would take revenge on all of you?”

The king’s earnest face caused Xiao Lin to want to throw a temper tantrum. Xiao Lin was not a worm in Asabanor’s stomach; how could he know what the madman was planning?

However, Xiao Lin held back, thinking for a moment before saying, “I was once in the Final Lands...”

“The Final Lands, isn’t that... How is that possible...”

“Fine, fine!” Xiao Lin interrupted, helplessly saying, “That’s not important. Basically, I’ve seen an entire army that was created by Asabanor. An undead army in the tens of thousands.”

Taking a deep breath, Xiao Lin’s tone got more serious. “Defeating us is not something he can do alone. He needs soldiers, an endless supply of soldiers. However, he had already lost his country, position and all his power in this world. It would be impossible for him to gather enough forces by himself, so what do you think the best choice for him is?”

“An army of undead!” the king said.

“That’s right.” Xiao Lin looked at the king with a look that said ‘so you’re not stupid’. After that, he said his own conclusion, “If Asabanor manages to control the royal city he would turn the city into the base of his undead forces. All life and all flesh and blood in the city would be his resources. Of course, us otherworlders probably count as high-quality materials to him.”

“Just him alone?” The king was in disbelief. There were quite a few necromancers among the dark races in the Rosa Kingdom, and the king had some understanding of them. He knew that it would be impossible for just one person to convert that many undead. If the necromancers dared to even think about something like that, the Rosa Kingdom would have long since chased them out.

“It’s up to you to believe it or not. Other necromancers might not be able to do it, but it would not be a problem for him. In truth, I’m really suspecting that those royal troops outside the city were all turned into undead by just his power alone!”

In truth, Xiao Lin did not know how strong Asabanor was. Back in the Final Lands, the Asabanor they met was just in a spirit state, and his soul had also taken a big hit when they traveled back to Planet Norma. That was why Xiao Lin had no way of estimating Asabanor’s true strength, but it was undeniable that Asabanor was only getting stronger as time went on.

The king fell silent again. Xiao Lin looked at the old man who was deep in thought, and decided to leave the palace, but the king once again called out to him.

“His residence.”

“What?”

“In the garden at the back of his residence, there should be an underground passage. I don’t know where the passage leads, and I’ve never asked him.”

Pausing for a few seconds, Xiao Lin did not even have the time to thank the king after he realized what the king meant, not even thinking about why the king suddenly wanted to help. Xiao Lin realized that time was of the essence and flew out, quickly gathering the guards within the palace.

Even though he was a commander, he still had no authority over the guards that protected the king. However, the king sat on the throne within the palace and waved in acknowledgement. The guards did not hesitate. They knew that the better choice was to follow Xiao Lin.

Chapter 528 - Battle In The Garden

Chapter 528: Battle In The Garden

The residence of the ex-commander was not far away from the palace. It was an incredibly beautiful manor. Xiao Lin brought his men and rushed right in, but did not notice anyone there. There were not even any traces of any guards or servants. Xiao Lin got his men to look around the building, but no reliable clues were found. All that was found were ashes on the floor. The minister had probably burned everything.

The soldiers who were investigating were also unhappy because there did not seem to be anything valuable in the house. After that, Xiao Lin brought the soldiers over to the garden the king mentioned. Besides the run-down manor, there were various vibrant flowers in the garden that looked extremely valuable. The flowers looked like they were very expensive as well. The Rosa Kingdom was named after the rose; the flowers from the kingdom were also quite famous around Planet Norma, and were all worth quite a bit.

The soldiers looked at each other, all showing signs of greed. They had not managed to find anything valuable when they were investigating and were quite unhappy, hence picking up a few of the flowers seemed like the most obvious thing to do at that time.

Xiao Lin did not bother stopping them; he had been looking for the underground passage. After a few minutes, the garden that had been thoroughly ransacked started to emit a multi-colored mist. Xiao Lin was suddenly on alert, and was about to give an order when he noticed that the soldiers had all collapsed in the garden, clutching their throats. Their faces had reddened, as if they could not breathe.

Xiao Lin took out his Holy Sword, and unleashed his flame sword aura, opening a path in front of him before he fled the garden. The soldiers standing outside were not affected due to the distance, but when Xiao Lin escaped, almost half of the soldiers were already lying down on the garden floor.

“What flowers are those!” Xiao Lin asked the soldiers that remained.

They trembled, not having recovered from the horror. They only responded after Xiao Lin shouted a few more times, but they all collectively said that the flowers were all the usual notable ones that circulated in upper society, which meant it was impossible for them to be poisonous.

That was all information that could be easily verified, so Xiao Lin was not worried that they were lying. Since the flowers themselves were harmless, then it was obvious that someone had added the poison. That minister had definitely expected someone would find the place, and had tried using the poisons to stall for time.

Xiao Lin waved his Holy Sword, unleashing his flame sword aura as he burned away all the flowers and plants in the garden. It helped get rid of the poison, but the pollen in the air had served to help worsen the fire, and the suddenly massive flames caused Xiao Lin and everyone else to take a step back before Xiao Lin asked them to look for a source of water to put out the flames.

It took an hour before the fire was thoroughly extinguished, and the pollen in the air was gone as well. Xiao Lin then carefully re-entered the garden. The underground passage had been uncovered after the large fire, so he found the entrance that was hidden in a corner very quickly.

The passage looked very old, and was probably something that was built a long time before. Xiao Lin quickly heard some strange movements not long after he entered. He was immediately on high alert, and got someone to get a magical light to illuminate the passage. In the dim light, Xiao Lin could make out a silhouette.

“I see you! Come out!” Xiao Lin shouted before repeating himself in Normese.

“I understand you!” someone quickly responded in Mandarin.

The silhouette slowly walked over, and Xiao Lin chose to wait there. The narrow passage was not somewhere appropriate for battle. It was a middle-aged man in casual clothes. He was not holding weapons. He had a grey head of hair. Xiao Lin remembered seeing him the first time he entered the palace, and quickly found out from the soldiers that he was the military minister—the traitor.

“Where are the energy stones?” Xiao Lin immediately said.

The man coldly pointed to the passage behind him.

An unsurprising answer, Xiao Lin said, “If I want you to leave this place, you’ll definitely not agree, right?”

The man smiled mockingly. “My family was killed by your people. What do you think?”

Xiao Lin did not bother explaining the difference between Judge Academy and Dawn Academy to the man. Xiao Lin raised his Holy Sword and said, “The king told me about it. I emphasize with what happened to you, but everyone in the city has families. If you aren’t going to give way, then I’ll have to send you to your family.”

“So it was the king?” The man sighed. “I thought I could stall for even more time, but his heart has gone soft! No matter. Since I’m here, none of you will be able to leave!”

Xiao Lin was a little confused. Even though he knew the man wanted to stall for time, that also meant he was guaranteed to die. The power of hatred was really shocking.

As empathetic as he was, Xiao Lin would still not show mercy.

Miracle!

Ruin!

A grey light flashed in his eyes, and Xiao Lin’s entire body was brought to the highest state of combat. He suddenly appeared in front of the man in a flash, thrusting out his Holy Sword. With the angle and speed, the opponent could only widen his mouth in shock, and looked on as the wound on his body started to bleed.

Xiao Lin sighed as he sheathed his blade, and was about to get the soldiers to drag the injured man out. He did not kill the man because Xiao Lin wanted him alive to get more information on the rebels and Asabanor. To the soldiers that were defending the city, that information was worth about as much as the energy stones.

As he was turning his head, Xiao Lin saw the man struggle as he took out a vial of deep green liquid. The man used his teeth to open the bottle and poured the liquid into his mouth.

Xiao Lin immediately felt like something was wrong and shot forward. He grabbed the man’s collar and pressed a blade to his throat tightly. However, he was a step too late, and a relieved smile appeared on the man’s face. He spat out blood as he said with much difficulty, “You-you can’t-can’t stop me!”

“Die!”

At that point, Xiao Lin forgot about rebel information, raising his Holy Sword as he slashed it at the man’s throat, but the man’s body was already undergoing dramatic changes.

Clank!

The sword only produced sparks when it hit the throat. A green, scale-like layer had already covered the man’s skin up, and was quickly spreading to the man’s whole body.

Chapter 529 - Battle After The Transformation

Chapter 529: Battle After The Transformation

Xiao Lin was familiar with this occurrence because just a few days ago, Xiao Lin had seen someone undergo the same kind of change in front of his own two eyes. In that form, the man got a huge boost in his speed and power, and had a certain relationship with the resurrection towers, leading to unlimited resurrection abilities, which was the most terrifying thing.

Xiao Lin once again saw it—a demon-like body covered with green scales. However, the man in front of him did not have a third eye, and when Xiao Lin opened his Eye of Truth, he did not see any threads. Of course, since the corrupted resurrection tower had been destroyed, he would not get any form of resurrecting ability.

Xiao Lin did not hesitate to use his flame sword aura while his Ruin state was still active. The dancing flames fell on every corner of the garden. Troops that wanted to go inside to help immediately fled upon seeing the situation.

Roar!

A deep roar came from within the flames. The green-scaled man suddenly rushed out of the flames. There were only some black marks on his body, but he was not injured that much. He had a weapon before, but it had already been thrown aside. With the expansion of his muscles, the armor he was wearing had been ripped apart as well.

Boom!

The man swung his bare fist, and Xiao Lin blocked it with his Holy Sword. At the collision of flesh and blade, an immense force surged through the sword, causing Xiao Lin's hands to go numb. However, under the Ruin state, his strength did not lose out to his opponent. The man was not that strong before, and even with the transformation bolstering his power, it was not at an unimaginable level.

Xiao Lin's Holy Sword had the destructive ability of a Gold-ranked weapon. Even if it did not have any other effects, using its pure destructiveness to cut through armorless opponents was the best way to show off its strength.

The man's right hand that was blocked by the Holy Sword was immediately cut in half. Flesh splattered, and Xiao Lin was surprised when the red blood that flowed out was contaminated with flecks of green. Valen's green blood could have been explained by him being a different race, but that man was definitely human.

The man did not seem to feel the pain in his hands, even though he only had half a palm left. He still shouted and charged at Xiao Lin. With the help of Phantom Steps, there was practically no way the man could hit Xiao Lin. In terms of skill, that man was much lower than Valen.

Xiao Lin's Holy Sword mercilessly left scar after scar on the man's body. The green scales could not defend against the explosive strength of Ruin. Xiao Lin could somewhat feel as well that the man's transformation did not seem complete yet.

After a few minutes, the man did not seem to have an inch of unharmed skin left on his body. After losing the protection of the scales, the flames in Xiao Lin's sword aura caused the man even more damage. The wounds that had blood pouring out were also burned by flames. Even Xiao Lin was starting to feel the pain.

However, the man seemed to have lost all sense of reasoning, and was still stubbornly fighting on. Every time he fell, he would stand up again in fervor. Each injury had caused his speed and strength to drop, but he was still unbelievably dangerous to a regular person.

The scattered soldiers had quickly brought reinforcements back with them, but the increased numbers did not help at all. Instead, they were all killed by the crazed man. Even if he only had his left hand remaining, just a slap was enough to turn the soldiers with Bronze-ranked armor into mush.

Xiao Lin took a deep breath; the air in the garden had turned scorching hot by his flame sword aura. He felt like he did not have much time left in his Ruin state, and Xiao Lin looked toward the man pitifully. Xiao Lin could somewhat empathize with the man; to be able to fight in that state for the sake of stalling for time showed how deep the man's hatred went.

If it were the regular troops from the royal city that came to investigate, they would probably have been delayed by at least half a day by that man. Sadly, the one he met was Xiao Lin.

Looking at the wounds on his body, Xiao Lin understood that the strengthened body was very hard to kill in one strike. In order to make sure he was completely dead, Xiao Lin would need more power.

He shouted, getting the surrounding soldiers to leave. The soldiers immediately fled when they heard the order. The man was basically a demon to them.

Dragon Breath Sword!

Xiao Lin once again awakened the dragon breath that was deep within his consciousness. The dragon breath immediately surged forward, and with the gentle drop of a sword, the dragon breath completely swallowed the man up.

As Xiao Lin's most powerful skill, the strength of dragon breath was immeasurable. Even Xiao Lin did not know how strong that sword aura was. It might have been Bronze? Silver? Even Gold?

Xiao Lin did not know, but he knew that even the transformed man could not withstand it. After using his dragon breath sword, Xiao Lin slipped out of the Ruin state in exhaustion. Thankfully, the increase in his attributes allowed him to not collapse on the spot. Looking at the remnants of the garden, the man's corpse had been disintegrated by the dragon breath, and what was left was only a mangled corpse. He ordered a few soldiers to bring the corpse back and guard it properly.

Be it Valen Argos or that man, their transformations were both very suspicious. It was definitely not a form of power that Dawn Academy had mastered. If he brought it back, Xiao Lin believed a certain Logistics Department Head would happily research it.

The reinforcements were still coming in, and no one hesitated to follow Xiao Lin's orders. Even if they were afraid of the man's corpse, they were more terrified of Xiao Lin's skill than he showed earlier. This planet emphasized strength, and his strength was much more convincing than his rank as a commander.

Leaving behind a group to clean up the garden and to look for any clues they missed, Xiao Lin put aside the fatigue of his body and brought the remaining people into the passage.

The passageway was very long, but it was spacious. Everywhere had been properly reinforced as well. It was obvious that the passage had been made a long time ago, but it had been cut off halfway in. Piles of collapsed rubble completely blocked their way. The scope of the collapse was large as well, and it would take at least half a day to clear. However, if they took that much time, then they would be in deep trouble.

Chapter 530 - Visit

Chapter 530: Visit

Xiao Lin was furious, but ultimately powerless. The man had actually managed to delay them. Even if it was only a very short time, the intensity of their battle had been felt from kilometers away. Those that were secretly transporting the energy stones had definitely felt the danger behind them, and decided to destroy the passage.

Since it had already collapsed, it was definitely too late to go after the energy stones. Thinking it over, Xiao Lin decided to abandon clearing up the passage. That was because he suddenly understood why the man had spent so much effort digging the passage. It was obviously not to transport energy stones. If enemy forces appeared in the heart of the royal city, then the consequences would have been dire, so blocking the way like that was a good idea.

He had busied himself the entire night without anything to show for it. In the end, they had lost all the energy stones in the warehouses. After that, news from the palace came. The palace had their own energy stones in their warehouses, but they were all just low-ranked, and in low volumes. Low-ranked energy stones could only be used to power the normal defensive towers—the high-ranked defensive towers needed much more energy.

It was already dawn when Xiao Lin left the residence. The waves of undead had once again been repelled, and with the rising of the sun, the royal city once again returned to peace. However, it was unclear for how many more days the peace would hold.

Dragging his fatigued body back to the embassy, Luo Jianhui and the others were already back. No one had slept yet, obviously waiting for his news. Xiao Lin told them the general situation and the lounge fell into silence.

The defensive towers had been their greatest trump card. Relying on the destructive power of the high-ranked defensive towers, they could absolutely hold out until reinforcements came from Dawn Academy.

“How long can the defenses hold out for?” Liang Taibai asked.

“The normal towers can still be used for a month, but the high-ranked ones will only last for at most two more days.” Xiao Lin had already calculated the numbers that concerned their life and death beforehand.

“What’s happening with the merchants?” Xiao Lin asked. He knew that Liang Taibai had been with the merchants the entire day, trying to get more help.

Liang Taibai shook his head. “Very few of them are willing to help. No one is really willing to fight. You know as well that there are no resurrection towers at the moment.”

“Are they just going to wait for the city to fall?” Xiao Lin said in disbelief.

“Most of them want to try breaking out. They did not want to get involved in a war that had nothing to do with that. As for the other academies, we don’t even have to mention them; it will be impossible to gain their help.”

Luo Jianhui smiled coldly. “Those shortsighted people! Even if this territory isn’t directly ours, the Rosa Kingdom is still a buffer that shields us from other areas. If we lose this place, Dawn Academy would be faced with danger from all sides. Don’t forget our other sides are surrounded by the Endless Sea and orc territories!”

Liang Taibai motioned. “This is all within our calculations. Let’s talk about how we can defend this place, the reinforcements will need at least a month to arrive.”

“Why do they need so long!” Unsatisfied complaints were heard.

“There’s no choice, Dawn Academy hasn’t been faced with large-scale war for a long time. The preparing and gathering of the army—as well as the supplies—are not things that can be done in a matter of days.”

Pausing, Liang Taibai said, “I’m not very good at military matters, so please bring up any ideas you have. The price of long-range communication is too great, and I can’t use it a second time for the time being, so we can’t rely on Dawn City for now.”

Thanks to the betrayal of the minister, everyone now mistrusted the palace even more. As a foreign embassy, even if it was just in name, the palace should have sent a representative to military meetings like this, even just for show. However, this time they had completely ignored anyone from Rosa, especially since it was not the time to point fingers.

Everyone gave their opinions, but the main point was conscription—conscripting the entire city to help with the defense, especially the dark clans. If they were successful, they might be able to hold on for more than a month.

“We’ll need to rely on Xiao Lin for the dark races. Hasn’t Ibeiya been staying in our embassy?” Everyone knew of Xiao Lin’s relationship with Ibeiya, even if Xiao Lin felt like they seemed to have formed the wrong idea.

Xiao Lin did not have anything to add. His ideas were more or less the same as the others. They would need the strength of the dark races as well as help from the entire city to be able to defend themselves.

Even though everyone was tired after a whole night of activity, no one could rest at the time. After the meeting ended, everyone busied themselves with their own responsibilities. The main tasks were primarily propaganda and garnering support.

Even if most of them did not have much experience in defending cities, thanks to the education of Dawn Academy, they still had the basics down. Morale was definitely important, and with the war prolonging, the commoners in the city were very important.

In that arena, those foreign workers with years of experience were definitely very familiar. They had even seized the government away from the palace, but the king used his silence as acknowledgement as usual. Since the king did not object, the officials and ministers naturally knew what to do, and did not hesitate to cooperate.

Xiao Lin then brought Ibeiya to visit the dark clans. In order for there to not be conflict among the dark races and the regular folk, they had been designated a special district in the city. Even with the intense battles the past two days, the district was still very quiet.

Since the death of Valen Argos, the Argos clan had rapidly fallen. After all, that man had killed off his own siblings, and their remaining fortunes had all been seized by the other clans. That was all done in a matter of two days. The dark clans definitely did not show mercy when it came to those matters.

The first clan Ibeiya brought Xiao Lin to was the succubus clan. Even if Ibeiya was not very happy with it, she had said that after the fall of the Argos clan, the succubi were the most powerful.

The clan of succubi was called the Sisaiya clan. Xiao Lin had met one of them before in Valen’s castle—the voluptuous, beautiful, and mature woman.

“The succubi aren’t that strong, and don’t have that much of a history, but they’re very good at seducing men. These years, they’ve used marriage into other clans as a way to trap all the clans into their network. If we gain their support, we will have mostly succeeded.” Ibeiya had told Xiao Lin the gist of things on the way.

Elite Mages' Academy

Chapter 531: Succubus

Xiao Lin thought for a moment after listening to everything, and suddenly joked, “Ibeiya, do you have a grudge against that clan? Why do I feel like your tone is off?”

“There is no such thing as a good succubus!” Ibeiya said unkindly, turning around and looking at Xiao Lin with a pitiful gaze. “I only brought you here because there’s no other way. Please don’t toss me aside for them.”

Even though he knew the little girl was faking it, Xiao Lin patted Ibeiya on the head, consoling her and not knowing how he should react. “Relax, you’re making too big of a deal of this. How could I toss you aside.”

“Hmph, you might not be able to say that when the time comes. The succubi are very beautiful, and are extremely seductive to men.”

“Enough. I guarantee that I won’t be attracted, even if they’re angels.”

“I still can’t let it go. Let’s just head back...”

...

The two of them joked around and arrived at the Sisaiya clan’s residence. It was an old yet well-maintained manor. Even though it was night time, the lights in the house were still lit. It was not as luxurious here as the Argos clan, but each decoration seemed extremely unique. It was obvious that the owner had put a lot of thought into them.

“The mistress has been waiting for a long time. Follow me.” Scantly-clad servant girls led the way. The white mounds of flesh in front of their chests were very alluring. Seemingly feeling Xiao Lin’s gaze, the two servant girls did not have a shred of embarrassment, even pushing them up and looking at Xiao Lin with extremely seductive and teasing gazes.

Xiao Lin felt extremely awkward, and a white silhouette suddenly appeared in front of him. Ibeiya’s white dress suddenly blocked his sight, and the girl was glaring at the servants angrily, saying, “What are you looking at! I’ll dig your eyes out!”

“Oh, the little princess of the St. Claude clan is here too. You should look after your man better. Don’t let us snatch him away.” The girls’ seductive gazes somewhat lessened, but their words were very bold.

“Bring us to Sisaiya. She’s already waiting for us?” Xiao Lin quickly changed the topic before Ibeiya could go any further.

Sisaiya had actually been waiting for a long time in the main hall. There were quite a few people in the moderately-sized hall. They were either napping on the beast-skin sofas or quietly conversing around the wall-lamps. At a glance, there were at least twenty to thirty people, causing the place to feel a little crowded. The strangest thing was that Xiao Lin was the only man there.

There seemed to be a special fragrance in the air. Xiao Lin had wondered what the smell was, but quickly understood that it was the scent of the women around, and could not help but feel immensely awkward. Ibeiya was looking at everyone like an enemy.

Sisaiya had been conversing with another woman near the balcony. Noticing Xiao Lin’s entrance, she said a few things to some others before walking toward him with a slight smile on her face.

Sisaiya had a long black dress on, and the dress was adorned with tiny silver jewels, looking like the stars in the galaxy.

“Xiao Lin, is it? I’ve been waiting for you for two days. If you had not come yet, I might have paid you a private visit instead.” Sisaiya wore an alluring smile. Her gentle yet sweet voice seemed to be able to move hearts.

Xiao Lin was momentarily entranced, but an unhappy snort from Ibeiya snapped him awake. He exclaimed in his mind that the other party really was a succubus. Just one sentence was enough to entrance anyone.

Xiao Lin had read up on the succubi before he came. The information within the embassy was quite complete. There were some differences from the legends on Earth. The succubi on Planet Norma were not those horned, winged, and hooved creatures like what was seen on Earth. They might be called demons, but Planet Norma’s succubi were definitely not true demons.

In this world, succubi had a special, different name: cursed women. During ancient times, the original succubi were humans that were imprisoned by evil demons. However, the humans imprisoned there never submitted, no matter how much time had passed, and the enraged demons unleashed a curse upon them, causing the women to have a bit of demon blood in them.

That was why everyone with succubus blood in them would be born with good looks and hot bodies, enough to arouse any man. They were born with unimaginable subjugation powers. Even though this power was forced on them, as time passed, they were slowly categorized as sluts, and ostracized by Normese society, getting lumped into the dark races.

Remembering the information that he had seen was also a way for Xiao Lin to snap back to reality. Xiao Lin then said, “Since that’s the case, I guess you already know why I’m here. I need your help, as well as the help of all the dark clans, in order to protect the city.”

He got straight to the point, afraid that his judgement would be affected by the women. Xiao Lin had taken Ibeiya’s warnings to heart. The succubi might not be that strong, but sometimes seductiveness was scarier than physical power.

Sisaiya paused for a moment, her smile unchanging. She then pointed at the other women, not answering Xiao Lin’s question and instead asking, “Do you know who they are?”

“Your relatives?”

“That’s right; they are all my sisters. They are all sisters that have married into various families. This one is from the Argos clan. Oh, don’t look at me like that. Don’t worry, her husband was killed by Valen. She probably even has you to thank for that.”

Sisaiya patiently introduced all her sisters that were present, but Xiao Lin could not remember that many names. However, just as Ibeiya said, the Sisaiya clan used their unique skills to build an extreme network of connections.

After over ten minutes of introductions, Sisaiya’s smile died as she said, “We’ve talked when we were at Valen’s castle, and I’ve discussed with the other clans during this time. We’re very much against helping the Rosa Kingdom.”

“You’re not helping the Rosa Kingdom; you’re helping Dawn Academy, as well as yourself.”

Sisaiya blinked. “How are you supposed to help us? You know clearly what we need.”

Xiao Lin fell silent. Even if he already had a general idea, he was not sure if he had the right to mention it. To be specific, it might not be something Liang Taibai could make the decision on.

Sisaiya continued, “In truth, we don’t really like the undead army outside the city either. We don’t know Asabanor, but we don’t wish for outsiders to control the city and disturb our peace. At the same time, we don’t want to gain nothing from helping Dawn Academy. Therefore, I have a good suggestion, if you’re willing to accept it, everything will go smoothly.”

“Say it.”

“Allow Ibeiya to become the new queen of this kingdom!”

Chapter 532 - Ibeiya And The King (1)

Chapter 532: Ibeiya And The King (1)

“Allow Ibeiya to become the new queen of this kingdom!”

Sisaiya’s voice reverberated around the hall, and the women stopped their chatter as all eyes were fixed on Xiao Lin’s direction. None of them were surprised. It was obvious that the succubi had already discussed that suggestion in the last two days.

Ibeiya opened her mouth in shock, staring at the beautiful woman in disbelief and immediately rejecting the idea, “I don’t want to! You definitely have some tricks in mind!”

Xiao Lin fell silent, patting Ibeiya’s head and whispering a few words to console her. He then looked at Sisaiya. Xiao Lin was not shocked either; the idea had surfaced in his mind after killing Valen. From various perspectives, Ibeiya was the best choice.

Sisaiya looked at Xiao Lin and smiled. “I guess you’ve already considered that too. The Rosa Kingdom needs a new ruler. Everyone knows the current king can’t hold on for long. Originally, you might have been able to pick out an obedient puppet from the royalty that was sent away, but you don’t have time for that now. If you want to defend the city, you’ll need the power of our dark clans. However, we can’t help you for no returns. We need someone to represent us, and someone with the blood of Rosa royalty and the St. Claude clan is the best choice.”

“Is that the suggestion from everyone here?”

“That’s right, you can treat it as something all of our clans have agreed on, and is also the only condition we have to help with the defense of the city.”

Xiao Lin thought about it and said, “I will discuss it with Ambassador Liang, but I hope you can understand. Even if we agree on it, we will still need the approval of Dawn City in the end. Also...”

Pausing, Xiao Lin said softly, “This will need the agreement of Ibeiya herself first.”

Xiao Lin knew that the smart girl would not have missed such a development, but Ibeiya had not revealed her thoughts on it yet, and he would not force anything on her.

No matter what, the short discussion had come up with results. Since Xiao Lin still needed to prepare for the defense of the city, he could not stay for too long, nor was he very used to the atmosphere there. So, he quickly brought Ibeiya away.

In the embassy...

Everyone had already fallen asleep after working through the night, leaving only Liang Taibai awaiting Xiao Lin’s return with a cup of coffee. Xiao Lin was touched and surprised, but did not delay as he immediately recounted Sisaiya’s request. Since it involved Ibeiya, he brought the girl in as well.

Liang Taibai fell into silence. He was the one who instigated the matter, and had sent Xiao Lin to discuss matters with that in mind. He quickly looked over to Ibeiya, saying, “Ibeiya, are you willing?”

Ibeiya had been thinking about that the entire way here. Xiao Lin could not understand what she was thinking, and could only say gently, “Don’t let anything influence you, you just need to tell us what you think.”

Ibeiya’s expression was very weird; it seemed distressed and a little sad, but there were also traces of happiness?

Xiao Lin actually did not understand Ibeiya that much. She was cute and beautiful; if she had been born in a normal family, she would be a princess without any worries. However, her birth meant she had to go through a lot, and her youth had caused her to quickly mature.

Xiao Lin knew that Ibeiya had her own goals, but he was not sure what it was. Rebuilding her clan? Revenge for her father?

After a moment, Ibeiya said with a complicated look, “I don’t know. Give me some time to think. You suddenly want me to be a queen. Isn’t it too sudden?”

“Our time is limited,” Liang Taibai said as he furrowed his eyebrows.

“I only need one night.”

“Fine.”

“I want Big Brother Xiao Lin to accompany me!”

“Ah, that’s fine.” Liang Taibai did not hesitate to sell Xiao Lin out, temporarily assigning the city’s defense to Luo Jianhui. After that, Xiao Lin’s only job for the day was to accompany Ibeiya.

Xiao Lin had nothing to say about it, but was still doubtful as to how Liang Taibai would convince Dawn Academy. However, he did not voice any questions. Xiao Lin had yet to sleep the entire night, but Ibeiya was not that considerate of him. After leaving Liang Taibai's meeting room, she immediately voiced her request to Xiao Lin.

"I want to go to the palace."

"You want to see your grandfather? Oh, I mean Rosa's king." Xiao Lin felt like the moniker might not be appropriate, and called him the king instead.

"The last time I saw my grandfather was when I was three. After that, my mother and I were chased out of the royal family, and have never returned." Ibeiya called the king her grandfather, but her cold tone showed that she did not hold any feelings for him.

"No problem there." Xiao Lin thought about it, adding, "If you want to give that king a hard time, I can help you."

Ibeiya finally let out a laugh, her face looking much more relaxed.

Xiao Lin already had the power to enter the palace as he pleased, so he brought Ibeiya along to the palace, and got the servants to fetch the king, who was essentially a puppet at that point. After that, he had them all leave. Xiao Lin had wanted to leave as well, but he was worried Ibeiya would suffer if she was left by herself, so he stood by the side instead.

The king had lost a lot of weight in the two days. He had known of the energy stones being stolen as well, and knew it would complicate the defense of the city. He first talked to Xiao Lin about the military minister, expressing his regret, but he then noticed Ibeiya, and looked at Xiao Lin with a confused and questioning expression.

"This is Ibeiya, your granddaughter." Xiao Lin was looking down on the old man in his heart, but he still introduced them.

The king paused for a long time looking at Ibeiya before softly sighing. "You really look a lot like your mother. I heard you've suffered these few years."

"I was okay," Ibeiya said casually. "Uncle treats me quite well. I've been to a lot of places these two years, and got to know a lot of people—experienced different things."

"Why did you return after leaving?"

"I'd planned on remaining in Dawn City, but I came back to help Big Brother Xiao Lin."

"It seems like you have a good relationship with him."

"It's at least better than with you!"

"Ah, your personality is a lot like your mothers."

"Really? My mother died when I was very young, so I don't really remember much about her."

...

The two of them chatted like that; to anyone who did not know the situation, it would look like two old friends talking to each other. There was no conflict, no venting. Everything was very calm. It was so calm Xiao Lin felt a sense of surrealness.

Elite Mages' Academy

Chapter 533: Ibeiya And The King (2)

With some things, the more normal they were, the more abnormal they seemed.

After losing both her parents since she was young, and even getting abandoned by the royal family, Ibeiya should hate Rosa's royalty as well as her own grandfather. The king did not seem to have cared for his granddaughter of mixed blood. If Xiao Lin had not told the king, the king would probably have never thought of Ibeiya.

Xiao Lin was sitting by the side, drinking some tea as he quietly listened on. The more he listened, the weirder it felt. Ibeiya's tone was very normal, no trace of excitement for seeing a relative, nor was there any trace of hatred or anger. The king seemed to be talking normally as well, asking Ibeiya about her life over the past years. His voice had no trace of regret or pity.

Ibeiya had wanted to see the king herself. Xiao Lin had been thinking about it on the way, but never found the answer. Ibeiya had not seen her grandfather for many years. Ibeiya absolutely would not have had the chance to enter the palace after she was chased out.

However, was Ibeiya just there to chat?

Xiao Lin could only listen patiently. Finally, the king's questions seemed to stop, and the two of them fell silent. After a few minutes Ibeiya's large eyes glinted as she used a cool tone to ask, "Actually I asked Big Brother Xiao Lin to bring me over this time to ask you a question."

"Is it about your mother?" the king said.

"No, I said it earlier. I'm thankful to my mother for giving birth to me, but my only memory of her stops at a drawing at home. It was my father that brought me up, but regretfully he was killed by hunters five years ago."

After pausing, Ibeiya's tone went even colder, even having some killing intent. "You should know, since the Rosa Kingdom allows the dark races to stay here, they do not allow hunters into the country as well. Why would hunters appear in my house five years ago? Those hunters had to be from the Sheikh Empire; that empire's religion treats killing dark races as a form of glory!"

"What are you trying to say?" The king narrowed his eyes.

Ibeiya took a deep breath, staring at the king before saying, "I've investigated it after. The church of the Sheikh Empire had a secret correspondence with you before, and after that, the Rosa

Kingdom suddenly obtained a large amount of money from unknown sources. Even though I suspected whether Dawn Academy was a part of it, I understood after investigating in Dawn City that the academy has been clueless on the matter to this day. I have to say you are quite smart.”

Xiao Lin finally put down his tea cup, looking at Ibeiya in surprise. The girl no longer had her calm face from earlier on. What she showed was dense hatred and anger.

Xiao Lin was starting to understand.

As a vassal of Dawn City, Rosa’s treasury would always be under the scrutiny of Dawn Academy’s embassy. Any use of the treasury would naturally be under intense scrutiny. Liang Taibai had said before that the king wanted to implement reforms that would circumvent Dawn Academy’s rule. Reforms need money, and any money moving out of the royal treasury would not have escaped the embassy. The only way would be to get it from outside sources, such as from that Sheikh Empire.

The Sheikh Empire was a large empire to the north of Planet Norma. It was a religious government. Xiao Lin did not know much about it; the most he knew was what Ibeiya had said. The empire hated the dark races, and their church had established an order of hunters. Anyone who brought in corpses from the dark races would be able to get certain rewards.

The more famous dark races would naturally be on the blacklist of the religion. Killing them would grant a lot of glory. The St. Claude had a large amount of history, existing since ancient times. It was no exaggeration to say that the St. Claude clan’s fall in just a few hundred years was probably because too many of the clan had been hunted, and they finally had to move to the Rosa Kingdom to hide.

He finally understood why Ibeiya wanted to go to Dawn City. The investigation was her true goal. Her mother had died since she was young, and even her father was killed. No one would be able to accept their parents being assassinated, especially when there was a plot behind it.

Ibeiya had chosen to investigate it all herself, and managed to find the truth. Xiao Lin looked at the king with shock. It was obvious that the old man had used the life and information of the father of his own granddaughter in exchange for money for his own reforms.

After finishing, Ibeiya looked at the king, slowly asking, “Tell me, is everything I said true?”

“That’s right. I did it.” The king surprisingly admitted it.

Ibeiya trembled, clenching her fists tightly. Xiao Lin moved quickly, and shot forward, placing a supportive hand on Ibeiya’s shoulder while his other hand held Ibeiya’s fist. Ibeiya tried to resist, but her strength could not compare to Xiao Lin’s. Her fingers were quickly pried apart by Xiao Lin.

In Ibeiya’s white palm was a knife the size of a finger. The blade was very thin, but had a cold blue glow. It even had a shocking amount of energy circulating within. Xiao Lin estimated that the blade was at least Silver-ranked, or even higher than that.

“Give it to me!” Xiao Lin snatched the blade away. Hearing Ibeiya’s words, he naturally knew that she was there for revenge.

Ibeiya stared at him, softly roaring, “Big Brother, why are you stopping me!”

“Because he knows that, even if I deserve to die, it’s not the time, and I can’t die in your hands.” The one who answered was the king on the throne. The king had already gotten up and was walking down.

Xiao Lin pulled Ibeiya behind him, and suddenly rushed forward, smashing a fist into the King’s face. With his power at that moment, he sent the defenseless king flying back a dozen meters, even destroying the throne.

The servants outside immediately rushed over after hearing the commotion, but they looked at each other when they saw the scene, not daring to make a move on Xiao Lin, nor did they dare to leave the king just as he was. They did not know if Xiao Lin was planning on killing the king at that moment. If the king died, they would definitely end up joining him.

“I’m fine.” The king stood up, waving his hands to command the servants to leave. The right side of the king’s face had swelled up, and his lips were bloodied. Even speaking was hard.

Chapter 534 - Ibeiya And The King (3)

Chapter 534: Ibeiya And The King (3)

The king crawled up and grasped the pendant in front of his chest, opening it before pouring the liquid into his mouth. Quickly, the wound on his face began to recover. His face was calm, not seeming angry at all. However, he warily looked at Xiao Lin, saying, “If you’re planning on doing anything more, you’ll need to get me more potions. All I have with me is this.”

Xiao Lin composed himself, looking at the calm king, Xiao Lin’s fist that fell to his side. The king understood very well that Xiao Lin could not kill him right there. Even if the king was injured, they would need to cure the king. Even if Dawn Academy did not like the king, the king could not die while they were still defending the city.

“We have a saying in my hometown; as evil as a tiger is, they do not eat their children. Even if you didn’t acknowledge your son-in-law, were you willing to let Ibeiya turn into an orphan?” Xiao Lin mocked.

“I’ve heard of such a saying, I’ve read a lot of your books after all. However, I’ve also read that men of character do not bother about trifles.” The king had no hint of regret, and only stared back at Xiao Lin.

The king quickly looked at the furious Ibeiya, calmly saying, “I’ve wronged your mother and you, I admit that. However, I’ve never wronged this country. I’m Rosa’s king first, your grandfather second. There has never been any absolute rights or wrongs in this world. The otherworlder next to you came to our world with their kind; that is the true origin of all this evil. If you want revenge, he should be one of them.”

“Nonsense!” Ibeiya shouted. “Don’t think I’m some child you can manipulate! Big Brother Xiao Lin is a good person; our conflict with their people has nothing to do with us. All I know is you killed my father!”

“I’m not treating you like a child. In truth, I’m quite happy that you knew to borrow the strength of Dawn Academy. It’s a pity that no one among my children has your intelligence.”

Pausing for a moment, the king continued, “You really want to kill me?”

Ibeiya glared, but it was at Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin sighed. He had kept himself in between Ibeiya and the king. It was to prevent Ibeiya from doing anything, and also to stop the king from making a move. He mocked the king, “You’re a smart person, you know we can’t do anything to you now, but you won’t live for long.”

If they really managed to secure the city, once everything was done, Dawn Academy would definitely deal with that disobedient king.

The king smiled coldly. “I don’t need you to remind me. However, it seems like it won’t take that long now. If I don’t die, how will my granddaughter take my place?”

Xiao Lin and Ibeiya were shocked. They had never mentioned the dark races wanting Ibeiya to be queen, and had never told any one of Rosa’s officials either.

“You’re spying on me?” Ibeiya’s tone was very harsh.

“It’s not that hard to guess. You’ll need the power of the dark clans to protect the city, and they would need something in return if you want them to help willingly. With your current struggles, the only thing you can offer is this throne.”

Talking to intelligent people really saved time, Xiao Lin decided against hiding it, saying, “You’re right. What we need is your throne.”

“Alright.”

The king’s answer was very quick, and Xiao Lin and Ibeiya looked at each other. Xiao Lin felt like the cunning old man might have had some tricks up their sleeves.

The king returned to the throne, touching the cold seat, saying in self-mockery, “This seat isn’t actually valuable anymore. Ever since your people came to our kingdom, most of the military and financial power had fallen into your hands. You might even get rid of royalty before too long. I’ve read your books; monarchy doesn’t exist in your world! Compared to letting you choose another puppet, I’d rather let Ibeiya do it.”

Xiao Lin understood what he meant. If they did not pick Ibeiya, Dawn Academy would just choose one of his children as a puppet. However, Ibeiya was different. Ibeiya had the dark races behind her. When the time came, it would be a contest between Dawn Academy and the dark races. No matter what happened, the Rosa Kingdom would not be completely hollowed out.

“It looks like you’ve done a lot of research into our world.”

“It’s just about knowing your enemy.”

“Then can you at least produce a document of sorts; it would make it easier for me to let the dark races know.”

“Why would it need to be so troublesome? Do you really think those races, who’ve lived for centuries, would trust in a document? Wait for tomorrow. I’ll make things clear tomorrow.”

Make things clear? Make what clear?

Xiao Lin and Ibeiya were both suspicious, but the king’s calm expression seemed to have led them to understand something and they did not press on. Before they left, Ibeiya seemed to have wanted to say something, but the cold expression on the king’s face caused her to leave.

“Big Brother Xiao Lin, do you think that old man will willingly give up his throne to me?” Ibeiya suddenly asked on the way back.

“Of course he won’t be willing, but he has no choice. It’s the only thing he can do for the city.” Xiao Lin remembered the assessment Liang Taibai gave the king. Pushing aside his standing in Dawn Academy, the king was very responsible. He might not be a good person, but he worked hard for the country, even if that hard work was not beneficial to Dawn Academy.

Sighing, Xiao Lin said gently, “Ibeiya, can you answer me now? Do you want to be the queen?”

Ibeiya blinked, asking, “Would you let me be the queen?”

Xiao Lin more or less knew her answer, saying, “Ambassador Liang told me, the last long-range communication from Dawn City had given him temporary power over everything.”

“Then I’m willing to try.”

“Very well. Good luck then.”

Xiao Lin encouraged her with a smile. He was not surprised at the answer. As the last of the St. Claude bloodline, Ibeiya had too much on her shoulders. That was probably her uncle’s wish as well. If she became the queen, it would help the clan.

Xiao Lin did not know if that was the right choice, nor was he sure if Dawn City would allow Ibeiya to continue as the queen, but at least her wish would be fulfilled for now.

Xiao Lin reported to Liang Taibai when they returned to the academy. Liang Taibai did not say anything, merely nodding before saying he would reach out to the higher-ups. He said that, as long as Ibeiya was willing, Dawn City would not cause any trouble. At least for now, the most important thing was still defending the city.

Chapter 535 - Rallying The Troops

Chapter 535: Rallying The Troops

The undead army's attack did not stop for what was happening in the city. The moment night fell, the waves of undead once again rushed forward. With the energy stones that were still in reserve as well as the low-grade stones sent from the palace, the defensive towers inflicted massive destruction as usual.

The night passed peacefully, but when dawn struck, the undead army did not retreat like the two days before. They still rushed to the city without a care. The undead zombies were even more sluggish after being weakened by the sun.

The undead were all formally soldiers from the royal city, and the numbers had always been limited. Under the constant fire of the defensive towers, the numbers had kept on reducing. It was until that afternoon, when the last rotten corpse fell, before everyone erupted in passionate cheers.

The undead army was finally exterminated, coming at a minimal cost to the thousands of soldiers defending the city, giving them a huge sense of accomplishment.

Xiao Lin and Luo Jianhui, who were in command, could only smile bitterly at each other. The cost of their victory that day had been the last of the energy stones. From the next day on, most of their defensive towers would be completely useless. The enemy had obviously known that as well, and the goal of their undead army had been achieved. That was why they sent the undead army charging forward without a care for casualties.

Xiao Lin fell asleep in a state of unease that day. When he was awoken, he received a surprising piece of news—the king had committed suicide.

Liang Taibai told him about it in private. The king's body was found in his bedroom a bit earlier. Since the palace already had Dawn Academy's people stationed there, it had basically eliminated the possibility of murder.

Liang Taibai said it was a pity, but it did not come as a surprise.

"I should have expected this." Xiao Lin was silent for a while before continuing. He had been wondering how the king would hand over the throne to his granddaughter the day before, but he never expected the king to use such a direct method.

"It's the best result." Liang Taibai sighed and said, "Even though it's not a great time for the king to die at the moment, if he waited for the siege to end, we might not be able to get a say in the successor. The king understood that, which was why he chose the right time to commit suicide, preserving the best scenario for the Rosa Kingdom."

"This is his last will. It's meant for Ibeiya."

Xiao Lin took the piece of paper from Liang Taibai. It was called a will, but it only had a few words written in blood on it. 'Rosa is yours now'.

"Are there any movements from the military?" Xiao Lin asked.

"Don't worry, we've basically controlled the military and the finances. Even if there's a minority who swore their loyalty to the king, we've already got them in control. It won't affect matters."

The two of them had a simple dialogue and managed to settle matters easily. After he left the office, Xiao Lin suddenly felt a strange feeling. It seemed like he suddenly empathized with the king. He could feel how deeply Dawn Academy had encroached upon the kingdom. As long as Dawn Academy wished, they could do anything they felt like to the kingdom.

Ibeiya might not have had any feelings toward her grandfather, but she was still dumbfounded when she received the news from Xiao Lin. Looking at the words on the will, she suddenly said, "I will do a better job than him! I definitely will!"

"I believe in you."

Xiao Lin did not know if Ibeiya had the experience, but as the only successor to the St. Claude clan, he believed that Ibeiya would definitely have received some education on leadership from her father and uncle. She was set to be someone of power in the future. Even if it was not as the queen, she would still be the leader of her clan.

It might seem too early, but Ibeiya did not seem unhappy at all. After the initial somber mood, she showed a lot of passion, immediately throwing herself into her new role, taking charge of the relationship between the embassy and the dark clans.

Later in the day, Xiao Lin went with Ibeiya to the Sisaiya clan again. After an hour-long intense discussion, they managed to establish various initial points, including the position of the dark clans in the royal city, providing them with more rights and reducing their taxes.

The dark clans were very enthusiastic, but they still understood that Ibeiya was just a link. The real master was still the embassy. However, Liang Taibai gave them a lot of power this time. As long as it did not involve the three main powers of the military, the finance, and the government, Ibeiya was free to decide everything else.

Liang Taibai had even explained to Xiao Lin what the wartime chain of command was. Due to the cost of interspatial communication, the foreign envoys were free to make their own decisions during times of emergency and if contacting Dawn City was difficult.

The dark clans were very efficient. After reaching an agreement with Ibeiya, they quickly collected their gear and immediately sent out a force of over six thousand soldiers.

There were dozens of clans in the royal city. The smaller clans sent out less people and the larger ones sent out more. Amassing the army did not seem to have used up that much time or effort.

On top of the existing guard in the city, they now had over ten thousand troops in defense. After the large-scale recruitment in the city, they managed to pull in another army of over twenty thousand soldiers. However, that regiment consisted of commoners without any military training. They had added some of the merchants from Earth, which was the result of negotiations with the merchant union.

With that, they now had over thirty thousand soldiers in the royal city. Even though their combat ability was not the best, with the solid city walls, they could put up a fight.

The rebel troops were also quickly approaching the city. After losing their long-ranged defensive towers, the rebels boldly established their camps very near to the city, but were quickly faced with

a rabid magical bombardment from the city. Even without the defensive towers, at least one in five of the six thousand dark race soldiers were decent at magic.

The rebels did not have as many soldiers as they initially thought, with only around seventy to eighty thousand. Even though they had some siege equipment, they did not have any high-leveled magical mechanisms. In this world filled with magic, defending cities were still more advantageous, which was why the rebels failed to gain any sort of advantages in the upcoming days.

Chapter 536 - Xiao Lin's Guess

Chapter 536: Xiao Lin's Guess

Xiao Lin had been busier than he ever was. Even though the number of guards in the city increased, Liang Taibai did not intend on changing commanders. Compared to commanding a few thousand people and relying on the defense towers, he had a much more challenging time in command.

Xiao Lin was not a genius; commanding tens of thousands of soldiers was way too difficult for him. Thankfully, Luo Jianhui's experience helped him with most of the problems. Xiao Lin adopted a humble attitude as he learned from Luo Jianhui. He knew that the only reason he was still a commander was because of the relationship between Ibeiya and himself, which was like a bridge of trust.

Ibeiya did not cause any waves after becoming the queen. To most commoners, the king was something they paid no attention to outside of having some curiosity. These few years, even idiots knew that the real power in the kingdom was Dawn Academy.

The ministers who were loyal to the king obviously voiced their anger and objections, but they could not find anyone to stand with them. Who would care about them during the defense of the city? In the end, they looked for Ibeiya. Facing that young girl, especially with her reddened eyes and pitiful looks, they could only swallow their anger. They obviously did not know how cunning Ibeiya was.

With that, ten days passed, and the defense of the city got more and more intense. The rebels might not have been very skilled, but their bravery was admirable. They did not seem to be afraid of death or injury, and fervently sent wave after wave of attacks. If not for the lack of death energy, Xiao Lin would have thought they were undead soldiers.

After losing the defense towers, the rebels almost managed to make it to the top of the city gates a few times. However, the equipment the rebels had was too poor, and they would be forced to retreat each time, leaving behind thousands of corpses. With the torrential rain, the rotting corpses stank up half the city, causing everyone to have to block their noses.

The casualties in the royal city were not small either, and Liang Taibai was forced to recruit more soldiers from the city. Those untrained soldiers were basically cannon fodder, but that was what they needed the most. Almost half of the old and injured soldiers that were originally around had died. The soldiers from the dark clans faced the least casualties, but even they had lost almost a quarter.

The dark races were the main firepower, and Xiao Lin knew they could not afford to have the dark races die easily, which was why they needed a large amount of cannon fodder to hold the rebels back, allowing the dark clans' soldiers more time to rest.

Xiao Lin wanted to join the fight, but was stopped by Luo Jianhui. He told Xiao Lin that it was not the time; the situation was still unclear and the commanders needed to maintain their cool. Xiao Lin accepted the suggestion. He had quickly absorbed and learned everything, including Luo Jianhui's words and his own understanding.

"What do you feel Asabanor is doing?" It was not the first time Luo Jianhui discussed that with Xiao Lin.

"With the current situation, even with the high amount of casualties, defending the city won't be too difficult. Asabanor sees that as well. What's the meaning of this fruitless siege? After the dark clans joined us, our power is already equal to the rebels."

"It's possible that he doesn't really care about the lives of these rebels," Xiao Lin answered uncertainly. Looking at the corpses littered around the city, his heart suddenly quickened, as if he grasped something.

"Are you worried Asabanor will turn the corpses into undead?" Luo Jianhui smiled and said, "There's no need to worry. I've asked the dark clans. Necromancy has its limitations. These corpses that haven't been dead for long won't have much death energy. Even if they were converted, their combat ability would be incredibly low."

"That's true," Xiao Lin answered. Thanks to Ibeiya, he had established a good relationship with the dark clans recently. He had asked a lot of questions about dark magic, both to understand more about Asabanor as well as due to the fact that he had learned dark magic as well. The books in the library could not compare to personal accounts.

Initially Xiao Lin suspected Asabanor knew certain supreme magic spells. He knew that with Legend-ranked magic, destroying a city would not be anything difficult. However, those kinds of figures were all legends themselves, and would rarely show themselves. Asabanor absolutely did not have that level of skill.

Xiao Lin could not shake off a feeling of unease. He had mentioned it to Liang Taibai and some others, but never got any explanation. It was possible they felt that Xiao Lin was just facing too much pressure, especially since he was just a new student. That was why Liang Taibai gave him a day off, getting him to walk around.

Xiao Lin accepted the suggestion; he felt like he was thinking too much as well.

There was not a big change in the royal city despite the attacks. After the initial chaos, with the valiant defense of the city and the rebels not being able to take it down, the embassy also received news that the reinforcements from Dawn Academy were approaching. That quickly put the commoners at ease. Compared to the rebels, they were happier to trust Dawn Academy.

Of course, there were aspects that were affected as well. With the attack, activity levels had greatly decreased, and the price of goods in shops drastically increased as well. After a strict curfew was announced, the most bustling city in Rosa calmed down a lot. Xiao Lin walked along the streets,

and most of the doors were shut. The streets were filled with rubbish, and it was unclear how long it had been since the streets were cleaned.

There was nothing much to see with the royal city in that state. Xiao Lin was supposed to pass the time, but he felt like it was better to just turn back. The rebels had not stopped their attacks, but as the days passed, the forces they sent to attack the city were decreasing.

The situation did not look bad, and Xiao Lin constantly looked for the source of his unease. Looking at the calm streets and the occasional person who passed, he had a sudden thought flash through his mind, and he quickly realized something.

The scene in front of him was familiar, which was the source of his unease. He finally remembered why it was familiar. It was like his third monthly examination, the so-called hardest amphibious assault. They were tasked to defend the fort, and it initially went very well. However, at the last moment, their foes managed to sneak into the fort, and caused all their efforts to be for naught.

If the current peace in the royal city was just a farce, then what did the enemy—no—what did Asabanor want from it?

If the enemy's goal was to sneak into the city as well, then what did he want?

Chapter 537 - Surprise At The Casino

Chapter 537: Surprise At The Casino

Xiao Lin did not know why he suddenly remembered the third monthly examination. It might have been intuition or just a nonsensical thought, but the thought had deeply rooted itself into his mind. After much deliberation, he increasingly felt like it had the highest possibility.

Xiao Lin immediately returned to the embassy to let Liang Taibai, Luo Jianhui and the others know of his thoughts. Xiao Lin had gotten very familiar with the staff from the embassy, and everyone acknowledged the junior who was only a few months into the academy, with no one looking down on him.

However, they could not help but laugh when they heard of the guess, consoling Xiao Lin and believing it was a nonsensical thought. The possibility of it happening was practically zero.

“Xiao Lin, I can understand the pressure you've been under, but you're telling us that Asabanor's only goal from the start had just been to get into the city. The countless undead soldiers and all of the rebels were just the price of that. You know the amount of soldiers he has would be enough to take over a small country. What Asabanor needs at the moment is territory and soldiers; how could he give them up so easily?” Liang Taibai did not believe it, and was patiently analyzing the matter.

Not getting any help from the embassy was within Xiao Lin's expectations. He continued to walk around the city after leaving the embassy, thinking hard about what Asabanor would want if he was really in the city. What would be worth such a large price?

Money?

Rosa might be a small kingdom, but as the hub of the kingdom, the royal city did have most of the wealth in the kingdom. Coupled with the jewelry amassed in the palace through hundreds of years, it was not a small fortune.

He would have all of that if he managed to take over the city.

Walking as he thought, Xiao Lin ended up stopping in front of a large building. It was the largest entertainment center in the royal city, Century Casino. An Fumin had spent a lot of money on this city, building the largest, most luxurious building in the entire city. It was a pity that the money would all be going down the drain with the war.

Xiao Lin did not have much pity for An Fumin—they were merely working together. It was a pity that, with the siege, it was impossible to bring back what An Fumin had asked him to.

Suddenly, Xiao Lin looked up in realization.

“Many people have searched all of Planet Norma looking for this, and countless people have lost their lives for it too. Too many people want it, but have never seen it...”

The boss of the casino, Sun Jia, had said those words. The thing An Fumin wanted him to bring back to Dawn City, that mysterious object inside the box. Xiao Lin had been completely disinterested in An Fumin’s secret, but thinking about Asabanor, he was suddenly uneasy.

Surely it could not be such a big coincidence?

With an apprehensive feeling, Xiao Lin walked into the casino. Even if they were being sieged, even with all the fighting outside, with the explosions from magic still able to be heard, the outside world seemed to completely disappear after stepping into the casino.

Century Casino was one of the few entertainment centers left open during the war. Even those who were trying to cause trouble in the royal city did not dare step into the place. That was because at least half of those from Earth regarded the casino as their last sanctuary. The amount of colonists gathered here caused everyone to avoid it.

Xiao Lin’s Earth attire caused the staff at the door to be even more enthusiastic. The local girls had very revealing outfits on, and put on alluring makeup—even a smile from them was seductive. There were plenty of people like that around; most of the girls hoped to attract a colonist and to be brought back to colonial territories. That way, they could enjoy a life of luxury.

It was a pity that Xiao Lin was not interested at all—not in the mood to enjoy the attractive women. It was not the first time he was in the casino, and he waved the girls away, walking straight to Sun Jia’s office.

After the war, Century Casino remained open, but had fired a lot of the non-essential staff, which was why there were not many people around the corridors. Brushing past someone covered in a grey robe, Xiao Lin paused, remembering something before reaching out to hold the man’s shoulder, saying, “Please wait a moment...”

He had not even finished when the grey-robed man suddenly moved, immediately shooting a green light at Xiao Lin. Xiao Lin was shocked; he was very familiar with that spell. It was Disintegration

Ray, which could directly destroy the soul. Thankfully, he was prepared, and immediately took out his Holy Soul Sword from his spatial ring. The special material of the sword immediately blocked the ray, but at a price: traces of decay seemed to have appeared on the blade.

The grey-robed man did not want to fight, and immediately fled after using Disintegration Ray. Xiao Lin might have been slower to react, but he did not hesitate to use his Ruin state. During this time, he had been using Ruin with increasing frequency. The more he used it, the more familiar he was with it, and the longer he could maintain it.

Boom!

In the narrow corridor, Xiao Lin shot out like an arrow, colliding right into the person. His Ruin state allowed him to catch up and tackle the grey-robed man. The two of them collided into the wall, and with the sudden sound of the impact, a hole formed on the wall.

Xiao Lin was the first to get up from the ground, and he used his Holy Sword to open up the person's robe. When he looked at the royal cell with Time Rewind, he had seen a grey-robed man enter the cell, which was why he was alarmed earlier. What shocked him was that he had thought the grey-robed person who kidnapped them was Valen, but now that Valen had died, who was this person?

Under the robes was a refined woman with milky white skin and blonde hair. A woman with pointy ears!

An elf?

An elf!

It was not Asabanor like he had thought, but what was in front of him was even more shocking. The number of elves in the Rosa Kingdom could be counted with one's fingers, and only occasionally would an elvish adventurer pass by.

Why was an elf here?

Why would the elves work with Asabanor, participating in the kidnapping and attacking the royal city?

Xiao Lin's questions flooded his head in an instant.

Chapter 538 - A Special Transformation

Chapter 538: A Special Transformation

The elvish woman quickly got up, using her dexterity to pull away. She quickly noticed that her robe had fallen off and no longer obscured her looks.

The woman quickly saw where Xiao Lin's shock was from, and green flashed in her pupils. Her voice was raspy and low, feeling closer to a man's voice as she asked, "Xiao Lin? You're Xiao Lin! I can't believe you're here!"

"Do I know you?" Xiao Lin found it strange that she knew his name.

"Asabanor gave me a picture of you long ago. Even if I die, I will remember you!" The woman clenched her teeth, her voice filled with anger.

Xiao Lin put his hand on his Holy Sword, fully on alert as he asked confusedly, "Hold on. Do I have any grudges with you?"

The woman smiled coldly. "You killed my sister, did you forget it so quickly? It's really like you otherworlders. You've never taken our lives into consideration!"

Xiao Lin was even more confused, but he quickly remembered. When he was returning from the Silver Province to Dawn City, he was ambushed by an elf. In the end, he had used his Ruin state and dragon breath. He smiled bitterly, not expecting to have met the elf's sister. Was that fate?

"It looks like you finally remembered? You otherworlders say an eye for an eye! I had been planning on saving you for last, but since I've met you, I'll just kill you here. Asabanor will be very happy." The woman mocked. She was speaking in Normese, but 'an eye for an eye' was said in garbled Mandarin.

Xiao Lin could not help but let out a cold laugh. "I seem to remember your sister being a dark elf. It seems like you might not be a dark elf, but you still know dark magic. I can't believe the elves have stooped so low as to help Asabanor, I think that Judge Academy will be very happy to know this."

"It's fine, there's no reason to worry about a dead person. Asabanor just wants your body. It doesn't matter if you're alive or not."

Xiao Lin was surprised, and asked, "Did you come here for me?"

The woman opened her mouth, but stopped. "Trying to get me to talk? Quit dreaming!"

Xiao Lin shrugged. "It doesn't matter. Once we capture you, our interrogators will get you to speak."

"Capture me?" The woman raised her eyebrows. "How are you going to capture me? That special state of yours? Or that sliver of dragon breath you have?"

"If those are all your trump cards, then you can just go ahead and die."

Finishing her words, the elf woman's white skin began to glow green. Xiao Lin was shaken, and a familiar scene quickly appeared. It was not the first time he saw that strange transformation. From Valen Argos to the general, that strange green light seemed to have a mysterious power that could greatly boost someone's power.

The elf woman obviously had a lot of information on Xiao Lin, which was why she knew of Xiao Lin's Ruin state and dragon breath sword, and that they were both Xiao Lin's greatest skills.

“Even if you know of it, I want to see how you defend against it!” Considering the increase in strength after the transformation, Xiao Lin did not want to drag things on for too long. He did not hesitate to enter his Ruin state.

The woman’s transformation was quickly completed, but it was different from the two prior. The mysterious green energy had changed into light green, and countless complicated black patterns appeared. Her muscles expanded as well, but not to an exaggerated degree. The greatest difference was her back. Her shoulder blades rose until it ripped through her clothes, and two jet black wings extended outward.

The woman did not care about being exposed after her clothes ripped apart. She unfolded her wings, and swayed them in the air as she worked to stabilize her flight. She seemed to not be used to that state, and the wings were not very large. They were only around half a meter long. The wings were filled with leaf-shaped feathers, and the leaves were all green. They were also not solid, and formed by energy.

Xiao Lin immediately opened his Eye of Truth. Ever since noticing that ability, he had been using the eye more and more. With the Eye of Truth, all falsehoods were turned to nothing. He could see that the wings were a mix of dark death energy and shattered life energy.

Of the three main energies, life and death energy were not supposed to mix. However, the woman had the two energies in perfect harmony in her wings, forming an even more terrifying power.

“I know you’ve fought Valen and that stupid man from Rosa, but if you think I’m the same as them, then you’re underestimating me.” The woman’s voice turned more womanly, but was still very raspy.

Even though she did not have the exaggerated muscles and explosive strength of the earlier two, Xiao Lin felt a sense of danger he never did before. That was why after activating Ruin, he did not hesitate and immediately converted all his strength to dragon breath.

Xiao Lin wanted to use his dragon breath sword to kill that dangerous woman immediately. Even if it was a pity not being able to capture the woman for information, his life was far more important. After all, they no longer had a resurrection tower in the royal city, and they could not risk themselves.

The elvish woman smiled as she held her wings out two to three meters in the air, seemingly getting used to her state, and not bothering to dodge.

Of course, dragon breath had a very obvious energy-gathering stage, but that also allowed the special sword aura to be extremely destructive. There was no way to dodge with speed.

The dragon breath sword quickly completed and was sent out. Xiao Lin used much more power this time, and the white light was accompanied with an intense shaking of a level 12 earthquake. The entire royal city felt the impact, and the nearby Century Casino was starting to collapse.

The shaking continued for minutes, and even Xiao Lin himself shook under the immense ripples of energy. He had used many times more energy than he ever had, and even holding on was hard for him. If he ended up getting hit as well, there would be no way for him to survive.

That was why Xiao Lin only dared to move forward after the energy receded. As the dust cleared, the winged, green woman remained in midair.

Chapter 539 - Dark Treant

Chapter 539: Dark Treant

The dragon breath sword that Xiao Lin had treated as a sure-kill technique all along failed for the first time. He understood that dragon breath was not omnipotent, despite its high levels of power. The special sword aura allowed him to wield power that was several times stronger than his own ability, but it was still nothing to someone truly at a high level.

However, the elf was definitely not someone at that level. At least, she was not before her transformation.

More accurately, even after transforming, Xiao Lin did not feel like she was strong to any extreme degree. Even so, she perfectly countered his dragon breath sword.

Xiao Lin noticed a faint green shield appear around her, and believed that was what blocked his sword aura. The energy shield quickly disappeared, not giving Xiao Lin enough time to observe it.

He was still in his Ruin state. The dragon breath sword's failure did not stop Xiao Lin's attacks. He followed closely with a flame sword aura, the intense flames turning into the shape of a sharp blade. The woman deftly dodged it, using her wings as well as her innate elven dexterity to make it look as if she was dancing as the blades of fire missed by the narrowest of margins.

Xiao Lin narrowed his eyes. This time his opponent had chosen to dodge instead of blocking, showing that the strange green shield could not be used at will.

Since it was not an absolute defense, Xiao Lin was not afraid of it.

The dragon breath sword used up a lot of energy, and Xiao Lin could not use it twice in a short time, but each attack he made under his Ruin state was still extremely threatening.

Xiao Lin was getting better at using his flame sword aura, and the skill was no longer the same flame sword aura or wave blade from before. Ever since he started learning elemental sword aura, he had slowly been improving on his flame sword aura. His sword aura now used the natural elements that had gone through destruction and rebirth, and those flame elements formed the true flame sword technique. Its power was several times greater than it used to be.

The elf woman was quite shocked because Xiao Lin had only mastered that skill after heading back to the academy, and so it was not in her information. However, the woman quickly let out a cold laugh, and shot out rays of green light. Each individual ray looked a lot like a Disintegration Ray, but it was incredibly slow, allowing Xiao Lin to avoid them easily.

However, those rays of light were not aimed at him. It looked like the woman was just aiming at the empty ground. When the rays landed, they quickly turned into liquid. The deep green color had

traces of black and dark red. It looked quite disgusting as the liquids started to bubble and quickly seep into the ground.

After a dozen seconds, the ground started to rumble as if something was underneath. Suddenly the ground split open, and various plant-like objects rapidly grew out. Xiao Lin was shocked, but knew it was definitely nothing that would be good for him. However, as he prepared the flame sword aura, the elf woman rushed to stand in front of him.

This time the woman took on the flame sword aura, and the green energy shield once again appeared, perfectly blocking Xiao Lin's sword aura again.

At the same time, those rapidly-growing plants quickly turned into huge trees. They were many meters tall, and the trees quickly uprooted themselves from the ground, waving around their massive arms as they started to surround Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin suddenly remembered something he had been taught in class before. Some special elves had the ability to summon treants. It was obvious the one in front of him was one of them.

However, flames naturally did a lot of damage to trees, and Xiao Lin once again raised his Holy Sword, and streaks of flames turned the surroundings into a sea of fire. However, those treants were quite strange; their leaves were not a natural green, but instead a metallic black.

The treants did not seem to care about the sea of fire at all, and the flames did not seem to have any effect on their bodies. Xiao Lin once again used his Eye of Truth, and with his third eye, he saw that the trees were all formed by a black energy, which Xiao Lin immediately understood.

It was dark energy that combined with the unique elf ability of summoning treants. Darkness itself had a resilience against fire, perfectly covering up for the weakness of the treants.

Since flame sword aura would not be useful, Xiao Lin chose to use regular sword aura instead. Even though using other elements was not a bad choice, Xiao Lin was currently only more familiar with the flame element, and had yet to master the other elements.

The summoned dark treants were very strong. Each slam of their branches would form a crater on the ground. However, they were way too slow, especially to Xiao Lin after activating Ruin. It was practically impossible to hit him.

Xiao Lin's regular sword aura was also impressive. He just did not use it much normally. With the purest of the sword aura on top of the Holy Sword's own destructive ability, slashing those branches was as easy as chopping vegetables.

After a short battle, the treants started to fall.

However, before Xiao Lin could even catch his breath, even more treants started to rise from the ground. Xiao Lin understood then that the woman was just using the treants to use up Xiao Lin's Ruin state, and even hold back anyone else from joining.

The commotion at the casino had alerted quite a few people, and Rosa's troops quickly gathered. However, they were all held back by the dark treants. The soldiers had no way to deal with the

treants, and in less than a minute, dozens of the soldiers died while the others were forced to retreat for reinforcements.

However, most of the forces in the capital were all defending the city, and those merchants from Earth were not willing to do anything themselves with the lack of a resurrection tower. With no one willing to do anything, Rosa's soldiers were forced to ask for help from the embassy. All of that took up quite a lot of time.

Xiao Lin's breath was beginning to get erratic. The fight with the dark treants had wasted a lot of his time. Coupled with the fact that he opened with the dragon breath aura, he knew that his Ruin state would not last much longer.

It was the first time Xiao Lin was facing an enemy like this, so he lacked the experience to handle it. The elf was already quite strong herself, but she was using the dark treants to stall for time. It was obvious she was being very careful, and wanted to guarantee capturing Xiao Lin, not giving him any chance.

Chapter 540 - Absolute Defense

Chapter 540: Absolute Defense

Any reinforcements from the embassy would take at least ten to twenty minutes, and Xiao Lin's Ruin state had a few minutes left at most. Once it was finished, Xiao Lin would be like a lamb waiting to be slaughtered.

Xiao Lin saw through the woman's plan, and he started to slash his blade even faster, increasing his speed to the maximum. He tried to use his afterimages to avoid the dark treants and attack the summoner directly. His sudden burst of speed caught his opponents off guard, and the dark treants were not able to reach him in time, allowing Xiao Lin to appear behind the woman in a flash.

His falling blade was once again stopped by the light green energy shield. Xiao Lin could feel a very obvious feeling of his sword being rebounded backward. Even with his full might under Ruin state, his sword had been reflected and crashed into the ground.

Xiao Lin was shocked. He was not very familiar with shield spells, but he had learnt that all shields had its limits. After taking his dragon breath sword and numerous flame sword auras, the green shield did not seem to have been affected.

'No, that's wrong!'

Xiao Lin quickly pulled back after his attack failed. It was obvious that the woman's shield was different from the usual shields he had learnt about in class.

Xiao Lin noticed that the woman's expression had a look of obvious exertion each time she used the shield, and the shield would disappear immediately after usage. He tried to send out a few more flame sword auras, but the woman did not block it, instead getting her dark treants to shield her.

That energy shield might have seemed very powerful, even able to hold back the dragon breath sword, but each use seemed to have a longer delay between the other.

Xiao Lin once again increased his speed, but it was preempted this time. The dark treants had blocked his path ahead of time. Xiao Lin no longer cared about wasting his sword aura and charged forward. With a silver flash, Xiao Lin sword aura spread out like a fan and cut down all the treants in front of him. It was the Total Annihilation technique that he had learnt before, but the sword technique used up a lot of his energy.

Bang!

This time Xiao Lin's sword hit the woman. Even if it was just a light wound, Xiao Lin smiled and mocked. "I was wondering how skilled you were; it seems that your shield isn't that great after all."

"It seems like you've found out!" The elf woman touched the wound on her arm. Her blood was very strange; there were traces of black in between the red and green. She licked her blood-stained fingers clean, placing her saliva on the wounds; the wounds started to slowly recover.

"My Absolute Defense does have a large limitation; it's a pity I'm still not in my complete form. I can only wait for Asabanor's research on the perfect form after getting you... It's no matter. I've already blocked your strongest skill. You're nowhere near as strong as Asabanor said."

"You do know a lot. It seems like we'll need to capture you alive."

"Can you? I can feel you reaching the end of your strength. You only have a few dozen seconds left. You wouldn't even be able to defeat my treants."

"Really? I'm more interested in your Absolute Defense!"

Xiao Lin narrowed his eyes, falling silent for a moment before suddenly beginning his attack again. His powerful flame sword aura was unsurprisingly blocked by the green shield once again. After his own mental count, he managed to get a number-thirty seconds; that was the time in between each use of the green shield.

At the same time, Xiao Lin activated his Replicate skill. The target was the woman who had just used her Absolute Defense. He was not sure if he could properly replicate the skill since there was no way he could determine the rank of it, but the information that appeared in his head caused him to make a strange expression.

[Absolute Defense; can block any attack on oneself, only usable by holders of the Original Bloodline]

[Incomplete Absolute Defense; can defend against any attack not higher than one's own rank, usable by those with the Incomplete Bloodline. 30 seconds between each use; each use cannot be maintained for longer than 3 seconds, each use uses up 10% of total body strength]

[Incomplete Absolute Defense replication complete!]

Xiao Lin paused, he was a little confused. He did not know if the replication was successful or not, especially because of the strange conditions.

What was the Original Bloodline? What was the Incomplete Bloodline?

Compared to Absolute Defense, Incomplete Absolute Defense had many more restrictions, such as the 30 seconds between each use, lasting for three seconds and the fact that each use used up 10% of physical strength!

Xiao Lin did not immediately see if he had successfully replicated the skill, and instead recounted his thoughts. From earlier till this moment, the elf had used Absolute Defense six times, which meant that she had used up at least 60% of her strength.

That price seemed like a large one to pay, but Xiao Lin also understood that he only had, at most, one minute left in his Ruin state, which meant that he could only try to use up her Absolute Defense two more times.

The reason why the woman was so apprehensive was probably because she was afraid of his dragon breath sword because she was not sure how many times Xiao Lin could use the skill. There was no way she could defend against it unless she had Absolute Defense.

It was obvious that the woman had loyally listened to Asabanor before coming. She might have thought that Xiao Lin was a very strong person, or maybe she was just a very passive and careful person. That was why she was willing to use up so much of her strength to waste Xiao Lin's Ruin state.

Xiao Lin was definitely not her equal after losing Ruin state, he understood that. His opponent did know that too

It was a pity that Xiao Lin's dragon breath aura could only be used once in his Ruin state. He currently did not have the power to unleash a second one. Thankfully, the opponent did not seem to know that.

First of all, he needed to get past Absolute Defense, but the elf was clever. She never directly engaged with Xiao Lin when it was down, and would only return after thirty seconds.

He could not get to her, and could not afford any delay.

It was the first time Xiao Lin encountered such a cowardly fighting style, and he did not know how to deal with it. However, since he had replicated Absolute Defense and understood the mechanisms behind it, he quickly formed his own plan.

"It looks like you're actually very strong. Since that's the case, I don't want to play with you anymore. Bye bye!"

After saying that, Xiao Lin immediately turned around and ran.

Chapter 541 - Unraveling

Chapter 541: Unraveling

The elf had a look of surprise at that moment, and flapped her wings in rage. She flew toward Xiao Lin, but it seemed like she had never flown in that state before. She was not as quick as anticipated.

However, after Xiao Lin used up so much of his energy, his speed was not as quick as it used to be. The chase quickly reached a distance of a few hundred meters, and the slow dark treants were left behind.

The woman was not stupid; after her initial anger, she quickly noticed something was wrong, but Xiao Lin did not give her that much time to think. Without the interference from those dark treants, he needed to focus more on his attacks since he did not have much time left.

Flame sword aura!

This time the woman did not use Absolute Defense, even though Xiao Lin estimated that her Absolute Defense would already be up. She seemed to remain careful. Without the help of the treants to protect her, she did not simply use that skill.

She really was apprehensive about his dragon breath sword. Looking at her expression, Xiao Lin was certain of his earlier guess, but he quickly got even more conclusions. Earlier, his sword aura formed a few more wounds on her.

The woman was not as strong as he thought. More accurately, her strength was not expressed in a normal form, such as speed or power; it was a type of enemy Xiao Lin had never seen before.

Ever since the start of the latest semester, even though it had not been that long, and Xiao Lin had not attended all the classes, Gu Xiaoyue's notes had meant that Xiao Lin had seen the notes from most classes. Of those, a theory that was brought up interested him a lot.

It was a system of strength that the colonists had compiled on Planet Norma. As colonists, they were all immensely curious of foreign magic and sword aura.

The theory was called the balance of strength. The meaning was simple: there did not exist an unstoppable power. Physical power was like a food chain, and there was something on top. For instance the orcs had strength and physiques above any other race, but their intelligence and mental strength was far lower than other races.

Normese humans were a more balanced race, and could do everything, but they were not at the peak of anything either. The elves had dexterity and extreme reactions, but they were not very strong. Dwarves were extremely creative, but their own combat strength was extremely low. Even the dragons that stood at the peak all had their special natural counters.

There were no perfect races and no perfect strength. The scholars from Earth believed that it was a form of protection from the natural law of the world. His intuition told him the woman was strong; even the Incomplete Absolute Defense could still block anything within the same rank, which was still terrifying.

Even without increasing her rank and power, if she had Absolute Defense, she would be unbeatable in this world. After all, Absolute Defense could even withstand the power of dragons.

However, that was not the case. Xiao Lin had read about the strongest of the natives before, and had never heard of Absolute Defense, nor had he ever heard of this woman.

That meant that Absolute Defense was not unbeatable; it definitely had other unfavorable conditions other than the natural restrictions.

Xiao Lin was no expert in that department, nor could he figure out an answer in such a short time. It did not matter; if he could not figure it out, he would just need to directly experiment.

With the information from Replicate, Xiao Lin subtly activated Incomplete Absolute Defense. A shield formed around him, but his shield was red. It was a shield formed with pure energy, which was different from the elf.

Xiao Lin once again opened his Eye of Truth, and saw that his Absolute Defense was made of elemental energy, while the opponent's was made of dark and natural energy. He did not know if he was mistaken, but when he opened his Eye of Truth, he clearly felt that his Absolute Defense had a faint ripple, as if it had been strengthened.

After using the skill himself, Xiao Lin finally formed a deeper understanding of the skill. What shocked him was that the skill was something that had its own law.

Xiao Lin might not be at the level where he could create his own laws, but he had interacted with those on that level before, including in the Final Lands when Ivanovich got him to collect the Shards of Creation. All of them had close relationships with law, and Xiao Lin started to be more sensitive to it. When he used it, the special feeling led him to understand immediately.

The elf was shocked as well; she was even more familiar with the special properties of Absolute Defense than Xiao Lin, and when the red shield formed in front of Xiao Lin, she immediately understood what it was. She immediately shouted in anger and shock, "Impossible! How could you have Absolute Defense!"

Xiao Lin was full of questions as well, but he had no time to chat.

With only three seconds of Absolute Defense, the 10% toll on his strength exacerbated his exhaustion. The treants were closing in, and Xiao Lin used the precious few seconds he earned to rush at the woman.

This time, he used up all of his strength. Xiao Lin used his own body like a cannon ball and shot forward.

However, it was not because Xiao Lin wanted to do it. He had no choice. After using Absolute Defense, he immediately understood the skill's weaknesses. Absolute Defense not only targeted the enemy, it targeted himself as well. He could not use any attacks during that period, especially anything that needed energy. The moment he tried, he felt the elemental energy immediately disperse. The only thing he could use was that collision.

The woman widened her eyes, and the close distance did not give her time to dodge, so she could only activate Absolute Defense.

In midair, her faint green shield collided fiercely with his deep red shield.

Chapter 542 - Aftermath

Chapter 542: Aftermath

If Absolute Defense was the strongest shield, then what would happen if two of them collided?

Xiao Lin quickly got an answer. The two Absolute Defenses collided intensely, and their immense repelling forces battered against each other. The red and green lights intertwined. Even if it was not a direct collision of flesh, Xiao Lin still felt like he was right next to a tornado.

The power of the defensive law, or rather incomplete law that formed the shield, was great. The energy that emitted was even greater than his dragon soul sword.

The rumbling lasted for many minutes, until the last of Xiao Lin's strength disappeared. He fell onto the ground heavily, his Ruin state already undone. He had expected that, but the exertion of his strength was much more than he had thought.

Xiao Lin's initial plan was to still have some strength remaining after using Absolute Defense and losing his Ruin state; that was a conclusion he reached after using his Ruin state so many times.

However, now he was left powerless on the ground. Even moving a finger was as difficult as running a marathon. That shocking exertion did not come purely from Ruin.

Xiao Lin quickly understood why. He smiled bitterly; he was foiled by his lack of understanding of Absolute Defense, because after his Ruin state ended, his collision with the enemy did not end right there. The Absolute Defense that could only be maintained for three seconds resulted in a loop of energy thanks to the collision, and instead lasted for minutes, probably incurring a larger cost.

Xiao Lin was not in a bad state, but the elf was not better off than him. Her transformed state had been forcibly stopped and the dark treants had quickly wilted after losing her power. The woman lay down on the ground powerlessly. The only way she was better off than Xiao Lin was that she could still force herself to stand up. However, her clothes had all been blown off, but of course Xiao Lin was in no mood to enjoy the snow white skin that was exposed.

"You've still lost!" The woman's face was fierce. "Asabanor was not wrong. You're very special, and should be researched."

The woman moved her right hand, and a green light flashed. There was a beautiful dagger in her hand which came from the spatial ring on her finger, she then swayed toward Xiao Lin.

Despite her exhaustion causing her to have difficulty even walking, she believed the final victory was hers. In terms of overall skill, she was still better than Xiao Lin, and she wore a satisfied smile.

Xiao Lin smiled as well. He struggled and raised his right hand, and his bloodied lips let out a cold and mocking smile.

‘You’re not the only one with a spatial ring!’

‘Come out, black knight!’

The woman’s expression suddenly changed. Xiao Lin rarely summoned his black knight, and had never done it when he faced Asabanor, so it was naturally not known to them.

“Since you’re familiar with dark energy, then you should understand that you can’t possibly face my black knight right now. Just surrender.”

Even though talking caused him to want to spit out blood in pain, Xiao Lin still hurried up the pace of his words. That was because he could see the decisive look in the woman’s eyes; she seemed to want to kill Xiao Lin even at the cost of her own life. Of course, Xiao Lin did not care about whether or not the woman was alive, but if she used some self-destructive ability, Xiao Lin could very well be affected.

“You killed my sister, and you otherworlders are the mortal enemies of my race! Do you think I would surrender to you?”

“Mortal enemies? Do you represent the elves or the dark elves?” Xiao Lin asked.

“You’ll know all that soon...” After that, she shut her mouth, obviously not wanting to let Xiao Lin know more.

Footsteps could be heard from not far away, it seemed that the embassy’s reinforcements had arrived. Xiao Lin quickly gave the black knight orders. With the increase in his skill, his mental communication with the black knight got better as well. On top of that, Silverlight had somehow changed the black knight, and it completely obeyed Xiao Lin’s orders.

The black aura around the black knight’s large sword was also dark energy, but even a dark elf would be unable to avoid injury. However, the elf was obviously not afraid of death, and Xiao Lin’s orders were to knock her out or capture her alive.

The footsteps got closer, and Liang Taibai’s orders could be heard. It seemed that the ambassador had brought the troops himself. The woman suddenly lunged at Xiao Lin. Even with her heavy injuries, she seemed to turn back time, and had a shocking explosiveness at that moment.

The black knight seemed to move at the same moment, picking up its black sword and swinging it at the woman’s shoulder. In the end, the woman was no match for the black knight, and she did not seem to have any intention of avoiding it. The blade did not completely sink into her. Even without hitting any vitals, the decaying properties had caused her skin to start rotting.

Xiao Lin let out a sigh of relief, but he quickly felt like something was off. The decaying effect would cause the woman to lose her mobility temporarily at most; it would not be fatal with timely treatment.

However, the woman cast him a mocking gaze, opening her mouth and spitting out blood before saying, “No matter what, my task has been completed. It’s a pity I couldn’t kill you, but I believe that Asabanor will help me fulfil that wish after receiving the object.”

After saying that, the woman’s body crumpled as a surge of black and green gas rose up from her head, floating toward the sky before disappearing.

After a few minutes, Liang Taibai appeared, but it was just like in the movies—reinforcements always arrived only after everything was finished. Xiao Lin did not bother cursing; he did not even have the strength to open his mouth at the moment.

Liang Taibai looked around before motioning for people to take the woman’s body away. He then produced a vial, uncorking it before feeding it to Xiao Lin. After a surge of warmth, Xiao Lin felt his strength recovering, but there was not much of an improvement.

Liang Taibai was surprised. “You exhausted yourself to this degree; even a mid-grade recovery potion was useless. Who was that woman? Whatever, let’s wait until we’re back before talking.”

“Hold on!” Xiao Lin used the little strength he had recovered to grasp Liang Taibai’s arm, panting as he said urgently, “The box! The casino boss Sun Jia has a box. Go see if it’s still there, quickly!”

After saying that, Xiao Lin fainted. Just like Liang Taibai said, he was extremely exhausted, and the potion was not that useful.

Chapter 543 - End Of The Siege

Chapter 543: End Of The Siege

It was night time when he woke up again, but Liang Taibai told Xiao Lin that three days had already passed. Xiao Lin was still very weak; it was much worse than the past few times. After getting up and walking a few steps, he felt that the fatigue had not recovered, and chose to obediently lie on the bed.

At some point, Ibeiya came over and took charge of taking care of him. Even though the embassy had their servants, they had all been removed from their posts by Liang Taibai due to safety concerns.

Ibeiya did not have the demeanor, but during the key moments of the city’s defense, many understood that her sudden appointment as the queen was not entirely legitimate, so they did not care too much. She had been obediently taking care of Xiao Lin by his side for two days. After all, no one would expect Luo Jianhui or any of the men to do it.

Not long after Xiao Lin woke up, Liang Taibai and Luo Jianhui came over, greeting Ibeiya. They did not ask the girl to leave, which counted as a show of trust in her. Liang Taibai immediately asked, "About that box. Do you know what was inside?"

Xiao Lin paused. He had asked Liang Taibai to investigate the box before he fainted. He felt a sense of unease, and shook his head before mentioning his promise to An Fumin.

Liang Taibai smiled bitterly and sighed. "It's not your fault; that An Fumin is really too bold to dare to hide something like that from the academy."

Xiao Lin hurriedly asked, "What was in the box? Was it stolen?"

"Yes, we found Sun Jia already injured when we arrived. That elf definitely had an accomplice. It's a pity we arrived too late. After that, we interrogated Sun Jia for a long time, and she still wanted to hide it. If we hadn't found more evidence..." Luo Jianhui's face was cold; no matter if it was Sun Jia or An Fumin, he did not seem to like either of them.

"You still haven't said what was in the box." Xiao Lin's face was impatient.

Luo Jianhui and Liang Taibai exchanged a look, falling into a short silence.

"I'll go prepare some tea." Ibeiya consciously made a move to leave.

Liang Taibai stopped her. "It's fine, we might need your help with this. You should stay back and listen."

"Stop putting on a show. Was there some legendary weapon in the box?" Xiao Lin guessed.

"No, all that was in the box were some useless ornaments, but that's not the point; the box's contents are not important." Liang Taibai took a deep breath, smiling bitterly as he said, "The box is the important thing."

Xiao Lin was frozen in shock. "Are you telling me that the box is some incredibly valuable artifact?" It was obvious that Sun Jia had lied to him. Sun Jia had said that the box contained something countless people wanted but would never get, which was why An Fumin got him to transport the thing. That was because any normal person would think that the box's contents were the valuable thing, and ignore the box itself.

However, they outsmarted themselves in the end. Asabanor had obviously not been tricked by the two of them. Liang Taibai said that the box had already been stolen. Even though they were investigating the entire city, since the enemies dared to sneak in so boldly, they definitely had a way out. It would not be a stretch if they were no longer in the royal city.

"The origin of the box actually has something to do with Ibeiya."

Ibeiya who had obediently sat by the side without saying anything suddenly revealed a confused expression. Liang Taibai said, "Have you ever heard of the Original Vessel?"

"Original Vessel?" Ibeiya nodded. "Father mentioned it to me before, but I've never seen what it looks like. Father told me it was lost a long time ago."

“It’s something passed down within your St. Claude clan. According to our reports, the Original Vessel was lost a few decades ago. We helped to try and find it, to no avail. Now it seems like An Fumin had stolen it.”

Ibeiya could see the confused Xiao Lin, and explained, “The Original Vessel is an inheritance of our clan. I heard from my father that it’s been passed on since ancient times. I actually don’t know what use it has; father said it was just a vessel and did not have any amazing powers, nor was it a destructive weapon. It was just a useless vessel, which was why father did not care that much that it was lost.”

“We actually don’t know much about the Original Vessel. From the information we’ve gathered throughout Planet Norma, the vessel is used to keep and collect something. There are a lot of myths, and it is said that the vessel has existed since the birth of the world. After that, it went to the St. Claude clan during the dark ages. Truthfully, we all thought that it had more worth as a collectible than any practical usage, which was why we did not care about it too much these years.”

That was why Liang Taibai and Luo Jianhui smiled bitterly at each other. They naturally knew of it after working in the royal city for years, but had never felt like it was anything worth mentioning. However, Asabanor was not some idle collector who would put in so much effort for a useless box.

“Sun Jia did not know much of it either. Of course, we’re not sure if she’s faking it, and we might end up having to ask An Fumin when we head back. Ah, that cunning bastard, I really need to properly settle him this time!” Luo Jianhui was extremely angry about this.

“However, there is some good news. Your earlier guess was right.” Liang Taibai’s tone was a mix of awkwardness and happiness. “The rebels that besieged the city have left. These two days, we sent scouts to observe them. They were retreating very quickly, so it does not seem to be a trick. I think Asabanor made them retreat after getting what he wanted.”

Xiao Lin felt like it was strange. “The rebels have already taken over more than half the cities in this country. Why did they give up at the last moment? Were they afraid of Dawn Academy? I’m really curious as to their relationship with Asabanor; is it just cooperation? Or maybe Asabanor had already thoroughly seized control of the rebels.”

Liang Taibai smiled. “That’s no longer what we should worry about. Once you recover, we should pack up and head home.”

“Back to Dawn City? That’s quick!”

“The military will still garrison here as planned, but their task will be to rebuild the resurrection tower. This thing has caused such a mess, so we need to head back for a debrief.”

“What about Ibeiya?”

“That’s also what we wish to discuss with you. We hope Ibeiya will stay in the royal city.”

Chapter 544 - Returning To The City

Chapter 544: Returning To The City

Two days later...

Xiao Lin was sitting on a lesser dragon carriage, already on his journey. It was a carriage pulled by a wild beast with lesser dragon blood. It was very reliable, both in terms of safety and speed. Xiao Lin looked out of the window at the ruined village outside and the commoners in shabby clothing, feeling quite heavy. It was the third day since they left the royal city, and it had been half a month since he left Dawn City.

Luo Jianhui and Liang Taibai were with him, but behind them was another large group of people, including the merchants from the royal city. There were a few employees left in the embassy, and their task was to assist Ibeiya as well as communicate with the incoming garrison army.

Ibeiya did not go with them in the end. Even though Ibeiya was very reluctant to leave Xiao Lin, she faced a very stern rejection from Liang Taibai. Barring any accidents, the monitors in charge of escorting the royal family should already have returned to Dawn City, and the royal family would already have been under Dawn City's protection.

On the other hand, due to the war, Ibeiya had been appointed as the queen. However, if she did not gain the approval of Dawn City, her time as the queen would be numbered.

"If you head back with us, and on the off chance that our higher-ups want another member of the royal family to be the monarch, then you'd be in a very awkward position." Liang Taibai was vague with his words, but Ibeiya was a smart girl, and she quickly understood.

In order to preserve the power of the new ruler, it was hard to anticipate what sort of treatment she would get as a temporary queen. She could be imprisoned, killed, or even be used as a research subject.

No matter what, it was far safer for Ibeiya to remain, especially since the royal city had resumed its normal operations after the siege. Even if most of the work was done by the embassy, they still needed someone part of the royal bloodline to be the face of everything. Even if a lot of them thought that the young Ibeiya was not the best choice, she was definitely the only choice within the empty city.

...

Liang Taibai looked at Xiao Lin who was deep in thought, and suddenly smiled and asked, "Are you still worried about that girl?"

Xiao Lin did not deny it, and somewhat absent-mindedly replied, "I'm not really worried about Asabanor returning. That madman is single-minded, and will not rest until he achieves his goals. Since he chose to retreat, he won't come back. I'm just worried about the troops that Dawn Academy sent..."

Liang Taibai laughed and said, "You don't have to worry about that. They sent the first regiment; the captain is an old friend of Yu Mei's."

Xiao Lin immediately understood what was being implied. “He’s under the dean?”

“That’s right. I heard that the dean looks favorably upon you.”

“Aren’t you always in the royal city? How do you know that?” Xiao Lin smiled, turning lively as his worries were relieved.

“I might be a foreign envoy, but we’re essentially half working in the intelligence department. Don’t underestimate our information network.”

“Then are you with the dean as well?”

“I am with Dawn Academy.”

“Then, Ambassador Liang, who do you think is in the right in the conflict between the military and the dean?”

“Ah, that’s not the best way to put it. The political state of Planet Norma is much more complicated than that of Earth; there is no right or wrong here, only how many benefits are to be made.”

...

The conversations during the journey allowed Xiao Lin to understand Liang Taibai much better. The ambassador had a very deep and unique understanding of Planet Norma’s culture, history, and politics. To Xiao Lin, those were all things that were difficult to learn about in class.

Initially, Xiao Lin would still interrupt with his own thoughts. As they got further into their journey, he completely listened to Liang Taibai in silence, all the way until the carriage reached Dawn City. Liang Taibai’s voice had even turned a little raspy after talking so much.

Liang Taibai and Luo Jianhui needed to head to the foreign affairs department for their debrief, but that was not somewhere Xiao Lin was allowed to be at yet. Since he did not know how long the debrief would take, and Xiao Lin needed to hurry back to make his own report, they decided to part ways at the city gates. However, Liang Taibai gave Xiao Lin his address in the capital before they parted, and even passed a key to Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin rejected it in shock, but Liang Taibai forced the key into Xiao Lin’s pocket, smiling as he said, “Don’t be mistaken; it’s just a very regular house. I’m always out of the city, and will probably need to return to the Rosa Kingdom after the debrief. My house in Dawn City was bought when I graduated, and it’s been a waste with it being unused these years. We hit it off quite well, and you’ll probably have many chances to return to Dawn City from the Academy later on. Just use my place for now. It’s better than staying in a hotel each time.”

With Liang Taibai being so upright and straightforward, Xiao Lin did not reject his good intentions. He thanked him again before leaving.

When Xiao Lin’s silhouette started to disappear, Luo Jianhui eyed his good friend and said, “I’ve tried to buy your house from you so many times, but you’ve always rejected me. Now you’re so generous. Didn’t you know that the kid won a lot of money from Century Casino earlier? He doesn’t have to worry about his lodging.”

Liang Taibai was much more familiar with Xiao Lin than Luo Jianhui thought, and smiled, “With that little amount of money, he probably won’t have much left after buying a place in Dawn City. He will have many more places to use his money in the future, and at least he’ll be safe staying at my place.”

Luo Jianhui said meaningfully, “Safe? Hey, old friend, you’re freaking me out. This is Dawn City, not the chaotic Rosa Kingdom.”

Liang Taibai did not answer. “Let’s go. There’s a lot we have to do.”

“The foreign affairs department isn’t that way. Even though we haven’t been back for many years, I still remember the way.”

“We’re going to the administrative department, not foreign affairs.”

“So you’re going to meet the dean first.”

...

The two of them quickly disappeared into the crowd in Dawn City, and Xiao Lin did not know that they went directly to the dean. However, Xiao Lin faced heavy investigations and questions after returning to the military. His status as an officer was on record, and Yu Mei had been in charge of the test, so Xiao Lin naturally needed to report back to the military the moment he got back. Furthermore, there were many people already waiting there upon knowing of his return.

However, that was all within Xiao Lin’s expectations; with such a huge incident happening, they would need to properly investigate it. Many of the questions needed to be verified by him.

Other than himself, the other monitors were also investigated, but they had already been questioned a few times before that. Being summoned to the military was probably to verify Xiao Lin’s information.

There were many of them in charge of the investigation. Other than Yu Mei and the student union president, there were also many others of differing ages. Yu Mei did not express any form of familiarity toward Xiao Lin after meeting him again. Of course, that in itself was a signal to Xiao Lin that the ones behind her were definitely not very friendly.

Yu Mei did not introduce any of them, which also meant that their statuses were far higher than that of Yu Mei or the student union president.

Chapter 545 - Enquiry Meeting

Chapter 545: Enquiry Meeting

After everyone was seated, Yu Mei cleared her throat and began with the main topic. “First of all, Xiao Lin, please tell us about everything that happened after leaving Dawn City. I hope for a truthful report, so do not conceal anything.”

Looking at Yu Mei's meaningful gaze, Xiao Lin glanced at the other monitors who were not far away. He immediately understood that the question had already been asked to the others; if he concealed anything, he would just cause distrust.

There was nothing much to hide anyway. Xiao Lin started recalling, and slowly recounted everything, from riding the griffins to Rosa Kingdom and their promise with An Fumin, then to being ambushed and kidnapped. Then, he told of him working with the embassy to look for the other monitors before ending the story at the siege and the defense of the city.

However, Xiao Lin had done something there, and concealed Ibeiya's matters. After all, the other monitors knew nothing about it, and it would be part of the ambassador's debrief anyway.

No one interrupted him, and there was a long silence after that. Yu Mei and the student union president did not speak, and everyone's gazes landed on the few old folks sitting at the back. It was obvious they were the main actors of the questioning.

After a few minutes, a somewhat younger man cleared his throat before starting his questions. The questions were a little strange, asking about who made the decision to ride griffins, and whether or not he had prior ties to An Fumin. Then he asked how they chose the route after arriving at the Rosa Kingdom, the timing of the night attacks, and how the villagers looked.

If one did not pay special attention, he might not have remembered it, but as Xiao Lin's Academic Genius improved, his memory became shocking, and clearly remembered many of the details.

That caused the other monitors to have awkward expressions, because their initial answers were all very vague. However, the questioner did not care about that, and after finishing his questioning, he nodded slightly, showing that he was done.

"If there are no other questions, shall we end things here?" Yu Mei took the chance to stand up and speak.

"Hold on, Xiao Lin. How do you view what happened this time?" a lanky old man suddenly interrupted, drawing some strange looks from the others, but no one said anything.

"Are you sure you want me to say? To be honest?"

"Xiao Lin!" The student union president coughed drying, throwing a glare to motion for Xiao Lin to speak properly.

Xiao Lin shrugged, saying, "Fine. First of all, someone knew about our entire journey. Even within the royal city, it was obvious our opponents knew everything about us. I'm not suspecting anything, but don't you think that, instead of questioning us, you should be investigating our intelligence department?"

"So you think we have a traitor?" The old man helped Xiao Lin put his words into a more direct manner.

Xiao Lin said nothing, rolling his eyes. He did not say that, and he did not mean to directly convey it. However, that direct accusation still caused a shift in everyone else's expressions. The old man was unperturbed, but his words seemed to carry a form of pressure, continuing, "What? Why

aren't you continuing? You want to say that we have someone who sold your information to the natives. You think we betrayed Dawn Academy--no--betrayed humanity?"

The old man was definitely not benevolent; the pressure from his gaze seemed to be aimed directly at Xiao Lin. Only when two people's skills were too distant to be compared could such a pressure be formed. Xiao Lin had felt it from the dean before, but this was much more condensed.

"No, I'm not pointing fingers at anyone! Nor am I challenging anyone! However, please open your eyes and properly look at what Asabanor did in the Rosa Kingdom. If we don't stop him, the consequences will be unimaginable." Xiao Lin forcibly fought the churning of his internal organs and shouted out; only with his shouts could he slightly reduce the pressure the old man was forcing on him.

After he was done, even Yu Mei and the student union president were looking at him strangely, as if they wanted to remind him of something. However, no one had the chance to speak under that old man's pressure.

Only after several minutes passed did the tension in the room suddenly disappear. As if he had suddenly been relieved of a thousand kilo burden, Xiao Lin's entire body relaxed. His panting felt like he had just survived a calamity.

The old man already withdrew the pressure he unleashed, and calmly looked at Xiao Lin, "Young man, I know of your potential. In fact, your future will go much further than all of us old folks that are about to die combined."

Pausing, the old man's words suddenly turned stern. "But that's still in the future. You're still too weak now, and you right now have no right to give your opinion on anything. The dean, that old fart, protects you, and I can understand it, nor do I mind giving you some benefits, but do not challenge my limits!

"Do you think I wouldn't know about you intentionally hiding the vampire girl becoming the queen? Do you think I don't know of your conflict with Asabanor? Those are not things you can interfere with!"

Xiao Lin unreservedly locked gazes with the old man. From the man's tone, he was definitely someone big. There were not many who dared to call the dean an old fart in Dawn Academy.

"The meeting will end here; this matter should never have been something the little kids could interfere with. We'll send them back to Dawn Academy this evening. Other than that, I'm issuing an order under my authority. First-year student Xiao Lin, from today until he graduates, will not be allowed to enter the colonial territories." The old man issued the order leaving no room for objection, ignoring Xiao Lin's angry glare, and no one dared to voice any objections.

"Dismissed."

As the crowd slowly dispersed, looking at the old man beginning to leave, Xiao Lin immediately ran after him. However, Xiao Lin was stopped mid-way, and could only shout, "There's still the box. Whoever you are, you at least need to investigate it harder!"

“Don’t worry about that. You’re very special to us. Just graduate; that will be your greatest contribution to Dawn Academy. Don’t disappoint the last wish that old fart made before he left.”

Xiao Lin had wanted to object, but the old man’s last words stunned him. After losing his focus for a moment, he shouted in anger, “What did you say? Last wish? What happened to the dean! What is going on with the dean right now!”

Chapter 546 - Grievous News

Chapter 546: Grievous News

This time no one answered Xiao Lin, and the crowd left with the old man. Only Yu Mei and the student union president were left along with the other monitors. The monitors were all silent, since the presence of the president meant it was not their turn to speak.

The president exchanged a silent look with Yu Mei before looking at Xiao Lin. When the footsteps outside the door got further, the president patted Xiao Lin’s shoulder and sighed, “Head back to the academy.”

“I want to see the dean!” Xiao Lin obstinately said.

“Not possible.” The president rejected calmly but firmly.

“Then tell me that old man was bullsh*tting. He was lying, right?”

“Xiao Lin, calm down, and those words should be kept here. That man you talked to earlier is the national defense commander of Dawn Academy as well as the new dean. Even if you hate him, you still need some basic respect,” Yu Mei reminded him gently.

“New dean?” Xiao Lin’s face was in despair. He had just gone to the Rosa Kingdom, and it seemed like everything had changed when he got back.

“The dean is not dead,” the president said, “But he isn’t in a good state. He is temporarily unable to perform his responsibilities as the dean, so the national defense commander took it up.”

Yu Mei waved toward the other monitors, getting them to wait at the hotel. The next spatial carriage would still take a while to arrive. The other monitors looked at Xiao Lin who was the only one to remain. They could not say anything, so they left.

After everyone left, Yu Mei seemed determined, and lowered her voice while looking at the president with a fiery gaze, “There’s still time left. Take Xiao Lin to the treatment room!”

The president jumped in shock, staring as he said, “Have you gone crazy? You know how complicated things are at the moment. There are some people who are just waiting for us to mess up. With Xiao Lin’s status, it’s impossible for him to meet the dean!”

“The dean looks fondly on Xiao Lin, and the old fart has restricted Xiao Lin from returning before he graduates. If not now, Xiao Lin might never get the chance!”

“Hey, can’t you be more carefree! The dean has taken care of you so well these few years. Are you going to be so heartless?”

“Please, those are two different matters. My powers are only useful within the academy. Who cares about me being the president here? You should calm down. How could they not have anything prepared for us? Believe me, if we show even a shred of intention, we’ll immediately be invited to the investigation department.” The president’s face was full of helplessness.

“It’s no matter if you won’t help me; I’ll go myself. I don’t believe they’ll do anything to me!” Xiao Lin said in disappointment before turning around to leave.

Yu Mei was worried he would cause trouble and wanted to chase after him before being stopped by the president. After two minutes, Xiao Lin came back to the room, awkwardly asking, “Where is the dean right now?”

Yu Mei was amused and the president shook his head helplessly before his tone turned stern. “I did not tell the other monitors this, and you shouldn’t spread it around either. The dean has not recovered from the last ambush. The attackers used a very strong dark energy with decaying properties, and even resurrection could not recover it, so his condition is getting worse by the day. The situation isn’t great. The dean could hold it back before, but since a few days ago, he hasn’t been able to get out of bed.”

Pausing, the president continued, “We’ll obviously support you if you want to see the dean, but this is out of our capabilities. Put it this way, the defense commander is in charge of the defense of the entire colony. On top of that, he’s been appointed the dean. No one would dare go against him at this moment. However, we might be powerless, but someone can help you.”

“Who?” Yu Mei felt like the president was lying, but his expression said otherwise.

Xiao Lin could more or less guess, but said it with uncertainty. “Department Head Song.”

“That’s right. Him.”

Yu Mei had a look of realization, but suspiciously said, “I graduated early, but I’ve heard about him these few years. I don’t really like the guy who always uses his backer, but isn’t his backer the dean? I don’t know why the dean likes a useless man like him.” It seemed like Yu Mei’s impression of Song Junlang was very bad.

The president did not deny it, but said, “Song Junlang is not as simple as you think. Of course, that man is a little crazy, I agree with that... However, his backer isn’t as simple as just the dean; the one behind him is a very big figure.”

“How big?”

“Very, very big.”

Yu Mei was speechless.

Xiao Lin was concerned for the dean, but he was surprised as well. He had always been curious about the person behind Song Junlang, and had tried asking him before as well. However, Song Junlang had always feigned ignorance.

It seemed like the president knew more about Song Junlang, but the president did not want to reveal too much. He instead told Xiao Lin that Song Junlang happened to be in Dawn City, and got Xiao Lin to look for him.

“Don’t worry about the trip; I’ll delay it for half a day. The latest spatial carriage for the day is in the evening. No one will cause any trouble if you get there by then. Quickly contact Song Junlang over this time and see the dean again!”

...

After leaving the meeting room, Xiao Lin was at a loss. He was full of gratitude for the dean. The warm old man had always been supporting him, and he could not imagine what would happen if the dean died, no matter if it was to him or to the academy and the colony.

Xiao Lin immediately snapped back. He knew he might not be able to do anything. It was like the defense commander said, he might have potential, but that lay in the past, not the present. Even so, Xiao Lin felt like he had to do something, no matter what.

First of all, he needed to meet the dean. So much had happened in the Rosa Kingdom. Even Xiao Lin, who did not know much about the politics of Planet Norma, could somewhat feel how intense the upcoming storm would be. He needed the dean to clear up his confusion, not anyone else.

Song Junlang was definitely in Dawn City. More accurately, ever since Song Junlang returned from Earth, he had yet to leave Dawn City, and his current location was at the research center.

Dawn City’s research center could be said to be the center of all research in Dawn Academy’s colonial territories, including the research and manufacturing of various weapons, equipment, potions, as well as brand new spells and skills. They were all created there, and it could be said to be a place that influenced the combat ability of Dawn Academy’s army.

Chapter 547 - Song Junlang’s Arrangement

Chapter 547: Song Junlang’s Arrangement

Song Junlang was the head of the academy’s logistics department. A more crude way of putting it was that he was in charge of making food. However, that man suddenly turned around and started working at the research center, and it felt disorientating.

Xiao Lin relied on Yu Mei’s guidance and entered the research center easily. Of course, he could not enter most of the places there easily. In Yu Mei’s words, there were many secrets there. If he casually walked somewhere he was not supposed to, he might suddenly face a few Gold-ranked spells.

When he saw Song Junlang, he was doing a strange experiment as usual. God knew why the research center had provided him with such a large specialized research room. Xiao Lin did not have the right to enter, and could only patiently wait outside. Yu Mei did not want to meet Song Junlang, and chose to wait at the entrance of the research center.

Looking at Song Junlang walk out in a white coat, Xiao Lin paused for a moment, smiling bitterly, “Why do I feel strange looking at you in those clothes?”

Song Junlang smiled. “Do I look even more handsome?”

“I just feel weird looking at a weird person like you wearing such formal clothes. You look like a wolf in sheep’s clothing. No, that’s not right; like a monster in human skin. Ah, that doesn’t seem right either...”

“... Enough. You don’t have to give more examples.”

An exchange like that was normal for the two of them. After the last time on Earth, they had not seen each other for a long time, but that did not affect their familiarity with each other.

Song Junlang poured a colorful drink for himself and drank it like he enjoyed it before asking Xiao Lin if he wanted it. Even though it was fragrant, once he knew that it was a drink formed with blood from various animals, Xiao Lin rapidly shook his head.

Song Junlang shook his head regretfully, and after a moment of silence, said, “I guessed that the president would lead you here. Ah, that sly man; he knows that he and Yu Mei’s statuses were not enough to sway the military, and he decided to use me.”

“Have you seen the dean?” Xiao Lin asked.

“I saw him last month, but I haven’t seen him since he was sent to the special treatment room.”

Xiao Lin could not tell anything from Song Junlang’s neutral expression. He knew that Song Junlang was quite friendly with the dean. After all, without the dean’s approval, Song Junlang would not have had his position in the academy. However, Song Junlang did not seem to be in any rush, which made Xiao Lin confused.

“That old man might not be able to survive.” Song Junlang seemed to guess his thoughts, and calmly continued, “Even the resurrection towers aren’t capable of everything. When the power of the soul is finished, resurrection towers can’t help at all. The funny thing is, this method of killing us was not invented by the natives, but our own people.”

“Who exactly wanted to kill the dean?” Song Junlang’s answer had anticipated Xiao Lin’s fears, and he asked in shock and anger.

“We’ve actually found the assassin earlier on; it was an orc and human hybrid. However, he killed himself when he was found. Of course, everyone knows he was just a sad pawn. As for who the chessmaster was, it’s no longer important. The old man has made too many enemies in his life, and too many people want him dead, so even he probably could not guess who it was.”

Song Junlang sighed sadly. “Actually, the dean already knew of this outcome from the day he was attacked, but he concealed his condition and tried to arrange everything that would follow his death, including the transition of power. Right, that included your monthly examination as well.”

“The monthly examination was arranged by the dean?”

“That’s right, if not for him, even those of them in the military would not dare do so. He wanted you to temporarily avoid this storm because, as the power transitioned, even if no one dared to touch the dean, the dean couldn’t guarantee the safety of those around him.”

“It’s a pity he did not expect the examination to have been tampered with. We almost died.”

“No, he expected that.” Song Junlang’s expression was weird, but did not explain. “Astrology is a mystical branch of magic... The result was not bad—Ibeiya becoming the queen was the best result. Ibeiya is independent from Dawn Academy, and cannot be tampered with by the military. She’s also within your control.”

“Hey hey hey, what do you mean within my control...”

“I know how much of a pedophile you are, you don’t have to hide it.” Song Junlang shot an encouraging look at Xiao Lin.

“Let’s continue discussing the dean; is there anything I can do?” Xiao Lin said helplessly.

“He wants to see you again as well. Let me arrange it.” Song Junlang stopped joking around. That man was more serious when talking about the dean.

Xiao Lin’s time was quite tight. Since that defense commander that became the new dean had restricted him, he could only stay in Dawn City until the day ended, and even that little time had been fought for by the president and Yu Mei. After that day, even if he did not leave, he would be forced into the spatial carriage.

Once he knew of the old man’s power, Xiao Lin could not help but worry if Song Junlang could get it done, which was why he did not mention his request, but in the end, it was Song Junlang who brought it up.

Song Junlang did not take off his white coat. He first had Xiao Lin wait on the spot, and went out to get things done. After forty minutes, Song Junlang hurried over. He was still empty-handed, but the difference was a blue badge in front of his chest.

They met Yu Mei when they left the research center. Song Junlang was not familiar with Yu Mei, and rejected bringing more people to see the dean. Yu Mei had been unhappy with it, but she immediately had a look of shock when she saw the badge on Song Junlang’s chest. She did not even snap out of her shock after Song Junlang brought Xiao Lin away.

Xiao Lin quickly saw Song Junlang’s power, and understood that all his concerns had just been a waste of effort.

The dean had been placed in a special treatment room. Over there, the deterioration of his soul could be delayed to the maximum, even if it still could not stop the loss of his life. Outside of the

treatment room was the strictest guard in Dawn City's history. Xiao Lin could even hear the low rumble of a dragon in the distance.

Chapter 548 - Our Future (1)

Chapter 548: Our Future (1)

"Don't talk too much later. Just follow me closely!" Song Junlang looked very carefree. His skill was not that high, especially when faced with the guards that even included a dragon.

Yet, from the time they entered, no one dared to stop them. Every guard that tried to stop them would look like a frightened cat the moment they saw Song Junlang, and quietly move away.

They faced no obstructions the entire way, and Xiao Lin felt quite shocked. He felt like those people might actually not recognize Song Junlang, after all he was only the Logistics Department Head for the last two years. Those of them who graduated before then might not even know what Song Junlang's name was. Yet, they still did not dare to stop him. Xiao Lin could not help but glance at that unassuming emblem in front of Song Junlang's chest, and could not help but whisper in a half-joking tone.

"What kind of emblem is that? It looks quite useful; why don't you give me one?"

"Alright, as long as you're willing to come to my experiment room. I can even give you a dozen," Song Junlang teased as well.

"Then forget it." Song Junlang's experiment room was as good as a tiger's den in Xiao Lin's eyes.

"... Are you not going to consider it? This emblem is very useful. Have you ever heard about a golden immunity plate from ancient times? It regularly features in dramas. With just one plate in hand, everything goes much more smoothly. This thing is pretty much the same," Song Junlang said half-seriously.

"Where did you scam it out of?" Xiao Lin asked suspiciously.

"Hey, why did you say I scammed it!"

"Some of the guards I saw earlier seem to have left," Xiao Lin suddenly said after turning his head around.

"Yes, probably to look for someone. They don't dare to stop me, but I have no way of stopping them from summoning someone either," Song Junlang said, having foreseen everything.

"Then what do we do?"

"Hurry up; even though I'm not afraid of anyone, it's never a good thing to cause a scene. This is already violating my principle of keeping a low profile."

“You, keeping a low profile...” The corner of Xiao Lin’s lips twitched.

The treatment room was not in Dawn City; it was at a cave over a dozen kilometers away from the city. The cave had completely been dug out. Rumor had it that, during the first war against the orcs, it used to be a military warehouse. It had been abandoned after the war, and was perfectly suited for a quarantined treatment room.

When they reached the deepest part of the cave, outside a stone room, a man and a woman blocked them. This time, they did not wear any armor, but both of them had large blades glimmering with elemental energy. Song Junlang’s smiled. “I never expected the final guards to be the two of you. When did you come back?”

The two of them looked at each other before the middle-aged woman said in a magnetic voice, “We rushed back the moment we heard about the ambush on the dean. We heard some commotion earlier... I never expected it to be you. It’s been awhile, Monitor Song.”

“These are my old classmates.” Song Junlang explained to Xiao Lin, but did not introduce Xiao Lin to the other two. However, they smiled as they observed Xiao Lin before the man furrowed his eyebrows and said, “Is he the new student the dean mentioned before?”

“Who else would it be, but since the old fart made the two of you guard this place, I guess he never planned on stopping it. I shouldn’t have brought the emblem here.”

Song Junlang sighed, seemingly disappointed at his miscalculation. Looking at Xiao Lin, who was sweating, he did not explain when he pushed Xiao Lin into the stone room as he said, “Go meet the dean. We’ll stand guard here.”

Xiao Lin stumbled into the narrow stone room; the small room only had a large light blue orb in the middle. The orb had taken up most of the space in the room, and was floating in the air. Other than that, there was no one and no other objects to be seen.

Xiao Lin felt that it was strange, and could not help but reach out to touch it. He immediately felt a very strong suction coming from the orb. The orb soundlessly cracked open in the middle, and a row of stairs appeared. Xiao Lin followed the stairs into the space within, and the orb closed behind him.

Inside the orb was a completely isolated space, and in the warm white glow, there was a white bed. On it was a serene looking old man.

It was the dean.

Xiao Lin rushed over, but he was blocked by an invisible membrane a few meters away from the bed. He angrily began to hit it, and even wanted to pull out his Holy Sword to break it.

“Ah, that’s useless. If my shield was so easily broken by you, then I would lose all my dignity!” the old dean teased.

Xiao Lin gaped, “You erected it?”

“The curse I was inflicted by is very special, and we’re not sure if it’s infectious, so this is for your own good.” The dean had a white patient’s outfit on. He sat up in bed, but did not stand. He seemed to have more wrinkles on his face, and looked a lot older. In truth, in terms of age, that old man was already a few hundred years old; it was just that his strength meant that no one dared to treat him like an old man.

“Can the curse be undone? I know some people from the dark clans that might be able to help.” The calmer the dean was, the more Xiao Lin’s heart ached, and the more he tried to solve the problem.

The dean smiled as he shook his head. “Are you referring to the dark races who stay in the Rosa Kingdom? Back then, even Ivanovich did not succeed. This curse is currently incurable.”

Xiao Lin suddenly remembered that the St. Claude clan had met Ivanovich before, but the dean’s words contained an even more shocking secret, which made Xiao Lin cry out in shock, “Dean, do you mean that Ivanovich had died to this curse as well? Who is the one harming you in the shadows?”

The dean smiled, seemingly having accepted death. “That’s no longer important. What’s happened has happened, and nothing will change the truth no matter how much we investigate. Xiao Lin, I don’t think you came to see me for a matter as trivial as who the assailant was, right?”

Xiao Lin fell silent. He obviously knew he could not do something like that with just himself. After composing himself, he prepared to tell the dean everything that happened in the royal city.

Yet, the dean raised his hand to stop Xiao Lin, saying, “You don’t have to waste your breath, I already know of everything that happened in the royal city.”

Xiao Lin was perplexed and astonished.

The dean explained, “Astrology can somewhat predict the future with certain special methods, and I already had someone use astrology to predict the matter.”

“Then do you know where Asabanor currently is?”

“That’s impossible. Astrology is not omnipotent, and Asabanor himself is a very strong astrologian. If you have the time, you can head to the library to understand the art; I think it will help you... Ah, we’re going off topic. This time, I want to talk to you about the future — Planet Norma’s future, the future of the colonists, as well as the future of Earth.”

Chapter 549 - Our Future (2)

Chapter 549: Our Future (2)

This time, I want to talk to you about the future, Planet Norma’s future, the future of the colonists, as well as the future of Earth...

The old man's raspy voice suddenly turned deeper as he closed his eyes, seemingly in recollection as he said, "Do you still remember what I told all of you during the opening ceremony?"

"The part about the colonists? You said we would be able to obtain everything we want on Planet Norma; power, riches, territory and much more. Yes, I remember. No, it would be more accurate to say we couldn't possibly forget." Stopping, Xiao Lin smiled as he added, "That is the motivation for all of us putting our lives at risk."

"That's right, no matter what we say and what we admit to, there's no way to deny that desire is the most basic motivation for anyone. How much do you know of the history of the colonists?"

"I've seen everything from the history lessons," Xiao Lin carefully answered. They did have history lessons during the last semester, but he felt like the dean could not possibly be testing his classroom knowledge.

"Then what about Earth's history? How much of that do you know?"

"I know quite a bit of Earth's ancient history. I specialized in that when I was in university."

The dean smiled silently before he sighed, "The thousands of years of Earth's civilized history really is quite long, but compared to the Earth's billions of years, thousands of years is not worth mentioning at all. The scientists on Earth have always been working hard to understand our home, and when the first colonists appeared on Planet Norma, there was also a group of people who tried to figure out the relationship between Earth and Planet Norma."

That answer was within Xiao Lin's expectations. He thought of the Atlantean civilization as well as Silverlight. However, he felt it strange that he had never seen that part of history in any books, including the extra-curricular ones in the library.

"Only a small portion of people have investigated the relationship between Earth and Planet Norma out of their own interest. It was just like they expected: there are thousands and thousands of connections between the two worlds. With the current most reliable information, the relationship dates back to three billion years."

Xiao Lin was shocked again, because he had thought that the relationship would have originated from Atlantean times, but compared to the over four billion years of history Earth had, the Atlantean civilization was actually just a shooting star. However, he seemed to have thought of something, and curiously asked, "Hold on, was there really life on Earth three billion years ago?"

The dean nodded. "The current archeologists on Earth have found that the earliest fossils date back to almost three and a half billion years ago. Of course, we can't use that to conclude that there was when life on Earth started, for it could have been much further ago, but if we use this as the starting point, the legends of Planet Norma say that God created life three-point-three billion years ago. Don't you feel like those two timings are a little too close?"

"Is it a coincidence?" Xiao Lin asked.

The dean shook his head and sighed. "I don't know. Of course, history only represents the past, but the more connections there are, the more we can predict the future. At that moment, the Supreme Council completely stopped every academy performing any research on the subject, and classified

it as the highest of secrets. Other than those who were around during that era, there are very few of the later generations who know of this anymore.”

Xiao Lin nervously sat up. He felt like the dean’s next words would form the main topic.

However, the dean was still delaying it, asking Xiao Lin, “Do you know about the stability of the laws?”

“I do, Department Head Song told me that, if the laws keep being disrupted, it will break the balance, and could even lead to the extinction of a planet.”

“That’s right, and Earth is constantly moving toward that point of extinction.”

“It’s because the earliest colonists had constantly used their powers on Earth, right? That’s why the academies restricted those above Silver-rank from going back later on,” Xiao Lin said.

The dean smiled bitterly. “Song Junlang told you that? He did not tell you the truth, but it is the highest of secrets after all. It’s right; those of them who obtained power and returned did indeed use powers that exceeded the laws to satisfy their own egos and desires, but how many of them do you think there were? If only that tiny amount of people could destroy the laws of a planet, it would be way too weak.”

Xiao Lin could vaguely understand what the deans’ next words would be.

“In truth, the laws on Earth had already been shattered and crippled a long time ago, and we are just the last straws that broke the camel’s back.”

Xiao Lin was not surprised at the answer, because he remembered the last moments of Poseidon destroying Atlantis, and the scenery did shatter. However, thanks to Poseidon being sealed, the cracks slowly recovered. However, that still meant that, even during the era of Atlantis, Earth’s laws were already in danger of breaking.

If one used that as a basis to hypothesize, then a bigger question came. In the river of history, far away from Atlantean times, what form of power could so completely destroy the laws of a planet?

“It’s war,” the dean answered.

“A war with Planet Norma?” Xiao Lin guessed the answer.

“That’s right, but knowledge of when the war started has already been lost, but conservative estimates put it at hundreds of millions of years ago. Any records of the war have already completely vanished from both planets, but we still managed to find some traces from ancient remains, such as discovering an extremely ancient site that seemed to be the target of a nuclear explosion on Earth. Our current hypothesis is that it was a remnant of the war back then, and after the war, the passages between the two worlds were completely sealed. It was only reopened during the Atlantean era, and only reused by us on a large scale in recent years.

“Xiao Lin, do you know why we decided to colonize this place? Why did we abandon our families and everything we had on Earth to head to a different world, risking our lives as we uncovered new land?” The dean looked at Xiao Lin, coming back to the original question.

Xiao Lin finally understood, and he said softly, “It was not for territory, money or power, but only to live?”

“Yes, to live; it was just that simple. However, the reason has been classified as a secret by the Supreme Council, so we can’t reveal it to the students. I looked for you to tell you that we don’t have much time left. Even though lately all the academies have introduced more and more strict regulations to protect it, Earth is just like my frail body right now, in the fact that it does not have much time remaining.”

Chapter 550 - Departure

Chapter 550: Departure

The dean suddenly got up and put a crystal ball from the bedframe in his hand. The crystal ball shined with a warm glow before softly floating in the air. The various pictures started to appear on the surface of the crystal ball. Upon closer inspection, it looked like Earth, but upon even closer inspection, Xiao Lin noticed the differences with this ball and Earth. The glowing ball looked like fractured glass, and it was already filled with countless cracks.

“This is a replica of the state of Earth’s laws that I had someone make with astrology. These years, we have basically been using various methods to test the state of Earth.”

The dean raised another hand as he said that, condensing a light blue ball of light the size of a fingernail. That was the most basic level of an energy ball. After that, he threw the energy ball at Earth.

The moment the two of them touched, a soft cracking sound could be heard as the crystal ball shattered in the air, turning into a blue liquid that flowed out of the dean’s palm.

Xiao Lin was more and more horrified as he looked on, as the dean was telling him that Earth could no longer withstand any amount of commotion, even if it was just a breeze; Earth could very well end up like that crystal ball and turn into dust that was just careening in the void of the universe.

Even though he had already mentally prepared himself in various ways, Xiao Lin never expected Earth to be in such a dreadful state. He was extremely anxious because his parents and friends were all still back on Earth. Even if he could never return to Earth in the future, he could not bear to look on as they are buried along with the planet.

Xiao Lin quickly felt a deep frustration in his heart, as he knew very well how miniscule his current strength was in the face of such danger. No, it was possible that even the entire academy could not do anything in the face of such a large-scale threat. It was because of that that they started to invade and expand their territories on Planet Norma all those years ago. Rather than calling them colonists, it was more accurate to say that they were just preparing a protective retreat for themselves.

“What else can I do? No, what else can we do?” Xiao Lin’s mood drastically fell at that point. It was the first time he felt such a real sense of powerlessness that he felt like he could do nothing.

The dean suddenly walked forward and reached out, miming the action of patting Xiao Lin's head. Even though there was a membrane in between them, a warm light emitted from the dean's large hands, causing Xiao Lin's complicated and hopeless mood to slowly get better. He raised his head again, forcing out a smile on his lips in thanks.

"In these hundred years, we've tried countless ways but never succeeded. Even Legend-ranked individuals are powerless in the face of such laws," the dean said softly and gently. "We really can't do anything, but you're different. Xiao Lin, only you are different, so what we can't do, you can!"

"Is it because I'm an SS-rank talent-holder?" Xiao Lin said. Even if he never admitted it, it was not a secret in front of the dean.

"Ivanovich's appearance sparked hope for all of us for Earth's future, but it's a pity that the endless scheming and infighting between humans killed that genius. Thankfully, decades later, we once again obtained two new SS-rank talent holders, you and Lilith."

Pausing for a moment, the dean half-jokingly said, "Considering that Earth is at the brink of destruction, and the fact that SS-rank talents are a special existence that surfaced less than once ever tens of millions of years, but yet in three appeared in the span of a century. In truth, even if I was an atheist, I would not be able to resist suspecting that some cosmic being had arranged your appearance."

"Even if the natives said that we were gifted by God, even if we have more potential than regular people, is there still enough time?" Xiao Lin could not help but be doubtful, because his and Lilith's strengths were still way too low.

"It has nothing to do with skill; it's someone only the two of you can do. It's an ability that God has given you, and no one else; even those at Legend-Rank would not be able to do what you can do with your SS-rank talents."

"Ah, can you please explain it more clearly? I still don't know what I have to do." Xiao Lin felt more confused the more he listened.

The dean waved his arm, helplessly smiling. "I don't know either. Ivanovich might have known back then, but he's already taken those secrets to the grave... Xiao Lin, you'll need to investigate by yourself in the future, as no one can help you with it. I didn't interact much with Ivanovich, but I know that Ivanovich worked toward this before. It's a pity..."

"What about Lilith? If I have her help, it might be easier."

"It's possible. Lilith might help you, but the Judge Academy might not allow that to happen." The dean sighed softly.

"Why?" Xiao Lin asked, confused. He was not just asking about Judge Academy's attitude; he was also asking about Ivan, the genius that had been killed by schemes and infighting.

"Is it really necessary to pay a price to save Earth? What rewards would we get if we did? Even if we save Earth, what do we gain? If we have no way to save it, are we really going to bring everyone on Earth to Planet Norma?" The dean looked at Xiao Lin's eyes as he asked those questions.

Xiao Lin once again fell silent, bitterly smiling after a moment. “They want profits? I understand now; no wonder this was concealed. How many people know of Earth’s impending doom?”

“Only those who have the highest authorities have the right to know. If you weren’t an SS-rank talent holder who is fated to have something to do with this, I would not have let you know so early.”

“Even if you told me this today, the truth is, I have no clue what to do either.”

“Go look at Ivan’s old home. If you can find something Ivan left behind, it could help you.”

“Something Ivan left behind?”

Xiao Lin had wanted to ask more when a soft cough came from outside. After that, the sound of Song Junlang speaking could be heard, but he obviously was not talking to Xiao Lin.

The dean sighed with a faint smile on his lips. “It’s almost the time that you should head back. Remember, at least in one or two years’ time, don’t come back to Planet Norma; focus on staying in the Academy and on Earth!”

After that, the dean waved his hand in dismissal. Xiao Lin opened his mouth, but before he could say anything, a strong force came out of the dean’s palm, sending him softly yet unstoppably outward.

The large orb was still floating in the air. Xiao Lin startled away, and Song Junlang marched in quickly, grabbing Xiao Lin’s arm as Song Junlang forcefully pulled him away.

There were several more fully armored guards outside of the stone room, their hands were all pressed on their swords around their waists. The couple that Song Junlang called his classmates also had their hands on their blades and the atmosphere was very tense. When Xiao Lin walked out, Song Junlang laughed as he said, “It’s a misunderstanding, just a misunderstanding. Alright, I’ll bring Xiao Lin back now.”